



ASSURING THE SAFETY, QUALITY & EFFICACY  
OF VETERINARY MEDICINES

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**ATI 286**

**Request**

**From:** [Redacted under section 40 of the FOIA]

**Sent:** 22 January 2014

**Subject:** relating to phenylbutazone found in meat from horses slaughtered in the UK in 2013

I write with a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act.

My request is as follows:

- \* Please disclose how many positive test results for phenylbutazone were found in meat from horses slaughtered in the UK in 2013;
  - \* Please disclose in each case any follow-up action (including tracing the meat and any necessary removal from sale etc.)
  - \* Please disclose how many positive test results for other other drugs tested for were found in meat from horses slaughtered in the UK in 2013, indicating which drugs.
- Please disclose any follow-up action.

I look forward to a response within the statutory time limit.

**VMD Reply**

**Sent:** 4 February 2014

**To:** [Redacted under section 40 of the FOIA]

**Subject:** relating to phenylbutazone found in meat from horses slaughtered in the UK in 2013

Thank you for your email, dated 22 January 2014. We are dealing with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## Your Request

You asked:

- how many positive test results for phenylbutazone were found in meat from horses slaughtered in the UK in 2013
- in each case any follow-up action (including tracing the meat and any necessary removal from sale etc.)
- how many positive test results for other drugs tested for were found in meat from horses slaughtered in the UK in 2013, indicating which drugs with any follow-up action.

## Our Reply

### Positive test results for phenylbutazone in 2013

The Food Standards Agency implemented scheme, testing 100% of horses for residues of phenylbutazone with effect from 30 January 2013, found residues of phenylbutazone in 86 of all horses tested.

### Follow-up action

Officers from the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency carried out follow up investigations in the majority of cases. With effect from 11 February 2013 none of the horses found to be non-compliant entered the food chain and were disposed of in accordance with legislation. Prior to this date, the FSA recalled the products for the six horses found to contain residues of phenylbutazone under the 'Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed' that enables the FSA to recall a product from the market across the EU.

A summary of the overall findings is set out in the table below:

<b>Number</b>	<b>Outcome of investigation</b>
12	Cross contamination of feed, where a horse has had access to medicated feed containing phenylbutazone where it had not been prescribed for that particular horse.
1	Fraudulent passport, being investigated further by Trading Standards.
1	Phenylbutazone administered to wrong horse in error.
14	Investigations could not establish the cause of the residue
7	Horse originated from Northern Ireland, therefore, AHVLA officers unable to carry out investigation.
1	Passport missing, unable to take any follow up action.
23	Horses not signed out of the food chain in the horse passport, usually due to owners being unaware of the requirements of legislation.
27	Investigations ongoing.

## Other drugs tested

The VMD implement the statutory surveillance programme in accordance with Council Directive 96/23/EC.

There were 131 samples taken under this programme during 2013.

Details of non-compliant samples are listed in the table below:

<b>Number</b>	<b>Substance and amount found.</b>	<b>Follow up action</b>
1	8400 µg/kg cadmium	Under investigation.
1	23 µg/kg alpha-nortestosterone	Animal in foal at time of sampling, no further action.
1	12 µg/kg alpha-nortestosterone 45 µg/kg bea-nortestosterone	Under investigation

Although under section 21 of the FOIA we do not have to provide this information because it is accessible to you via the website below, we have, in this case for ease of access, included the information in our reply.

<http://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/vrc/meetings/papers.html>,

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## **Our Service**

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint, you may request an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this e-mail. If you would like to request an internal review please write to [Redacted under section 40 of the FOIA] at the VMD via [ati@vmd.defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ati@vmd.defra.gsi.gov.uk).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office  
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