



Home Office

Direct Communications Unit  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Tel: 020 7035 4848  
[www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

Ms Linda Horan and Professor Robin Lovell-Badge  
Institute of Animal Technology  
5 South Parade  
Summertown  
Oxford  
OX2 7JL

DECS Reference: MIN 165671/21

13 August 2021

Dear Linda and Robin,

Thank you for your letter of 28 July 2021 regarding critical workers and self-isolation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. You raise a number of concerns regarding reduced staffing levels at establishments which may impact animal welfare, compliance with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA) and continuity of research. As Head of the Animals in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU) the Minister has passed your letter to me to respond on her behalf.

Last year, the Government published two letters setting out our position regarding the delivery of science, and specifically ASPA, in the context of the pandemic. First, The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Minister for Science, Research and Innovation at BEIS, Amanda Solloway MP, published an open letter (copy attached) on the UKRI website on 23 March in support of the life sciences in the UK. The letter encouraged the continuation of science and research programmes and the protection of work during the pandemic. Secondly, on 27 March 2020 I wrote to all Establishment Licence Holders setting out the GB Animals in Science Regulator's response (a copy is appended at Annex A).

Establishments should seek to maintain strong establishment leadership and good governance in the delivery of their responsibilities. It remains important to document the processes used and decisions made to comply with licences held under ASPA. As always, the Regulator may be contacted for advice on the regulatory requirements.

Yours sincerely,

**Will Reynolds**

Head of Animals in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU)



Home Office

Animals in Science Regulation Unit  
Home Office  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

27<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Establishment Licence Holder,

**Re: ASRU response to the Coronavirus pandemic**

I am writing to provide an update on the GB Animals in Science Regulator's response to the issues stemming from the Coronavirus pandemic and the associated measures that have been put in place.

The safety of the UK people is the government's first priority during this period of national disease emergency. The measures that this government is taking are to pro-actively manage the epidemic spread of coronavirus and to reduce the pressure on the NHS. In particular, the preservation of our frontline UK services is paramount at this time of national need.

These measures have had far-reaching impact across the UK in every aspect of peoples lives and businesses. The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Minister for Science, Research and Innovation at BEIS, Amanda Solloway MP, published an open letter on 23 March that supports the efforts and vital importance of the life sciences in the UK. The letter encourages the continuation of science and research programmes, and to protect work:

- that is considered to be of critical urgency or importance;
- where the pausing of activity is either not possible or would severely impede research delivery; and,
- which requires ongoing maintenance and supervision activity, including the care of living animals.

The letter has been published on the UKRI website.

To be clear, at present, establishments and their staff are not under restrictions and can therefore attend work as needed to fulfil their duties. Given the circumstances, strong establishment leadership with considered decision making will be key to managing the nation and businesses through these difficult times.

At this unprecedented time, ASRU will seek to be supportive of the difficult decisions that

need to be taken by establishments so you may continue to protect your staff, the animals and your business. It is especially important at this time to document the processes used and decisions made to comply with licences held under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act.

I would like to convey thanks from the Home Office Minister and Chief Scientific Adviser for your consideration and support in implementing the government's priorities.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Reynolds', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Will Reynolds**

Head of Animals in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU)

