

24th September 2013

Reference: LSTM/FOI/13-001

Dear Requestor,

Many thanks for your Freedom of Information request received on 28th August 2013 regarding animal testing within the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. Please find below the response to your enquiry.

Please can you provide the following information?

**1) Does your institution carry out experimentation on animals?**

I can confirm that Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) does undertake experimentation on animals.

**2) If yes, what type of animals? (i.e. please provide a list of those which were involved in experimentation between 2009 and 2013)**

The only overnight animal holding facility of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine is our herpetarium, which currently houses 160 specimens of 26 different species of venomous snakes. This is a Home Office accredited and inspected facility. Venom is routinely extracted from the snakes and provided for (i) antivenom production to treat snakebite victims in Africa and (ii) for research to improve snakebite treatment. Venom extraction is a harmless procedure and conducted by UK's foremost experts on the handling of venomous snakes. Venom extraction is not a Home Office-regulated procedure and is therefore not an experiment.

The only regulated procedure we carry out on the snakes is extraction of the venom gland to acquire venom gland transcriptomes (definition of all the genes that code for venom proteins) to provide essential information to improve snakebite treatment. This experiment, which involves the death of the snake, was performed as follows:

2013 – 7

2012 – 0

2010 – 0

2009 – 8

Further information on the herpetarium can be found here

<http://www.lstmliverpool.ac.uk/research/departments/parasitology/venom-unit/the-herpetarium>

- 3) What types of experimentation have been carried out on the animals between 2009 and 2013?**

This information is collated and held by the Home Office, who can be contacted via [FOIRequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FOIRequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

- 4) How much was spent on animals for experimentation in the academic years 2009/2010; 2010/11; 2011/12; 2012; 13**

Please see the above response.

- 5) How many died because of the experimentation in 2009/10; 2010/11; 2011/12; 2012/13?**

Please see the response to Question 3.

- 6) How many were put down following experimentation in 2009/10; 2010/11; 2011/12; 2012/13?**

Please see the response to Question 3.

Should you be dissatisfied with our response, please contact us within a reasonable time (within 2 months of this response) to [roched@liv.ac.uk](mailto:roched@liv.ac.uk)

If you remain dissatisfied, you may appeal this decision to the Information Commissioner. The contact details for the Information Commissioner are Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF, or via the website [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

Should you require any further information or assistance in this matter, please don't hesitate to contact me at the above address.

Many Thanks,

Freedom of Information Compliance Officer  
Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine  
Tel: 0151 705 3782

**The information supplied within this response is correct at time of response and continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study, non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs) can be also used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.**

