

ENQ-38728-F7Y6KO

28 May 2020

Via: [REDACTED]

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## Official Information Act Request

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your request received on 7 May 2020, for the following information:

*"In view of yet another case of native bird deaths from 1080, please supply the following information-*

- 1. have Landcare the ability to test for the green dye found in 1080 pellets?*
- 2. where fluoroacetate has not been found in samples from suspected 1080 poisoning cases, have attempts been made to test for the green dye? If not why not?*
- 3. have EPA or DOC ever asked for a test for the green dye when submitting samples in suspect 1080 toxicity samples? If not why not?*
- 4. In view of the fact that the main cause of toxicity from 1080 pellets is by fluorocitrate why is there no test for this hazardous substance at Landcare or any other laboratory used by government departments?*

*As EPA administer the HSNO Act I suggest they answer thus avoiding failure to meet the 20 working day deadline."*

Your request has been treated as a request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

As noted in our letter to you on 22 May 2020, we transferred questions one, two and four of your request to Landcare Research (Landcare). The information to which these questions relate is not held by us but is believed to be more closely connected with the functions of Landcare. In these circumstances, we are required by section 14 of the OIA to transfer your request.

The response to question 3 of your request follows.

The EPA would not request testing of the green dye if samples suspected to contain 1080 were submitted for testing.

The green dye in 1080 pellets has been a requirement for a long time, predating the HSNO Act, to reduce the attractiveness to birds. It is not intended as a way to trace the 1080 pellets, and there is no specification in the reassessment decision as to what this dye must be made from.

The Environmental Risk Management Authority reassessment decision of Sodium Fluoroacetate (1080) and Formulated Substances Containing 1080 (August 2007, Amended August 2008) states:

*"For all formulated substances containing 1080, baits must be coloured either blue or green. The previous requirement under the Pesticides Act (and related regulations) that baits had to be dyed green was based on the effectiveness of the colour in reducing the visual attractiveness of the baits to birds. More recent research with New Zealand native birds*

indicated that blue may also be an effective visual deterrent for North Island robins and weka. There have also been problems with attaining a green colour in certain bait formulations. Specification of the bait colour as either blue or green provides a visual deterrent to birds which allows some flexibility in bait colour depending on the characteristics of the bait and the specific circumstances of any particular operation" (pp. 102-3).

The reassessment document is publicly available at: <https://www.epa.govt.nz/assets/FileAPI/hsno-ar/HRE05002/0b50924b52/HRE05002-Decision-FINAL-2008.09.11.doc>

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this decision by the Ombudsman. You can contact the Ombudsman on 0800 802 602, or by email at [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz).

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us via [ministerials@epa.govt.nz](mailto:ministerials@epa.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gayle Holmes', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gayle Holmes  
General Manager  
**Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement**