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Our ref: FOI2019/00462  
6 February 2019

Dear

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Funding of animal welfare controls in slaughterhouses**

Thank you for your request for information of 9 January 2019 about Funding of animal welfare controls in slaughterhouses. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Please note that this letter also responds to your emails of 2 and 17 January 2019 to Baroness Vere and George Eustice, as in these emails you also request information on the funding of animal welfare controls in slaughterhouses. Therefore, some parts of your emails do not fall within the definitions of an information request and have therefore been handled under general correspondence. They have been clearly separated below.

**Information requested and handled under the FOIA, with our response:**

1. *What total amount (ie financial cost) does the Government (DEFRA) determine or believe is required to deliver animal welfare controls as required by law in all slaughterhouses in England each year (whether calendar year or financial year), for example, last year (2018 or 2018/19) and this year (2019 or 2019/2020).*

*(Note - animal welfare controls' is here taken to include activities such as welfare inspection, investigations, enforcement, legal advice and action as required, and training which may be undertaken by Official Veterinarians (OVs) or other officials).*

Defra does not hold information on the total financial cost required for animal welfare controls in all slaughterhouses. The slaughterhouse operator is responsible for ensuring that they meet all the animal welfare controls required by law. The annual financial cost of monitoring and enforcing animal welfare controls in slaughterhouses are discussed with FSA on an annual basis to agree costs.

2. *What is the total financial contribution made by DEFRA to the Food Standards Agency (FSA) specifically to enable animal welfare controls in all English slaughterhouses as required by law each year (whether calendar year or financial year), for example, for last year (2018 or 2018/2019) and anticipated this year (2019 or 2019/2020).*



For 2018/19 Defra's funding for monitoring and enforcement of animal welfare was £170,000. We do not yet hold information on the funding figures for the next financial year as we are in the process of negotiating these with FSA.

*3. What is the total financial contribution made by slaughterhouse operators in England to the Food Standards Agency (FSA) specifically to enable animal welfare controls as required by law each year (whether calendar year or financial year) in all slaughterhouses in England, for example, for last year (2018 or 2018/2019) and required/anticipated this year (2019 or 2019/2020).*

Defra does not hold information on the total financial contribution made by slaughterhouse operators to the FSA. Animal welfare controls are included as part of overall official food and feed controls and the FSA holds this data.

*4. Is there a separate financial contribution by slaughterhouse operators in England to the implementation of animal welfare controls at slaughter outside of any made directly to the FSA? If so, how much did this amount to for all slaughterhouses in England last year (eg 2018 or 2018/2019), and how much is it required/anticipated to be for this year (eg 2019 or 2019/2020).*

Food Business Operators in slaughterhouses are responsible for bearing the costs of meeting their own animal welfare responsibilities and requirements, such as appropriate staffing and CCTV. It would be for the individual operators to decide if they want to purchase external services and neither Defra nor FSA would have access to this data.

*5. On what basis is the financial contribution of each of slaughterhouses and Government to the implementation of animal welfare controls in slaughterhouses in England determined? (For example, on what basis is the financial cost of delivery of animal welfare controls in slaughterhouses in England determined, and on what basis is this allocated between slaughterhouse operators and Government?).*

Defra does not hold information on the financial contributions made by slaughterhouse operators to the FSA. Animal welfare controls are included as part of all official food and feed control charges and the FSA holds this data.

*6. To what extent in 2018 (or the period 2017/2018) did slaughterhouse operators pay to the FSA their expected or required financial contribution to deliver animal welfare controls in all slaughterhouses in England? That is what level (eg percentage of total funding anticipated) or total amount of financial default by slaughterhouse operators during this period was there?*

Defra does not hold information on the total financial contribution made by slaughterhouse operators to the FSA. Animal welfare controls are included as part of official food and feed controls and the FSA holds this data.

You can contact the FSA at the following email address: [FCT@food.gov.uk](mailto:FCT@food.gov.uk).

**General correspondence enquires and our response:**

In your email to Baroness Vere on 2 January you also raised the following points:

- *Export Health Certificates for the export of lamb to Saudi Arabia and whether assurance can be provided that only lambs stunned prior to slaughter may be exported.*

Export Health Certificates are templates accepted by the importing country to provide technical assurances on public and animal health. Whether the meat is Halal and accredited as such is a matter between the importer and exporter. You will wish to note that some Halal accreditation schemes accept stunning before slaughter. Moreover, there is nothing in current legislation to stop meat from animals slaughtered without stunning being exported to Jewish or Muslim communities in other countries.

- *The use of the New Zealand model in ensuring that halal certification is only for stunned animals.*

As mentioned by Baroness Vere in her response to your initial query in December, the New Zealand model of demonstrating recoverability from stunning is illegal in the EU. The EU Regulation on the protection of animals at the time of killing (EC Regulation 1099/2009) requires that the stunning of an animal is immediately followed by a method that kills the animal.

- *The requirements of domestic and EU legislation for the stunning of animals.*

Where stunning is carried out – including for religious slaughter - it must be effective in rendering the animal unconscious and insensible to pain and the animal must remain unconscious and insensible to pain until death. Official Veterinarians of the Food Standards Agency monitor and enforce the welfare regulations in all approved slaughterhouses to ensure that animals are spared avoidable pain, distress or suffering.

- *The issue of the use of high concentration carbon dioxide for the stunning and killing of pigs.*

Gas stunning has animal welfare advantages over other methods such as electrical stunning in that individual restraint of pigs during stunning is unnecessary and pigs can be kept in a group which they find less stressful. However, we have acknowledged that high concentrations of carbon dioxide are known to be aversive.

Research conducted since FAWC's recommendations in 2003 has shown that pigs do not avoid an environment containing high concentrations of inert gases and this does not induce breathlessness. However, there are practical constraints to the use of inert gas mixtures that have restricted commercial uptake. These include the need to expose pigs for longer periods of time in the inert gas mixture in order for unconsciousness to last until death.

Defra continues to push for animal welfare improvements and, as you recognise, we are jointly funding with the Humane Slaughter Association a research project in this area.

Information disclosed in response to this FOIA request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on [GOV.UK](https://www.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.

We attach Annex A, explaining the copyright that applies to the information being released to you, and Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

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

Yours sincerely

**Information Rights Team**

[InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

## **Annex A**

### **Copyright**

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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 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Nick Teall, Head of Information Rights, Area 4a, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: [InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:InformationRequests@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's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

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