



20-E-0016 DOC-619833

7 February 2020

T Benseman
Via fyi.org

Dear Mr Benseman

I refer to your official information request of 9 January 2020 for a list of takahē poisoning cases.

You asked:

Please provide a full and complete list of all Takahe NZ's Dept of CONservation or its contractors or associates have poisoned. Include all photos and field notebook entries. Include Where, when, how, why, by who and with what, these protected native birds were poisoned.

We have interpreted your request to be for a list of takahē that are known to have died from pesticide poisoning.

Takahē are currently held at 20 different sites across the country, many of which are owned privately or managed as a trust. Since 1984 there have been over 1200 individual takahē that have lived across these sites, and of these, only one that has been found to have died as a result of pesticide poisoning. All takahē mortality events that are considered to be of unknown cause will be sent for necropsy.

In 2014 one takahē was confirmed to have died from ingesting brodifacoum that was being used by a pest-free sanctuary to control a rodent incursion. Pest incursions are a common problem for mainland and island sanctuaries, and brodifacoum is a commonly used and proven tool for rodent eradication. The brodifacoum was housed within a bait station, however the takahē managed to access the bait.

The incident initiated an immediate suspension of pest control activity at takahē sites. A review of bait station designs was undertaken, requiring each takahē site to submit their bait station for rigorous testing using captive takahē. The result was a short list of approved designs that the Takahē Recovery Team are confident will not put takahē at risk. These approved designs were quickly adopted by all takahē sites, and have been successfully used since.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact us at replies@doc.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "St Timmins". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Susan Timmins
Acting Director, Biodiversity Threats
For Director-General