



Home Office

Sarah Jones MP  
Minister of State for Policing and  
Crime

2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF  
[www.gov.uk/home-office](http://www.gov.uk/home-office)

Rt Hon Dame Karen Bradley DBE MP  
Chair, Home Affairs Select Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

27 November 2025

Dear Dame Karen,

The Life Sciences industry is of vital importance to this country. The sector provides crucial research to further medical capabilities in the UK and plays a central role in protecting our pandemic preparedness capabilities. The experience of recent years has demonstrated that this risk cannot be ignored, and we must be prepared at all times to respond to such a crisis.

The use of animals in science is essential for scientific research necessary in the development of new treatments and, crucially, in the safety testing of new vaccines and medicines. A reliable, domestic supply of research animals is essential for maintaining the UK's life sciences industry, a key growth sector of the economy, and for maintaining our sovereign capabilities in the event of a pandemic. The UK would not have been able to respond as we did to the Covid-19 outbreak without a reliable supply of research animals with which to develop new vaccines and treatments.

The regulation of animals in science insists that they are only used when absolutely necessary and where harms and numbers are minimised. On 11 November, the Government published a strategy to support the development and uptake of alternatives to animals in science. This strategy will drive increased investment into and use of alternative technologies, reducing the need to test on animals. In the meantime, however, animal science remains necessary and it is of critical importance that it remains functional.

Recent protest activity has deliberately targeted the life sciences sector, threatening the UK's sovereign capability to produce vaccines and disrupting crucial supply chains that are vital to research and national health protection.

The right to peaceful protest is a fundamental part of our democratic society and one that we will always defend. It is a long-standing tradition in this country that people are free to gather and to demonstrate their views. However, it is important that we take action to protect essential infrastructure and services from intentional or reckless interference, when the potential impact of disruption is clearly so serious and widespread.

I am therefore laying an affirmative Statutory Instrument today to amend section 7 of the Public Order Act 2023 (the "Act"). This amendment will extend the definition of Key National Infrastructure within the Act to include the Life Sciences sector. The offence within the Act of interference with the use or operation of Key National Infrastructure will apply to the Life Sciences sector in addition to the existing sectors covered under section 7(6) of the Act.

This change will increase the police's ability to respond to disruptive protest activity that undermines our national health resilience. My officials will work closely with the police as we implement these important measures.

I will place a copy of this letter in the libraries of both Houses.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'SJ', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Sarah Jones MP**  
**Minister of State for Policing and Crime**