

Secret animal experiments at Inveresk, Scotland

Documents and photographs leaked to ADI provide a chilling insight into the world of contract research, where laboratories are paid to conduct animal experiments on behalf of manufacturers of products such as drugs, chemicals, household and industrial substances.

Inveresk laboratories, near Edinburgh, offers its clients dogs, monkeys, rats, mice, rabbits, pigs, guinea pigs, goats, cows, birds, and fish for experimentation and claims to be responsible for approximately 1% of all experiments taking place in the UK – over 25,000 animals every year.

Experiments like this are rarely published so this is a unique insight into the world of commercial animal experimentation.

The Inveresk reports show:

- Miscalculations in dosing resulting in severe suffering, death and premature termination of studies.
- Researchers running out of the test substance, half way through a study.
- A test substance passing its expiry date before the end of the experiment, whilst dosing of the animals continued.
- Animal tests being conducted when human studies were already underway.
- Animal results ignored – human studies continued after bad animal results.
- Chemicals accidentally pumped into dogs' lungs instead of their stomachs.

Horrific suffering is revealed. Side effects listed in Inveresk's own reports included: dogs foaming at the mouth; vomiting; bleeding from the gums; with diarrhoea; rats choking to death on paint; monkeys subdued, hunched in their cages; suffering body tremors; liquid faeces and swollen penises.

The ADI report discusses the conduct of experiments, the suffering of the animals, and the alternatives which are already available (or could be made so).

ADI has highlighted mistakes, inadequacies of scientific protocols, and contradictions in Inveresk's own reports of their experiments.

ADI Chief Executive Jan Creamer said: "This reveals the true horror of regulatory testing on animals, and insight into the enormous level of suffering and carnage that will be brought about by the animal testing programme proposed in the EU's new chemical regulations. Inveresk is the type of laboratory that will be undertaking the new EU chemical testing programme.

"UK and EU regulations require that animals should only be used when necessary; that non-animal methods be sought. And yet we see at Inveresk, experiments on animals when human clinical trials are being undertaken, blunders during experimental procedures which cause animals severe suffering, animals being choked to death with paint for unnecessary tests.

"ADI has proposed a new non-animal testing strategy for the new chemical regulations that uses advanced techniques which will deliver the protection for humans and the environment that we all want to see, but without wasting animals' lives in cruel and unnecessary tests."