



18-E-1056-Ogilwy/docCM5665519

22 January 2019

Ms Claire Ogilwy

fyi-request-9258-c9497d9f@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Ogilwy

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, dated 14 December 2018. You requested the following:

Can you please advise why when you send samples for analysis in connection to 1080 poisoning to Landcare, why do you not ask for bone samples to be tested, fluorinated amino acids, elevated citrate levels, histopathological examination of skeletal muscle?

How do you and Landcare handle the samples. What testing method is used. What do they consider to be the threshold and is fluorocitrate included (which is the lethal synthesis of fluoroacetate). What evidence do you have of comparative studies - frozen vs fresh samples.

Why do you not record time between death and testing?

Context:

The Department of Conservation does not operate a toxicology laboratory. When undertaking analyses for 1080 and a range of other vertebrate pesticide residues in animal tissues, the department uses the services of the Landcare Research *Manaaki Whenua* Toxicology Laboratory, which has accreditation from both International Accreditation New Zealand (IANZ) and the New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) laboratory approval scheme (LAS). The department follows the advice and protocols of the laboratory when testing for pesticide residues.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. *Why when you send samples for analysis in connection to 1080 poisoning to Landcare, why do you not ask for bone samples to be tested, fluorinated amino acids, elevated citrate levels, histopathological examination of skeletal muscle?*

The Department follows the protocols set down by the Landcare Research *Manaaki Whenua* Toxicology Laboratory regarding what samples to take for different pesticide residues, and how the analysis of samples should be carried out in order to establish a diagnosis of pesticide poisoning. The protocol for 1080 advises that muscle is the best tissue to take. The protocols are all publicly available on the Landcare Research *Manaaki Whenua* website.

www.landcareresearch.co.nz/resources/laboratories/toxicology-laboratory/services/advice-and-protocols/protocol-for-tissue-sampling-and-testing-for-vertebrate-pesticides-in-animals

2. How do you and Landcare handle the samples. What testing method is used. What do they consider to be the threshold and is fluorocitrate included (which is the lethal synthesis of fluoroacetate).

Information on the analytical methodology and levels of detectability are available on the Landcare Research *Manaaki Whenua* website.

3. What evidence do you have of comparative studies - frozen vs fresh samples.

The department does not operate a toxicology laboratory and does not hold information on studies comparing frozen verses fresh tissue samples.

4. Why do you not record time between death and testing?

It is not always possible to determine the time of death. Samples are taken, stored and sent for testing in accordance with the guidelines provided by Landcare Research *Manaaki Whenua*, publicly available on their website.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Yours sincerely



Matt Barnett
Director Threats, Biodiversity (Acting)
for Director-General