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Annual Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals, Great Britain 2012

Definition – for the compilation of these statistics the number of procedures reported generally corresponds to the number of animals. Where an animal that has recovered fully from a completed procedure is used again for a further procedure it is counted as a separate procedure

Presentation – the figures given refer to the numbers of procedures that were started in 2012 (rather than the numbers of animals), compared with 2011, unless indicated otherwise. Most figures have been rounded to the nearest 1,000 or 100 procedures or to two significant figures.

Summary

The National Statistics publication *Annual Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals, Great Britain 2012* was released by the Home Office on 16th July 2013, providing information about the use of protected animals in scientific procedures started during 2012.

(All comparisons with 2011 unless stated otherwise)

The key points from the latest publication are:

1. In 2012, 4.11 million scientific procedures were started in Great Britain, an increase of eight per cent (+317,200 procedures) compared with 2011. The rise was mainly attributable to a 22 per cent (+363,100) increase in the breeding of genetically modified (GM) animals and harmful mutants (HM), mainly mice, to 1.98 million procedures, nearly half (48%) of the total number of procedures performed. Excluding the breeding of GM and HM animals, the total number of procedures decreased by two per cent (-46,000) to 2.13 million procedures.
2. For the first time, the number of procedures involving GM animals (1.91 million) was greater than the number performed on normal animals (1.68 million).
3. There were increases in 2012 in the numbers of procedures for the following species: mice (+379,058 or +14%); sheep (+5,157 or +14%); goats (+1,462 or +746%), up from 196; guinea pigs (+1,203 or +10%); and non-human primates (+545 or +22%). There were falls for the following species: fish (-63,073 or -11%); amphibians (-2,218 or -14%); rabbits (-1,595 or -10%); and pigs (-961 or -22%).
4. The numbers of procedures for safety testing (toxicology) decreased by six per cent (-22,100) to 377,000, with a greater proportion to 2011 carried out to meet at least one legislative/regulatory requirement (94% compared with 84%).
5. The number of non-toxicology procedures increased by ten per cent (+339,200) to 3.73 million and included rises for the following fields of research: nutrition (79,300 or +425%); anatomy (73,200 or +20%); cancer research (+69,000 or +16%); genetics (+46,000 or +13%); ecology (+33,100 or +85%); and biochemistry (+15,800 or +54%). There were falls in the fields of physiology (-



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173,600 or -29%); pharmaceutical research and development (-24,600 or -11%); and pharmacology (-10,100 or -14%).

6. There were 1.49 million more procedures (+57%) than in 2001 (which had the lowest figure since 1955), primarily due to increases in the use of breeding to produce GM or HM animals (+1.20 million or +155%) and fundamental biological research (+525,400 or +67%), although there was also a notable decrease in procedures for applied studies in human medicine or dentistry (-194,200 or -28%). Mice primarily accounted for the rises for both GM and HM animals (+1.04 million) and fundamental biological research (+412,600). Excluding GM or HM breeding, the total number of procedures was higher than in 2001 (+284,500 or +15%).

(Source: Tables 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, 19; and online Time Series Tables 20, 26)

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<u>Home Office Responsible Statistician</u> David Blunt, Chief Statistician and Head of Profession for Statistics.	
<u>Contacts</u> Press enquiries , please contact the Home Office Press Office (Newsdesk - 020 7035 3535) Members of the public please call 020 7035 4848 (HO Public Enquiry Unit).	
Feedback and comments on the annual statistics are welcome in writing to Home Office Statistics, Home Office, 5th floor Peel, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF, or email:- asp.statistics@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk	

Notes to editors

1. The purpose of the annual statistical report is to satisfy the requirement in section 21(7) of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 that the Secretary of State should 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.
2. The statistics are compiled from returns, submitted by project licence holders at the end of each year, or on the termination of the licence when this occurs during the year. Further details of the collection procedures, coverage, definitions and quality assurance processes are given in the *User Guide to Home Office Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals*.
3. There have been no changes to definitions, nor revisions to previous data.
4. These statistics are produced as part of the National Statistics work programme in accordance with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#), and are managed by the Home Office Chief Statistician and Head of Profession for Statistics, David Blunt.