

Consultation on the annual statistical publication *Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals, Great Britain*

Background

1. Section 21(7) of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 requires that the Secretary of State publish and lay before Parliament each year information about the use of protected animals in experimental or other scientific procedures during the previous calendar year in Great Britain (publication of Northern Ireland statistics is a separate exercise under devolved arrangements). Copies are placed in the House Libraries.

2. The annual publication *Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals, Great Britain* is produced within the National Statistics work programme and as such is subject to the UK Statistics Authority's *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*, under the Statistics and Registration Act 2007. Although the statistics must be laid before Parliament annually as proscribed under the 1986 legislation, there is potential scope for changes to formats and to the detailed content, subject to the available resources, and balancing the needs of users against the burden on respondents and on providers which must be proportionate.

Scope of the consultation

3. This consultation seeks views, evidence and comments from users on potential changes to the publication format and contents. In particular, we would welcome comments and evidence on the following specific points:

- (i) for each table (including online Supplementary tables and Time Series tables) how often do users make use of it, how is the table information used and for what purpose, and for each of the online-only tables what would the impact be if the table were not published, or if the publication frequency were reduced to triennial (every three years)
- (ii) for each section of the Commentary, how often do users make use of it, how is the information used and for what purpose, and what would be the impact if the section were no longer published?
- (iii) In what format should tables be published? In particular views are invited on (a) making all tables other than the general tables (Tables 1, 1a, 2, 3, 4, 5) available online only and (b) providing online tables in Excel format rather than in pdf format

Specific examples of usage of the material will be particularly welcome, as will suggestions for improvements to the existing presentation, and views on how useful particular sections of the current publication are.

Consultation process

Responses to this consultation should be sent to the address below (post or e-mail) by 31 October 2009. The responses will then be analysed in order to inform the publication development. We plan to publish a summary of responses to the consultation and decisions made, in due course.

Assistant to the Chief Statistician

Home Office Statistics, Science and Research Group, Home Office,
5th floor Peel, 2 Marsham Street,
LONDON SW1P 4DF

or email: public.enquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk marked 'FAO Assistant to the Chief Statistician, Home Office Statistics'

21 July 2009