



Our ref: FOI 2016/02762
Your ref:

Date 29 March 2016

Dear 

Thank you for your email of 1 March 2016 requesting the following information:

- "1) By species; how many primates were used as part of research at DSTL Porton Down in 2015?*
- 2) How many primates were destroyed as a result of, or following, experimentation?*
- 2) How many primates used for research purposes in 2015 at DSTL Porton Down were bred or sourced externally*
- 3) What external agencies or organisations utilise the facilities at DSTL Porton Down in order to conduct research using non human primates?*
- 4) What was the aim of each of the experiments that used primates in 2015?"*

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and we can confirm the following information in scope of your request is held.

Dstl Porton Down conducts less than half of one per cent of the total animal experimentation carried out in the UK.

Dstl is proud of its work to develop and create battle-winning technology and protection equipment for UK Forces and Government through the best use of science and technology. The remit for Dstl to provide safe and effective protective measures for the UK and its Armed Forces against the threat posed by chemical and biological weapons and to enhance the treatment of conventional casualties on the battlefield, could not currently be achieved without the use of animals.

Dstl returns the numbers of procedures involving animals to the Home Office on an annual basis in accordance with UK legislation. During 2015, Dstl used a total of 57 primates, all of the common marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*) species, in experimental studies.

In accordance with an obligation under Animals (Scientific Procedure's) Act, all of these marmosets

were culled at the conclusion of experimental process.

During 2014, a group of marmosets was obtained from a licensed European Union self- sustaining marmoset colony as part of a planned addition of unrelated marmosets to the Dstl marmoset breeding colony, an action we take from time to time to maintain the breeding colony as outbred. Of the animals obtained from this external source, those suitable for breeding were placed into the breeding colony. The remainder were held as stock animals and during 2015; three of them were used as part of the research activity.

No external agencies or organisations utilise Dstl facilities designated by the Home Office under our Establishment Licence in order to conduct research using non-human primates.

Finally, in relation to the aims of the experimental studies that used marmosets, we can confirm that a total of 28 animals were used in studies related to model development and therapies for biological agent infections, 17 animals in studies concerned with medical countermeasures to chemical agents and 12 animals in studies related to the kinetics, dynamics and diagnostics of chemical and biological agents.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely

Dstl Secretariat