



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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08459 33 55 77
helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Your ref:
Our ref: RFI 6839
Date: 26 August 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Use of Shotguns during Badger Culling

Thank you for your request for information about the use of shotguns in badger culls, which we received on 28 July. We have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

The EIRs apply to requests for environmental information, which is a broad category of information defined in regulation 2 of the EIRs. Public authorities are required to handle requests for environmental information under the EIRs. They give similar access rights to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your question and the response are below.

A report by the British Veterinary Association on 24 July, at <http://www.bva.co.uk/news/3856.aspx> includes the statement "shotguns would not be used for controlled shooting".

Would you please confirm whether or not this is correct, and if it is correct state on what date the decision was taken that shotguns would not be permitted for the 'controlled' shooting of free-roaming badgers.

If the BVA statement is correct in this regard, it contradicts what was stated in your delayed RFI 6614 of 8 July, attached (see your answers to questions 2, 3 and 4), therefore I ask you to respond to this request for clarification promptly and not in the 20 working days framework of the FOI/EI regulations.



I would refer you to your request number 6774 where, in response to your questions, you were advised that shotguns would be used solely for dispatching cage trapped badgers and not for controlled shooting. You were also advised that the Best Practice Guidance will be amended accordingly. This decision was taken in response to the report prepared by the Independent Expert Panel. This does not contradict what you were advised in the response to questions 2, 3 and 4 of request number 6614. For reference, these questions and the responses are listed below.

2. Whether Defra has yet provided advice to “Natural England that the licence conditions for the pilot areas should be amended to permit only cage-trapping and shooting” and has carried out a “review [of] whether controlled shooting should continue to be an approved culling method”; and,

As confirmed by the Secretary of State on 3rd April, the second of four years' of culling in the two existing areas will continue in 2014. Both cage-trapping and shooting and controlled shooting will continue to be permitted control methods, as set out in the licence issued to each area:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/species/badger/badger.aspx>

3. if so, what advice has been given and the outcome of the review, and on what date(s); or

As set out above, this was set out in the Secretary of State's announcement of 3rd April and Defra's response to the report of the IEP.

4. if this advice and review are still under consideration by Defra, when they are expected to be concluded;

Please refer to the answer above.

Please note that these questions do not contain references to use of shot guns, but refer to the continuation of cage trapping and controlled shooting during the second year of culling.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIRs, and in keeping with the government's Transparency Agenda, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you will now be published on www.gov.uk together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. Please note that this will not include your personal data.

I have attached an annex which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the address below.

Yours sincerely

Defra FoIA and EIRs Team

Email: informationrequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF