



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk  
[www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

**Our ref:** RFI 6461

**Date:** 28/04/2014

Dear Mr

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: TB testing and numbers of badgers culled in the pilot culls**

Thank you for your request for information about TB testing and numbers of badgers culled in the pilot culls, which we received on 31 March. 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).

During the entire period of industry-lead culling in 2013, a total of 924 badgers were reported culled under licence in the Gloucestershire pilot area. The total number reported culled in the Somerset pilot area was 955.

TB testing in culled badgers was not undertaken as a routine procedure as high levels of TB were confirmed in badgers in the regions in which the cull areas are located during the Randomised Badger Cull Trial (RBCT). This has been confirmed by other research work carried out by independent scientists. A link to the report on the RBCT, which summarises the Trial's results and which contains an accompanying literature review, is below. Pages 72 to 77 will be of particular interest:

[http://archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/atoz/tb/isg/report/final\\_report.pdf](http://archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/atoz/tb/isg/report/final_report.pdf)

A sample of culled badgers was subjected to post mortem examination and any signs of illness or poor condition were noted as part of the procedure. It should be noted that testing badger carcasses for TB was not undertaken on a routine basis during the pilot cull. However, four carcasses were tested on occasion at the specific request of landowners when they were concerned when a culled badger appeared to be in a poor state of health. The tests were carried out by independent veterinary surgeons away from the main laboratory where the routine post-mortems were carried out. Of the four carcasses, one carcass was found to be infected with Bovine TB. Please note that the sample size of four is very small and the results from the tests should be treated with caution.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA, 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](http://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 giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service that you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me.

Yours,

Defra TB Programme  
[Ccu.correspondence@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Ccu.correspondence@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

## **Annex**

### **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](mailto: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