

Debate Pack  
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By Dr Elena Ares,  
Nikki Sutherland

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# Debate on an e-petition concerning commercial breeding for laboratories

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# 1 Background

A Westminster Hall debate has been scheduled for 4.30pm on 16 January 2023 on an e-petition relating to commercial breeding for laboratories, [Ban commercial breeding for laboratories. Implement reform to approve & use NAMs](#). The subject for the debate has been chosen by the Petitions Committee and the debate will be opened by Elliot Colburn MP.

## 1.1 Animal experiment statistics

The UK Government publishes statistics on the use of animals in experimental procedures in its annual publication [Statistics of scientific procedures on living animals](#). These cover Great Britain and show that:

- In 2021, there were 3.1 million completed procedures involving living animals in Great Britain. These were regulated procedures, meaning they involved animals for an experimental or other scientific purpose or for breeding genetically-altered (GA) animals.
- Of these procedures, around 1.7 million were experimental procedures on living animals and the remaining 1.3 million were cases of the breeding and creation of GA animals.
- The annual number of procedures has been falling steadily since 2015, a year in which 4.1 million procedures on animals were carried out. The number in 2021 was 26% or around a quarter lower than this. The Covid-19 pandemic also led to a reduced number of procedures being carried out in 2020 and 2021.
- Seventy per cent of experimental procedures carried out in 2021 were either 'sub-threshold' or 'mild' in severity, which is a record of the discomfort or harm they cause an animal. Twenty-two per cent were of 'moderate' severity and the remainder were 'severe' or 'non-recovery'. Almost all breeding and creation procedures were 'sub-threshold' or 'mild'. Overall in 2021, 161,000 animals were involved in procedures judged as 'severe' or 'non-recovery' in terms of harm caused.
- During 2021, 144 establishments in Great Britain were licenced to carry out regulated procedures on living animals. Establishments must also acquire a licence for each project involving regulated procedures and during 2021, 2,950 of these licences were in force.
- The Government stopped publishing detailed information on procedures by establishment type in 2021, [stating that](#), "Information

regarding establishment type is no longer collected in the return of procedures collection.”

- In 2020, 54% of all procedures on living animals (1.6 million procedures) were carried out at universities and medical schools, 27% at commercial organisations, 12% at non-profit-making organisations, and 6% at government departments or other public bodies.
- Over time, the number of procedures being carried out by commercial organisations has fallen, while the number at universities and medical schools has risen. In 1988, 60% of procedures were carried out at commercial organisations, compared with 27% in 2020.
- No information is published about which establishments are primarily engaged in the breeding and creating of GA animals, as opposed to experimental procedures.
- As these figures are no longer being published by the Home Office, there is a gap in current data. The organisation Understanding Animal Research collects and analyses data on procedures on animals from research organisations. It found that in 2021, [10 establishments were responsible for 49% or nearly half of all procedures on animals for scientific research](#). These are listed below.:
  - University of Oxford (207,192 procedures in 2021)
  - University of Cambridge (199,203)
  - University College London (185,278)
  - The Francis Crick Institute (183,363)
  - University of Edinburgh (172,100)
  - Medical Research Council (169,989)
  - King's College London (111,750)
  - University of Glasgow (103,271)
  - University of Manchester (87,535)
  - Imperial College London (76,325)
  - All other establishments in Great Britain (1,560,237).

Further information can be found in the Commons Briefing on, [Animal experiment statistics](#) published 3 August 2022.

## 1.2

## The petition

A debate on an [e-petition calling for a ban on commercial breeding for laboratories and an increase in the use of non animal methods in research](#) will take place in Westminster Hall on 16 January 2023. The Petition closed on 12 October 2022 after receiving 102,230 signatures:

**Ban commercial breeding for laboratories. Implement reform to approve & use NAMs**

Revoke all licences (PEL) for commercial breeders of laboratory animals. Require all Project Licences (PPLs) applications be reviewed by an independent Non Animal Methods (NAMs) specialist committee. Revise s24 ASPA 1986 to allow review. Urge International Regulators to accept & promote NAMs.

We believe the use of animals is scientifically, ethically, morally and financially (taxpayer funded) unjustifiable.

Defined in 1959, UK law enshrines the principles of the 3Rs. The UK must abandon these old principles and focus on the development and use of Non Animal Methods.

Having an independent NAMs specialist committee review applications for Project Licences (PPLs) prior to their approval, so that a licence is only granted if there is no replacement method.

Commercial breeders of laboratory animals are profit rather than animal-welfare focused.<sup>1</sup>

The Petition calls for all establishment licences for commercial breeders of laboratory animals to be revoked, which would mean that they would no longer be able to carry out their activity. It also calls for the creation of a committee specifically to determine for each proposed project whether alternative non-animal methods or NAMs (also sometimes referred to as new approach methodologies) have been properly considered before a licence is granted.

The petition also calls for a number of amendments to the [Animals \(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986](#) (ASPA). Firstly, for the 3Rs principle (replace, reduce, refine) set out in [Section 2A of the Act](#) to be replaced with legislation focused on the use of NAMs.

The 3Rs require that any potential project considers whether any proposed animal experiments can be replaced with non-animal experiments, that any animal use if necessary be reduced as much as possible and that any procedure should be refined to eliminate or reduce to the minimum, any possible pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm.

The petition also calls for [Section 24 of the Act](#) to be amended. Section 24 makes it a criminal offence to disclose confidential information on licenced procedures.

The Government response did not address the commercial breeding of animals for laboratories specifically or the call for a NAMs specialist

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<sup>1</sup> E-petition 611810, [Ban commercial breeding for laboratories. Implement reform to approve & use NAMs](#).

committee. It did set out how animal experiments are licenced and the Government view on the need for their use, concluding:

The Government is clear that the use of animals in science is justified, for the benefits it brings to human, animal and environmental health and safety. Alongside this, the Government supports the replacement, reduction and refinement of the use of animals in science – principles that remain valid. The existing legislative and regulatory frameworks provide an appropriate delivery of these two objectives.<sup>2</sup>

Two written questions tabled by Dan Curren MP currently waiting for responses, which were due on 11 January, have asked the Government to set out their position on NAMs when licencing animal experiments:

- [PQ 119172](#) : To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that (a) new approach methodologies and (b) non-animal methods are considered as part of the licence approval process for animal use in science.
- [PQ 119175](#): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment has she made of the potential merits of establishing an advisory independent committee, comprising of specialists in new approach methodologies, to review project license applications for animal testing prior to the granting of Home Office approval.

## 1.3 Non-animal methods (NAMs)

Non animal methods for scientific research include [a number of approaches](#) as set out by Cruelty Free international, an animal charity that campaigns for the use of alternatives to animal testing:

- Cell cultures: this includes 3D structures on [chips that mimic organs](#) [also referred to as [Microphysiological Systems](#) or MPS] and which can be used to study biological and disease processes, together with drug metabolism.
- Human tissues: diseased and healthy donated tissues.
- Computer modelling: including of human tissues, which can be used to make predictions on the likely hazards of substances.
- Volunteer studies using modern scanning methods.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> E-petition 611810, [Ban commercial breeding for laboratories. Implement reform to approve & use NAMs](#)

<sup>3</sup> Cruelty Free International, [Alternatives to animal testing](#)

An article in Nature in April 2022, [Medical regulators: look beyond animal tests](#), reflecting on the effective use of NAMs in the development of Covid vaccines, highlighted how these approaches are used in practice:

Non-animal technologies and methods for assessing chemical hazards, medical risks and therapies are called new approach methodologies (NAMs). They are already applied to develop consumer products for use outside the body. In 2013, the European Union banned animal tests to assess whether cosmetics were safe. Cell and computational methods filled the gaps. In 2018, a study found that combining non-animal methods to predict skin sensitization works as well as or better than the standard mouse test.

[...]

In the past decade or so, alternative testing methods have become much more sophisticated, including use of 3D cell cultures, organoids, bioprinted tissues, computer models and ‘organs on a chip’, which can mimic interactions such as those between the digestive and immune systems.<sup>4</sup>

The UK’s [National Centre for the Replacement, Reduction and Refinement of Animal Experiments](#) (NC3Rs) is funded by research councils and the private sector. It sets out its work in this area as follows:

The non-animal technologies programme was de-prioritised by Innovate UK in December 2016 as part of a rationalisation due to budgetary constraints. The NC3Rs has continued to support the development and application of non-animal technologies through collaborations, for example with the EPSRC and Dstl on CRACK IT Challenges, and with the Medicines Discovery Catapult on a new funding scheme, Technologies to Tools, to accelerate the translation of non-animal technologies into research tools.

In 2022 we will publish a review of the outputs from the feasibility and collaborative research and development funding competitions.<sup>5</sup>

The NC3Rs [Vision for 2015-2025](#) provides further detail on its aims with regards to replacing animal experiments. NC3Rs also provides [information and guidance](#) on specific technologies on its website.

A written response from November 2022 did provide some further information on funding for NAMs:

In addition to funding the NC3Rs, UKRI also funds a portfolio of research projects involving humans, human materials, animal models, and non-animal technologies. The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and NC3Rs have recently launched a £4 million joint funding call focussed on supporting next generation non-animal technologies, such as

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-01110-6> 27 April 2022

<sup>5</sup> National Centre for the Replacement, Reduction of Animal Experiments (NC3Rs), [Advancing the development and application of non-animal technologies \(NATs\)](#)

organ-on-a-chip and computer modelling, to work towards providing more reliable and applicable alternatives to reduce the use of animals in research.<sup>6</sup>

The [RSPCA which campaigns to encourage humane alternatives to animal experiments](#) has set out some of the barriers to the uptake of NAM's in laboratories, both within the scientific community and as a result of regulatory requirements:

#### **Why it's difficult to replace animals**

The potential for replacing animals depends on the nature and aim of each experiment. Humans can't be used in potentially harmful experiments. Isolated cells and tissues may not be able to give the whole picture of a complicated living system.

A better idea of the scientific barriers to animal replacement is needed. Research can't be directed at overcoming these without this. Scientists often have preferred ways of working. Changing their approach requires persuasion, increased advice and training in the use of alternatives.

Developing alternative methods, and showing that they work, also takes time and resources. What's more, many laws on product safety require information from animal tests. Getting these tests replaced takes time, especially when many countries are involved.<sup>7</sup>

[Animal Free Research UK](#), funds [research to alternatives to animal use](#) in medical research and believes that "[pioneering technology is making animal testing redundant](#)". It has highlighted what it refers to as [animal method bias](#) when submitting research for publication:

A large majority of biomedical researchers still consider animal experiments the "gold standard," even though human relevant methods like organ-on-chip and artificial intelligence can better replicate human diseases and are more predictive of drug efficacy. The hallmark of animal methods bias is when journal editors or peer reviewers request that research on animals is conducted as a misguided attempt to confirm existing findings from human-based methods. Sometimes journals even suggest that animal studies are a prerequisite for publication.<sup>8</sup>

## 1.4

## Legislation on animals in scientific procedures

The [Animals \(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986](#) (ASPA) regulates the use of protected animals in any experimental or other scientific procedure which may cause pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm to the animal. The [Animals](#)

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<sup>6</sup> HC Deb 18 October 2022 | [PQ 60158](#)

<sup>7</sup> RSPCA, [Replacing research animals](#)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.animalfreeresearchuk.org/working-to-address-animal-method-bias-in-scientific-publishing/>

[\(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986 Amendment Regulations 2012](#) made several changes to the ASPA, including the addition of cephalopods as ‘protected’ animals. Government [guidance on the operation of ASPA](#) was published by the Home Office in March 2014. This states that “under the Act, protected animals are any living vertebrate other than man and any living cephalopod.”<sup>9</sup>

Revised legislation came into force in 2013, transposing [EU Directive 2010/63/EU](#). This also required EU Member States to submit data on specific indicators annually to be synthesised and published by the European Commission.

In the light of the UK’s departure from the EU, the Animals in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU), the body responsible for enforcing ASPA, has stated that “other than minor changes to references to the Directive [EU Directive 2010/63/EU] that are embedded in ASPA, no further legislative action is needed for animals in science regulation around EU exit”.<sup>10</sup>

The UK continues to collect and publish statistical information on the use of protected animals in regulated procedures annually in order to meet the requirements of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.<sup>11</sup>

The Government response to a previous petition provides further details and context for the existing legislative framework:

Animal testing of cosmetics has been banned in the UK since 1998. Under UK law it is illegal to test cosmetic products, or their ingredients, on animals to meet the requirements of the Cosmetics Regulations 2009. Animal testing of chemicals is required under UK law, depending on the chemical itself and the quantity manufactured, to protect the safety of workers manufacturing or exposed to such material in high amounts and protect the environment when such chemicals may find their way into waterways, soil or the atmosphere.<sup>12</sup>

## Regulation and regulatory bodies

Administration and enforcement of ASPA in England, Scotland and Wales is the responsibility of the [Animals in Science Regulation Unit](#) (ASRU), which is part of the Home Office. Its activities include:

- providing advice on the regulations

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<sup>9</sup> Home Office, [Guidance on the Operation of the Animals \(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986](#), March 2014 PDF 2.20 MB

<sup>10</sup> Home Office, [Animals in Science Regulation Unit Annual Report 2017](#), 3 December 2018

<sup>11</sup> Home Office, [Animal testing and research: guidance for the regulated community](#), updated 29 September 2021

<sup>12</sup> Parliament.uk, [Ban Animal Testing - Fund, accept & promote alternatives to animal testing](#), closed 12 October 2021



- operating the licensing system required by ASPA
- assuring the compliance of licence holders with ASPA and the terms of their licences.<sup>13</sup>

The Northern Ireland Department of Health carries out this role in Northern Ireland and reports its activities separately.

The Animals in Science Committee (ASC) is an independent committee which advises the Home Secretary on matters relating to animal testing in the UK. Further information and reports from the ASC can be found [online](#).

## Licences

Three kinds of licences are required for any procedures on animals to be carried out:

- personal licence for each person carrying out procedures on animals
- project licence for the programme of work
- establishment licence for the place at which the work is carried out.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Home Office, [Animals in Science Regulation Unit](#), 2 July 2021

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/research-and-testing-using-animals>

## 2 Parliamentary material

### 2.1 PQs

#### [Animal Experiments](#)

**Asked by: Qureshi, Yasmin**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her Department's policy to ban animal testing where it causes animals severe suffering; and whether she is taking steps to promote New Approach Methodologies to replace animal testing.

**Answering member: Chris Philp | Department: Home Office**

The use of animals in science supports the development of new medicines and the safety of our environment, for the benefit of humans and animals.

The Home Office assures appropriate protection of the use of animals in science through licensing and compliance assurance under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. This legal framework, implemented by the Home Office Regulator, requires that animals are only ever used in science where there are no alternatives, where the number of animals used is the minimum needed to achieve the scientific benefit, and where the potential harm to animals is limited to that needed to achieve the scientific benefit.

The Government actively supports and funds the development and dissemination of the 3Rs. This is achieved through funding UK Research and Investment who fund the National Centre for the 3Rs and research through Innovate UK, the Medical Research Council and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council into the development of alternatives.

**HC Deb 20 December 2022 | PQ 109510**

#### [Animal Experiments](#)

**Asked by: Osamor, Kate**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of phasing out animal experiments in science.

**Answering member: Kevin Hollinrake | Department: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

The carefully regulated use of animals in scientific research remains necessary to protect humans and the wider environment. The Government's current approach is to ensure that the UK has a robust regulatory system for licensing animal studies and enforcing legal standards and to actively support and fund the development and dissemination of techniques that replace, reduce and refine the use of animals in research (the 3Rs). This is achieved primarily through funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) for the National Centre for the 3Rs (NC3Rs). Since the NC3Rs was launched in 2004, it has committed £100 million in research to develop 3Rs technologies.

**HC Deb 14 December 2022 | PQ 104321**

[Animal Experiments](#)

**Asked by: Zeichner, Daniel**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Animals in Science Regulation Unit's annual reports for 2019-2021, if he will increase the support available to researchers in replacing animals with (a) computer modelling, (b) organ-on-a-chip technology and (c) other New Approach Methodologies.

**Answering member: George Freeman | Department: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

The Government actively supports and funds the development and dissemination of techniques that replace, reduce, and refine the use of animals in research (the 3Rs). This is achieved primarily through funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) for the National Centre for the 3Rs (NC3Rs). Since the NC3Rs was launched in 2004, it has committed £100 million in research to develop 3Rs technologies.

UKRI also funds a portfolio of research projects involving non-animal technologies. This includes a £4 million joint funding call focussed on supporting next generation non-animal technologies, such as organ-on-a-chip and computer modelling, to work towards providing more reliable and applicable alternatives to reduce the use of animals in research.

**HC Deb 06 December 2022 | PQ 97583**

### Animal Experiments

**Asked by: Hendry, Drew**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has had recent discussions with regulators on the adequacy of the rules on enforcement action set out in the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

**Answering member: Tom Tugendhat | Department: Home Office**

The Regulator's published Compliance Policy is aligned with the requirements defined in the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

The policy explains how the Regulator identifies and investigates potential incidents of non-compliance and decides on appropriate and proportionate measures aimed to minimise the risk of recurrence. It can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-testing-and-research-compliance-with-aspa>

**HC Deb 28 November 2022 | PQ 88917**

### Animal Experiments: Animal Welfare

**Asked by: Huq, Dr Rupa**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Animals in Science Regulation Unit annual reports 2019 to 2021, published on 26 October 2022, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of (a) investigating that report's findings on animal welfare in laboratories and (b) taking steps to support scientists in the development of new approach methodologies to help reduce animal testing.

**Answering member: Tom Tugendhat | Department: Home Office**

The Regulator has strengthened its regulatory oversight and published its process establishment audits at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-research-technical-advice#process-and-standards-for-establishment-full-system-audits](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-research-technical-advice#process-and-standards-for-establishment-full-system-audits). The audit process includes an animal welfare assessment.

Government policy is to actively support and fund the development and dissemination of techniques that Replace, Reduce and Refine the use of animals in research (the 3Rs). This is achieved through funding UK Research and Investment who fund the National Centre for the 3Rs and fund further research through Innovate UK, the Medical Research Council and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council into the development of alternatives.

The Regulator has a responsibility to assess all project licence applications for the full application of the principles of the 3Rs and all licence holders have a standard condition in their licences that requires them to deliver the 3Rs. In addition, all establishments have an Animal Welfare and Ethical Review body that has a responsibility to advise the Establishment Licence Holder and Project Licence Holders on the 3Rs.

**HC Deb 25 November 2022 | PQ 88963**

### Animal Experiments

**Asked by: Gwynne, Andrew**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Animals in Science Regulation Unit annual reports 2019 to 2021, published on 26 October, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the incidence of non-compliance with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 in laboratories.

**Answering member: Tom Tugendhat | Department: Home Office**

Establishments conducting research are regularly inspected, with both announced and unannounced inspections carried out by inspectors to ensure compliance with their licences and the legislation.

The regulator's compliance policy explains how it identifies and investigates potential incidents of non-compliance and decides on appropriate and proportionate measures aimed to minimise the risk of recurrence. It is available at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-testing-and-research-compliance-with-aspa](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-testing-and-research-compliance-with-aspa).

**HC Deb 24 November 2022 | PQ 88840**

### Animal Experiments

**Asked by: Knight, Sir Greg**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce the number of experiments carried out on animals each year; and if she will make it her policy to phase out the use of cats in scientific procedures.

**Answering member: Tom Tugendhat | Department: Home Office**

Under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPAs), cats (together with dogs, horses, and non-human primates) are specially protected species.

This means that greater oversight is required of establishments holding these species and of projects using these species.

Government policy is to actively support and fund the development and dissemination of techniques that Replace, Reduce and Refine the use of animals in research (the 3Rs). This is achieved through funding UK Research and Investment who fund the National Centre for the 3Rs and fund further research through Innovate UK, the Medical Research Council and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council into the development of alternatives.

**HC Deb 24 November 2022 | PQ 88831**

### Animal Experiments

**Asked by: Wakeford, Christian**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of enforcement action taken in response to the breaches of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 that are set out in the Animals in Science Regulation Unit's annual reports for 2019-2021.

**Answering member: Chris Philp | Department: Home Office**

The Home Office take any allegations regarding non-compliance with the law, the Code of Practice or licence conditions very seriously.

The Compliance Policy, found here: (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-testing-and-research-compliance-with-aspa>) explains how the Regulator identifies and investigates potential incidents of non-compliance and decides on appropriate and proportionate measures aimed to minimise the risk of recurrence.

**HC Deb 11 November 2022 | PQ 77654**

### Animal Experiments

**Asked by: Wakeford, Christian**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Animals in Science Regulation Unit Annual reports 2019 to 2021, published on 26 October 2022, for what reasons incidents of non-compliance with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, for which the remedy was not solely inspector advice, increased between 2018 and 2021.

**Answering member: Chris Philp | Department: Home Office**

The 2018 Animal in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU) annual report explains that several non-compliance cases were detected in 2018, but investigations were not completed until 2019. Available at (p26):

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/animals-in-science-regulation-unit-annual-report-2018](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/animals-in-science-regulation-unit-annual-report-2018). These completed investigations were then reported in the 2019 ASRU annual report.

The Animals in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU) has published its compliance framework which identifies and investigates potential incidents of non-compliance and decides on appropriate and proportionate measures to minimise the risk of recurrence. Available at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-testing-and-research-compliance-with-aspa](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-testing-and-research-compliance-with-aspa).

**HC Deb 11 November 2022 | PQ 77653**

[Animal Experiments](#)

**Asked by: Fabricant, Michael**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of launching an urgent inquiry into the death of animals in establishments licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 as a result of failure to provide adequate food or water, as set out in the Animals in Science Regulation Unit's annual reports for 2019-2021.

**Answering member: Chris Philp | Department: Home Office**

The Government continues to be committed to assuring that animals used in science are protected by the legal framework.

The Animals in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU) has published its compliance framework which identifies and investigates potential incidents of non-compliance and decides on appropriate and proportionate measures and remedies to minimise the risk of recurrence.

All cases of non-compliance during 2019 to 2021 have been thoroughly investigated and the outcomes have been published in ASRU's annual report.

**HC Deb 09 November 2022 | PQ 75764**

### Animal Experiments: Inspections

**Asked by: Smith, Henry**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Animals in Science Regulation Unit annual reports 2019 to 2021, published in October 2022, what assessment she has made of that report's finding that over 95 per cent of non-compliance incidents were self-reported from 2019 to 2021; and whether she has made a recent assessment of the potential merits of increasing the number of unannounced inspections of establishments licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

**Answering member: Chris Philp | Department: Home Office**

The Regulator has strengthened its regulatory oversight and published its process of full system audits at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-research-technical-advice#process-and-standards-for-establishment-full-system-audits](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-research-technical-advice#process-and-standards-for-establishment-full-system-audits). The Regulator's audit programme for compliance assurance purposes is delivered in accordance with the requirements defined in the legislation. This includes in-person announced and unannounced visits to licensed establishments.

Self-reporting of non-compliance, in regulatory frameworks, is generally indicative of a willingness towards compliance. The Regulator encourages self-reporting as part of a good governance framework and a culture of compliance.

**HC Deb 08 November 2022 | PQ 73829**

### Animal Experiments

**Asked by: Johnson, Kim**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to accelerate the replacement of animal experiments with techniques such as the use of organ-on-a-chip technology and computer modelling.

**Answering member: Ms Nusrat Ghani | Department: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

The Government actively supports and funds the development and dissemination of techniques that replace, reduce, and refine the use of animals in research (the 3Rs). This is achieved primarily through funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) for the National Centre for the 3Rs (NC3Rs), which works nationally and internationally to drive the uptake of 3Rs technologies and ensure that advances in the 3Rs are reflected in policy,



practice, and regulations on animal research. Since the NC3Rs was launched in 2004, it has committed £100 million in research to develop 3Rs technologies.

In addition to funding the NC3Rs, UKRI also funds a portfolio of research projects involving humans, human materials, animal models, and non-animal technologies. The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and NC3Rs have recently launched a £4 million joint funding call focussed on supporting next generation non-animal technologies, such as organ-on-a-chip and computer modelling, to work towards providing more reliable and applicable alternatives to reduce the use of animals in research.

**HC Deb 18 October 2022 | PQ 60158**

### [Dogs: Animal Experiments](#)

**Asked by: Anderson, Lee**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if his Department will make an assessment of the implications for his animal welfare policies of breeding dogs for animal testing.

**Answering member: Scott Mann | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 does not apply to animals used in scientific procedures. Protections in scientific procedures are instead provided by the [Animals \(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986](#) (ASPA). ASPA is administered and enforced by the Home Office. Every establishment that conducts work under ASPA has a standard condition in its licence that requires appropriate care and accommodation standards for animals to be applied. The standards of care and accommodation are available in a published Code of Practice, and these standards also cover the welfare of dogs bred for use in scientific procedures. The Home Office regulator inspects against these standards of care and accommodation.

**HC Deb 30 September 2022 | PQ 46141**

### [Animal Experiments](#)

**Asked by: Huq, Dr Rupa**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of beagles being bred for use in laboratory experiments in the UK; and what steps she is taking to phase out animal experiments.

**Answering member: Tom Pursglove | Department: Home Office**

No estimate has been made of the number of beagles being bred for use in laboratory experiments in the UK. Most dogs used for research purposes are for the toxicity and safety testing, including potential new medicines, based on internationally-set requirements for testing in non-rodent mammals, usually dogs or monkeys, to protect human health. The level of breeding is largely determined by the level of safety testing required.

The Government is clear that the use of animals in science is justified, for the benefits it brings to human, animal and environmental health and safety.

The Government is committed to assuring that those animals used in science are protected. The legal framework in the UK requires that animals are only ever used in scientific procedures where there are no alternatives, where the number of animals used is the minimum needed to achieve the scientific benefit, and where the potential harm to animals is limited to that needed to achieve the scientific benefit.

Government policy is to actively support and fund the development and dissemination of techniques that Replace, Reduce and Refine the use of animals in research (the 3Rs). This is achieved through funding UKRI who both fund the National Centre for the 3Rs and fund research through Innovate UK, the Medical Research Council and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council into the development of alternatives.

**HC Deb 07 September 2022 | PQ 38893**

[Animal Experiments](#)

**Asked by: Smith, Henry**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will commit to the (a) phasing out the use of animals in experiments and (b) phasing in of non-animal alternatives as soon as it is scientifically possible to do so; and if she will make a statement.

**Answering member: Tom Pursglove | Department: Home Office**

The Government is clear that the use of animals in science is justified, for the benefits it brings to human, animal and environmental health and safety.

The Government is committed to assuring that those animals used in science are protected. The legal framework in the UK requires that animals are only ever used in scientific procedures where there are no alternatives, where the number of animals used is the minimum needed to achieve the scientific

benefit, and where the potential harm to animals is limited to that needed to achieve the scientific benefit.

The Government continues to actively support and fund alternatives to the use of animals. The National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement, and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs) leads on developing and sharing techniques in the UK and internationally.

Since the NC3Rs was launched in 2004, it has invested £77 million in research towards developing new approaches to Replace, Reduce and Refine the use of animals in scientific procedures, and an additional £32 million through its CRACK IT programme for SMEs and universities to work with the pharmaceutical and chemical industries on collaborative 3Rs projects that aim to generate commercial opportunities in this area.

**HC Deb 21 July 2022 | PQ 34891**

#### [Animal Welfare: Licensing](#)

**Asked by: Sobel, Alex**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of applications for project licences to conduct experiments on animals under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 were refused permission in each year between January 2012 and January 2022.

**Answering member: Tom Pursglove | Department: Home Office**

From 2018 to date, no applications for project licence under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 have been refused. For previous years, the Home Office does not hold data on applications that have been refused or withdrawn through the application process.

The Government publishes extensive Guidance on applying for licences. Applications are internally reviewed by an establishment's Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body before being submitted to the regulator for assessment. During the application process applicants have the opportunity to amend or withdraw an application in response to feedback from the regulator.

**HC Deb 11 July 2022 | PQ 31226**

### Animal Experiments: Horses

**Asked by: MacAskill, Kenny**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Annual Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals in Great Britain for 2021, published on 4 July 2022, of the 55 horses and other equids used for the first time, how many procedures were conducted on each animal.

**Answering member: Tom Pursglove | Department: Home Office**

The number of procedures carried out in a year does not equal the number of animals that have been used in procedures that year. This is because some animals may be used more than once i.e. 're-used', in certain circumstances. These instances are counted as separate, additional, procedures. As a result, the number of procedures is usually slightly higher than the number of animals used. We do not hold data on how many times an animal has been re-used in procedures.

**HC Deb 07 July 2022 | PQ 30157**

## 2.2

### Early Day Motion

**EDM 223 2022-23 | 29 Jun 2022**

#### Animal-free science and animal tests

That this House is concerned that the UK remains one of the countries in Europe consistently with one of the highest numbers of animal experiments, with over 2.88 million animals tests taking place in 2020 alone; is disappointed that UK legislation no longer contains a commitment to the final goal of full replacement of procedures on live animals found in recital 10 of Directive 2010/63/EU; acknowledges the ever-increasing capacity of animal-free, human relevant science to deliver economic and public health benefits as well as prevent animal suffering; notes that a recent YouGov survey found that 65 per cent of people want to see a Government-led, cross-departmental plan to incentivise an end to animal tests; further notes the Cruelty Free International campaign to Target Zero animal tests; and calls for a Minister with specific responsibility for providing strategic leadership to put in place a UK strategy to accelerate a transition to animal-free science.

## 3

## Useful links

All-party Parliamentary Group for Human-relevant Science

March 2022

[Bringing Back the Human: Transitioning from Animal Research to Human Relevant Science in the UK](#)

PETA UK

[Non-Animal Research Methods and Tests](#)

RSPCA

[Laboratory animals](#)

FRAME (Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments)

[Funding and promoting non-animal methods](#)

FT

14 August 2022

[How science is getting closer to a world without animal testing](#)

[Animal Free Research UK](#)

[National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research \(NC3Rs\)](#)

[Cruelty Free International](#)



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