



Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

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8 June 2023

Dear Mr Howarth,

Thank you for your email of 23 May to the Home Secretary on behalf of a number of your constituents regarding cosmetic animal testing. I am replying as the Minister with policy responsibility for the regulation of the use of animals in science.

The Government is taking action to seek alternatives to animal testing for worker and environmental safety of chemicals used exclusively as cosmetic ingredients. On 17 May 2023, the Home Secretary announced a licensing ban with immediate effect.

The Government is committed to replacing animals used in science wherever scientifically possible and is confident that the UK science sector and industry has the talent to provide the solutions.

The cosmetic regulations require manufacturers to demonstrate that their products are safe for use by consumers. Alternatives to animal tests are available and therefore animal testing for consumer safety of cosmetics and their ingredients was banned in the UK in 1998. This ban remains in force.

Under chemicals regulations (the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals regime, or REACH), chemicals manufacturers and importers must demonstrate the hazards to human health and the environment of the chemicals they place on the market. This includes chemicals used as ingredients in cosmetics. In some cases, where there are no validated alternatives, this has in the past required testing on animals as a last resort.

The REACH regime is separate from, and has a different purpose to, the consumer cosmetics regulations, which is why it has been possible that a chemical used in cosmetics production may be required to be tested on animals. This has been reflected in the issuing of a small number of time-limited licences between 2019 and 2022. The Government recognises the public concern around the testing on animals of chemicals used as

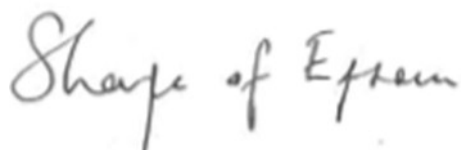
ingredients in cosmetics, and the new opportunities available to depart from the EU testing regime.

I can assure you that no new licences will be granted for animal testing of chemicals that are exclusively intended to be used as ingredients in cosmetics products. The Government is also engaging with the relevant companies to urgently determine a way forward on legacy licences.

In addition, the Government is undertaking work to review at pace the effective administration of the ban over the longer term (including the legal framework for this). This will have due regard of the needs of the science industry, the need to ensure worker and environmental safety, and the need to protect animals from unnecessary harm.

Modern alternatives mean there are opportunities to design non-animal testing strategies for these chemicals so that worker and environmental safety can be maintained, and potentially enhanced. In this way, working with industry, the Government is seeking to improve safety by the application of new non-animal science and technology.

I trust this will assure you that the Government is determined to avoid the testing of cosmetic products and their ingredients on animals.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sharpe of Epsom".

**Lord Sharpe of Epsom**