



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Animal and Plant Health Agency
Access to Information Team
Weybourne Building
Ground Floor
Woodham Lane
New Haw
Addlestone
Surrey
KT15 3NB

T 01932 341111
F 01932 357608

www.gov.uk/apha

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INTERNAL REVIEW RESPONSE

You have requested that APHA conducts an Internal Review on the response you received from us following your information request on 9 May 2016. We can confirm that this review has been undertaken by an officer unconnected with the original decision regarding your request.

The Request

APHA received a request for information from you on 9 May 2016 as follows:

“Please send to me the annual number of cattle reactors per 1000 skin tests on a bovine in England when performing routine whole herd tests on the following herd sizes in each of the last 2 years.

1-10

11-50

51-100

101-200

201-300

>300

As such, please send to me 6 numbers for 2014 and 6 numbers for 2015.”

Discussion and Investigation

I have discussed the case with the Officer involved and it would appear that the response you received took account of whether the animals in question were slaughtered or not, and the inclusion of this aspect was the main trigger of reporting the data not being held. We have re-examined your request and tested this against the data we do hold, this time without taking any account of slaughter.

In APHA, some TB data is captured and stored in the SAM database, but not in the a way that makes it easy to extract due to the significant volumes of detailed data

required to produce the summary level figures you have requested, which we do not routinely report on. Further investigations with the APHA's TB data team (who hold a separate TB data set for a different purpose) has shown that this requested information could be produced by manipulating the two datasets in a different way to normal to create a response to your specific request, and therefore for the purposes of the FOI Act, the data is held by APHA, ie a merging of two similar sets of data.

APHA want to be as open as possible in answering requests. The FOI Act (FOIA 2000) itself requires us to help applicants obtain the information they are looking for. Manipulating the information would involve a significant cost and diversion of resources from APHA's other work. To supply you with the requested information we would have to run an extract of TB test data held in Sam for England for the 2 years in question. We would then have to run a separate extract of TB reactor data from our second dataset for England for the 2 years in question. Finally we would have to join the data together using the primary key of the TB tests to arrive at an aggregated data test, and hence involves the writing and testing of two data extract scripts and a merge table. This merged data would then need to be tested for accuracy before going any further, to ensure no errors were generated. No such scripts currently exist as this is not a routine task. This new dataset would then need to be manually manipulated to extract the data in the required format that met your requirements

Section 12(1) of the FOIA allows us to refuse a request for information if we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit, which currently stands at £600 (which the Cabinet Office has stated equates to 3.5 days of work). It is estimated that to process these two separate sources and then re-process to derive your statistics would entail effort in excess of this, due to the volumes of data involved.

On the basis of our estimates, we consider that the cost would exceed this Government limit and, as such, we would still have to refuse your request.

Public Interest Test

It is not felt that, on balance, it would be an appropriate use of public funds to divert staff from their routine duties to spend their effort in excess of the Government limit to produce statistics not normally produced as part of "business as usual" activities. It is not therefore viewed to be in the Public Interest to derive these figures to be able to respond to this request.

Internal Review Decision

The result of this Internal Review is to overturn the original response and use of the "data not held" decision. However, to produce the response would involve effort in

excess of the Government limit and hence we now engage the Exemption in Section 12 of the FOIA 2000.

Yours sincerely

ACCESS TO INFORMATION TEAM

Email: enquiries@apha.gsi.gov.uk