



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT
Directorate D - Water, Chemicals & Cohesion
ENV.D.1 - Chemicals

Brussels, 29 -11- 2007

**Subject: Response to British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV)
postcard petition on a non-human primate supply and breeding
establishment in Camarles, Spain**

Dear European Union citizen,

We have received a large number of postcards from UK citizens initiated by the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV), drawing our attention to a non-human primate supply and breeding centre in Spain, and expressing concern that the establishment is inappropriate for keeping non-human primates.

According to EU Directive 86/609/EEC on the approximation of laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States regarding the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes, Member States have to ensure a minimum standard of protection for experimental animals. In addition to this, Commission Recommendation 2007/526/EC, adopted this year contains guidelines on the accommodation and care of experimental animals. However, it should be remembered that these measures are only guidelines, and not legally binding within the Member States. On the basis of the information provided to the Commission, we have no reason to believe that these guidelines or the provisions of Directive 86/609/EEC are not being taken into account in this facility.

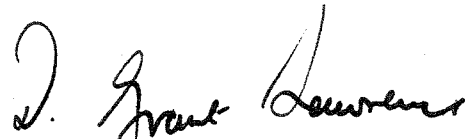
We share citizens' concern on the use of non-human primates in experiments, which is one of the most sensitive topics in relation to animal research. Specific questions on the use of non-human primates including the possible banning of certain species, such as great apes, are part of an ongoing discussion on non-human primates and experimentation. The Commission is currently preparing a revision of Directive 86/609/EEC, the aim of which is to strengthen the legislation in the area of animal experimentation in the European Union, and to ensure that the animals that continue to be used in experiments receive appropriate care and humane treatment. The revision will *inter alia* be looking into the requirements and conditions for the authorisation of experiments, personnel and establishments as well as inspections of establishments which breed, supply or use laboratory animals. These issues are all relevant to the housing and care of non-human primates.

It should be noted that non-human primates are currently only used in procedures if no other animal is considered suitable for the aims of the experiment, and therefore the availability of non-human primates in the EU will not determine their level of use in experiments.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone on behalf of Commissioner Dimas who has sent in a postcard on this issue, for their interest in the welfare of these non-human primates. We invite you to visit our website for updates on our work on the welfare of all experimental animals, including the revision of Directive 86/609/EEC:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/home_en.htm.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Grant Lawrence". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

D. Grant LAWRENCE
Acting Head of Unit