



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency

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Our Ref: ATIC1414

[REDACTED]  
{By Email}

29 Aug 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

## PROVISION OF REQUESTED INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information about imports and exports which we received on 01 Aug 2018. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI).

The information you requested and our response is detailed below:

'This includes the number of imports and exports of laboratory animals.

'The number of imports per month, per species and possibly number of animals and whether imported to an academic or commercial establishment?

If under BALAI establishments have given the 24 hour notification to the APHA offices local to their establishment would APHA be able to provide the same information for imports from European countries?

As most exports of lab animals are carried out under private vet health certs or signed as fit to travel by a competent person, I do not think there will be many DEFRA export health certs raised but if that information could be extracted as well that would be helpful.

To assist us in our discussions with DEFRA we would like to gather as much information as possible with regards to the import and export of laboratory animals and biological products from and to both European countries and the rest of the world, and the data we are looking to gather from within our industry is as follows'

### Live Animals

- 1 Period 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018
- 2 Species (mouse, rat, guinea pig, hamster, rabbit, fish)
- 3 Number of imports from European countries, per month, by species and box numbers

APHA receive Importer Notifications for rodents/lagomorphs imported for research purposes from the EU. However due to the way these documents are stored we would have to go through each individual notification to extract this information. Currently there are approx. 570 notifications for consignments from the EU that did not require an Intra Trade Animal Health Certificate (ITAHC). It would take 10 minutes to locate and check each one to see if it was relevant to this request and extract the information (95 hours total). Data on imports of fish is not held by APHA. These imports fall under the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS). <https://www.cefasc.co.uk/about-us/>

- 4 Number of imports from the rest of the world, per month, by species and box numbers

Licences for rodents/lagomorphs imported for research are valid for 12 months and can be for multiple consignments. When the licence expires importers must send a return to APHA confirming details of consignments imported during the validity period. Due to the way these returns are logged we only record the total number of animals imported while the licence was valid. We would have to check each individual return to confirm which consignments fell into the above time period and extract the information requested. There were approx. 250 licences valid during this period and it would take 10 minutes to locate, check and extract information from each return (41 hours). In some cases if the licence is still valid we would not have received details of consignments imported.

- 5 Number of exports to European countries, per month, by species and box numbers

We would need to locate and look at 12 certified copies of TRACES ITAHCs returned to CITC. It would take approximately 10 minutes to locate each electronically filed certified copy of the ITAHC and collate the data (2 hours).

- 6 Number of imports to the rest of the world, per month, by species and box numbers  
7 If the number each month could be broken down by either Academia or Commercial company – if known

Authorisations are valid for a set period (usually 1 month to 2 years). Each authorisation will cover only the product applied for – so they couldn't import (for example) bovine serum under an authorisation for rodent embryos. As long as the product imported is covered by the authorisation an unlimited number of consignments can be imported under the authorisation during this period. We can provide details of the number of authorisations issued during the period requested and the products they cover, but not how many consignments were imported under each authorisation.

To complete this task we would need to locate and look at 121 certified copies of the Export Health Certificates (EHC) returned to the Centre for International Trade at Carlisle (CITC). It would take approximately 10 minutes to locate each electronically filed certified copy of the EHC and collate the data (20 hours).

## Biological products

- 1 Period 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018
- 2 Species if known
- 3 Type of product if known ie tissues, blood, frozen embryos or sperm, eggs, antibodies, antigens, medical samples,  
Because no licence or paperwork is required from APHA. Samples move with a facilitation letter which can be found on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk). They can download the letter and don't need to contact APHA in any way.
- 4 Number of imports from European countries, per month  
APHA do not hold any data regarding research samples imported from the EU.
- 5 Number of imports from the rest of the world, per month  
APHA hold details of authorisations issued to import research samples, but not individual consignments.
- 6 Number of exports to European countries, per month  
APHA do not issue certification for biological products to the EU so there is no data available.
- 7 Number of exports to the rest of the world, per month
- 8 If the number each month could be broken down by either Academia or Commercial company – if known

We would need to locate and look at 978 certified copies of the Export Health Certificates (EHC) returned to CITC. It would take approximately 10 minutes to locate each electronically filed certified copy of the EHC and collate the data (196 hours). This figure is based on all laboratory products exported so may reduce, although this is not guaranteed, dependent upon clarification of whether this was for biological products of the species listed above.

We want to be as open as possible in answering requests for information. The FOIA itself also requires us to provide reasonable advice and assistance to those seeking to make such a request. Unfortunately, your request is too focussed and apportioning relevant spending according to your categorisation would cover an enormous amount of information. Gathering it together would therefore involve a significant cost and diversion of resources from the Department's other work. In this case we have applied the Section 12 exemption, details of which are below:

Section 12(1) of the FOIA allows us to refuse a request for information if we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit, which currently stands at £600. On the basis of our estimates, we consider that the cost would exceed this limit and, as such, we are refusing your request.

Section 12(2) also provides that we are not required to confirm whether APHA holds the information requested if by doing so we would exceed the appropriate cost limit of £600. This is the case for the information that you have requested, and so please note that this response should not be taken as confirmation that the information is held by APHA.

However, if you were to make a new request for less prescriptive categories of information, examples of which have been detailed within the reply, it may be that we could comply with that request within the appropriate limit, although we cannot guarantee that this will be the case.

The best way we can help you is to ask you to consider broadening your request to reduce the effort that would be needed to categorise the exact information you are seeking.

Information disclosed in response to this FOI request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOI and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on GOV.UK, together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

I attach an Annex which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you and contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the Access to Information Team at the email address below or postal address at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION TEAM**

Email: [enquiries@apha.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@apha.gsi.gov.uk)

## Annex

### Copyright

The information supplied to you is Crown copyright, unless otherwise stated, and is protected by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for the purposes of news reporting. You can find details on the arrangements for re-using Crown copyright information at:

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### Complaints

If you are unhappy with the result of your request for information you may request an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this letter.

If you wish to request an internal review, please contact: The Access to Information Team at [enquiries@apha.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@apha.gsi.gov.uk) or at the postal address at the top of this letter, who will arrange for an internal review of your case.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have 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 APHA's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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