



[REDACTED]

22 November 2024

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2024/01001

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 28 October in which you requested the following:

Your request:

For the years 2022 and 2023, re Animal Use under ASPA 1986 under the Establishment Licence for MRC Harwell Biological Services and MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology.

- 1) May I have the number of scientific procedures undertaken and split between species during each year.*
- 2) For each year could you please provide a numerical breakdown of the severity classification for procedures carried out.
Please split between sub threshold, mild, moderate, severe and non recovery. These will be the figures provided by project licence holders in the annual returns to the Home Office.*
- 3) Please can you tell me the number and species of animals, that were killed without being used for regulated procedures? This is for years 2022 and 2023, since leaving the EU these are not required to be included on the annual returns so if you do not have these then please I can I have the figure for the last year it was legally required i.e. 2017 as below.*

To be clear these would be the figures last published in 2017 re Additional statistics on breeding and genotyping of animals for scientific procedures, Great Britain 2017, under EU Directive (2010/63/EU).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/additional-statistics-on-breeding-and-genotyping-of-animals-for-scientific-procedures-great-britain-2017>

- 4) Were any animals rehomed in 2022 or 2023? If so, please may I have their number and species.*
- 5) Do you annually reconcile the statistics each project licence holder compiles for the annual returns to the data the Establishment separately collects?*
- 6) Can you please tell me for each year how many project licences the Animal Welfare Ethical Review Body (AWERB) for your Establishment reviewed and decided to prevent them continuing for Home Office approval, this may be because for instance they identified a New Approach Methodology that could be used instead of animals.*

If any of this data is already published on your website, please can you direct me to the URL.

Our response:

I can confirm that UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) holds some information relevant to your request. Please see the information below.

Both of your requests have been amalgamated into one response, as both MRC Harwell Biological Services and MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology (LMB) are institutes of the Medical Research Council. All animal use at MRC

Harwell relates to the Mary Lyon Centre (MLC), the UK's national facility for mouse genetics and the use of mouse models for the study of human disease.

1) May I have the number of scientific procedures undertaken and split between species during each year.

MRC Harwell	Number of Procedures	
Species	2022	2023
Mice	59,437	56,712

MRC LMB	Number of Procedures	
Species	2022	2023
Mice	56,067	52,292
Rats	6	20

2) For each year could you please provide a numerical breakdown of the severity classification for procedures carried out.

MRC Harwell	Number of Procedures	
Severity Classification	2022	2023
Sub-threshold	38,885	39,386
Mild	15,933	13,755
Moderate	3,486	2,222
Severe	219	95
Non-recovery	914	1,254

MRC LMB	Number of Procedures	
Severity Classification	2022	2023
Sub-threshold	42,071	38,711
Mild	6,805	6,800
Moderate	2,030	2,616
Severe	4,542	3,139
Non-recovery	625	1,046

3) Please can you tell me the number and species of animals, that were killed without being used for regulated procedures?

MRC Harwell	Number of Animals	
Species	2022	2023
Mice	80,734	82,013

The MLC's business involves a lot of new line generation, cryo-archiving and genetic diversity studies. Therefore, a much larger range of wild type colonies are held as a national facility supplying mice to the UK and abroad.

MRC LMB	Number of Animals	
Species	2022	2023
Mice	22,375	20,689
Rats	0	109
Fish	1,660	1,020

The LMB have a number of wild type colonies which are bred to produce animals to be used in experimental cohorts or for tissues. These wild type animals can be bred with each other, or bred with genetically altered animals, both of which are considered unregulated.

4) *Were any animals rehomed in 2022 or 2023? If so, please may I have their number and species.*

MRC Harwell did not rehome any animals in 2022 or 2023. MRC LMB did not rehome any animals in 2022, and rehomed three rats in 2023.

5) *Do you annually reconcile the statistics each project licence holder compiles for the annual returns to the data the Establishment separately collects?*

MRC Harwell do reconcile returns figures compiled by project licence holders as they are collected in a central database and many project licence holders are based in different establishments, so do not have direct access to this database.

MRC LMB does not check returns figures against establishment records, as each project licence holder is responsible for compiling their own returns from their own records, however figures are checked for anomalies before submission to the Home Office. These anomalies could include, but are not limited to, the wrong severity category, the wrong purpose or notification if a clear explanation has not been provided when requested in the returns.

6) *Can you please tell me for each year how many project licences the Animal Welfare Ethical Review Body (AWERB) for your Establishment reviewed and decided to prevent them continuing for Home Office approval, this may be because for instance they identified a New Approach Methodology that could be used instead of animals.*

No project licences were prevented from continuing for Home Office approval.

Prior to submitting project license applications to the AWERB, applicants are provided with detailed advice and guidance, including extensive initial review. The AWERB will only approve applications if there is a clear scientific justification for the methods to be used and if members are content that the harms involved in the programme of work are justified in terms of the likely benefits. As applicants are usually willing and able to implement any required revisions requested by AWERB, outright rejections of applications are rare.

If any of this data is already published on your website, please can you direct me to the URL.

Information on licensing and ethical review of mouse research at the MLC at MRC Harwell is available [here](#)¹. Please note that published data for severity classification differs from the data provided in our response due to having a number of secondary availability licences, which are included in the data published on the website. These secondary availability licences are for animals returned by other establishments but used at MRC Harwell.

LMB animal research data is published [here](#)².

If you have any queries regarding our response please do let us know. If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review, explaining which elements of this decision you disagree with and why. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days of the date of our response and should be addressed to:

Head of Information Governance

Email: foi@ukri.org

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are still not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may apply to refer the matter to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review procedure provided by UKRI. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: www.ico.org.uk.

If you wish to raise a complaint regarding the service you have received or the conduct of any UKRI staff in relation to your request, please see [UKRI's complaints procedure](#)³.

¹ <https://www.har.mrc.ac.uk/services/ethical-review/>

² <https://www2.mrc-lmb.cam.ac.uk/research/animal-research/lmb-animal-research-facts-and-figures/>

³ <https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/contact-us/make-a-complaint/#skipnav-target>

Yours sincerely,



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