

15 FEB 2017

Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua



OIA17-0017

Gary Stephenson
Care of FYI Website

Dear Gary Stephenson

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your official information requests that were transferred from the office of Hon Nathan Guy, Minister for Primary Industries and received by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) on 18 January 2017. I shall quote and provide responses to each of the four requests below.

The following information is released to you under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

1. Can the Minister for Primary Industries give the same reassurance, publically, as John Key did for cats that pet rabbits will be as safe as a house under the MPI efforts to eradicate feral rabbits?

As advised in the response to your previous request for this information (Min16-1215), both Hon Nathan Guy, Minister for Primary Industries, and MPI have already provided information to you on the following:

- Biosecurity risk assessment and the processes in place to deal with any accidental introduction of RHDV strains not present in New Zealand;
- The legislative approval processes on the control of wild rabbits including animal welfare regulations related to research, the approvals process for pest control tools and the availability of vaccines for pet owners; and
- The opportunities for you and other interested parties to engage in the above legislative approvals processes.

I am satisfied that both MPI and Minister Guy have provided the information necessary to manage the concerns you have raised. At this time and on this issue, there is no further information that MPI can provide you.

2. How will Biosecurity find and stop the Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease Virus (RHDV) from entering New Zealand?

MPI has the appropriate systems in place to prepare for, detect, and manage biosecurity risks entering New Zealand.

Information on this issue has already been provided to you in a letter sent from MPI on 10 March 2016 (MIN16-0095), and also in another letter sent from the Minister for Primary Industries on 5 May 2016 (MIN16-0267).

3. Why does MPI not fund/foster/promote the research into a vaccine to protect against the actions in the management of wild rabbits given that they fund research into the virus?

Why does the check and balance not include funding into a vaccine for the virus it itself funds as per OIE directives?

Why are Landcare (funded by MPI) not publically updating their information on the vaccines ineffectiveness?

As advised in the response to your previous request for this information (Min16-1215), both Minister Guy and MPI have already provided information to you on the legislative approval processes on the control of wild rabbits, including the availability of vaccines for pet owners.

The approval process under the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act 1997 assesses a range of risks associated with Agricultural compounds, including assessment of information regarding availability of vaccines.

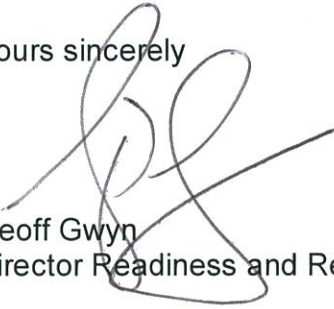
MPI does not hold information on if and how Landcare Research publically updates information on vaccine effectiveness. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), as the information requested is not held by the department or Minister of the Crown.

4. Why has not the Animal Welfare branch of MPI raised concern to the Minister, or the Minister raised concern regarding the questions being raised around the efficacy of the cypap vaccine against RHDV1a-K5 and funded research into proper vaccines to protect pet rabbits?

As advised in the response to your previous request for this information (Min16-1215), both Minister Guy and MPI have already provided information to you on the legislative approval processes on the control of wild rabbits, including the availability of vaccines for pet owners.

The approval process under the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act 1997 assesses a range of risks associated with Agricultural compounds, including animal welfare impacts and assessment of information regarding vaccines. For your further information, the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act 1997 can be found in full at the following link:
www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1997/0087/latest/DLM414577.html).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Geoff Gwyn', written over the typed name and title.

Geoff Gwyn
Director Readiness and Response Services