



**Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs**

**From the Private Secretary**  
Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

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*Dear Mr Rigby,*

Thank you for your email of 18 March about sheep dip poisoning. As Parliament is now dissolved, I have been asked to reply and apologise for the delay in doing so.

In November 2015 George Eustice was the first UK Government Minister to meet with members of the Sheep Dip Sufferers Support Group (SDSSG), to listen to their concerns, including their belief that the government of the day knew of the risks to human health, leading ministers to end the compulsory use of organophosphate sheep dips in 1992. At the end of this meeting, it was agreed that the following points would be looked in to and reported back to the SDSSG:

- To disclose the reasons for the decision to end compulsory dipping and share these with the group.
- To find out what benefits may be available to those who believe they have suffered from organophosphate poisoning.
- To discuss with the Department of Health how people can get access to lost records and what may have happened to them.

The Government has committed a large amount of time and public money to investigate the effects of sheep dip products. As of February of this year, all three actions had been completed. The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) met with the toxicology department of St Thomas and Guy's hospital to ascertain how members of the SDSSG could obtain their medical records. I understand that officials from the VMD are in contact with you and will assist in this process.

**Private Secretary**  
**Office of the Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food**