



## **Understanding Animal Research Statement on the campaign against MBR Acres**

Over the past few weeks our colleagues working at MBR Acres in the UK have been the focus of a sustained and organised campaign against their work breeding dogs for medical research. Like many others in our sector, this facility has followed a policy of openness about their work, going to lengths to demonstrate the good conditions in which their dogs are raised. Their staff are a dedicated team, qualified in animal management and welfare, and committed to raising the content and healthy animals expected by the scientific sector in this country. They are still working hard to care for the animals despite misinformation, harassment and lies being told about the facility this week.

The protest camp is distressing to the dogs who bark at the noise and smells it produces, and this is particularly the case when there are more visitors with bullhorns, food trucks and a samba band. It has also become clear from the statements that protesters have been making that their understanding about what happens in laboratories is wide of the mark.

A typical experiment would involve placing a candidate medicine in a dog's food every day and testing for physical changes. The hope of course is that the animal is unharmed since any harmful effect would spell the end of that medicine, however the animals would normally be humanely euthanised as part of those investigations. More invasive testing is sometimes necessary, but this is rare.

The use of animals is required by the government to screen for effects that might seriously harm human volunteers in clinical trials. Cosmetics testing using animals was banned in 1998 and animals cannot be used by law if there's an alternative.

MBR Acres remain rightly proud of their welfare standards, and of the contribution their work makes to developing critical new medical treatments.

Campaigners point to an ‘animal experimentation industry’, but there is no such thing. This is an area where there is consensus in the science, that biological sciences, or any related applications such as human and veterinary medicine or ecology, mean carrying out research using animals. In the UK this research is highly regulated and is only authorised where it is felt to have essential benefits to society. Work with dogs is particularly regulated, as they are given special protection under law to ensure that they are used minimally and that their welfare is assured wherever possible. Because of these special protections, dogs are rarely used in investigative work, and are almost exclusively used in safety testing. They are provided with life-long companionship, appropriate housing and veterinary support as required under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act.

The contribution of these dogs to medical research cannot be overstated. As the UK reopens following the COVID-19 pandemic, it is worth recognising that all the available vaccines were developed using animals.

We all hope for a day when it is no longer necessary to use animals in research, but since their use is currently essential, we rely on the law, and reputable organisations such as MBR Acres to ensure the animals used are treated well.

### **Statement ends**

[Understanding Animal Research](#) is a Mutual Society (not-for-profit organisation) that explains why animals are used in medical and scientific research. We aim to achieve a broad understanding of the humane use of animals in medical, veterinary, scientific and environmental research in the UK. We are [funded by our members](#) who include universities, professional societies, industry and charities.

MBR Acres Limited is a member organisation that funds UAR. MBR Acres breeds dogs for use in medical research and testing.