

ASPA Annual Returns 2023

2023	Non-recovery	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Sub-threshold	Total
Mice	57	4311	4309	273	4574	13524
Rats		138	543	1	102	682
Total	57	4449	4852	274	4574	14206

2022	Non-recovery	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Sub-threshold	Total
Mice	90	4709	4190	206	4174	13369
Rats		369	618	5		992
Rabbits		4				4
Gerbils		35				35
Fish		28				28
Total	90	5145	4808	211	4174	14428

Examples of severity

Severity assessments measure the harm experienced by an animal during a procedure. A procedure can be as mild as an injection, or as severe as an organ transplant. Severity assessments reflect the peak severity of the entire procedure and are classified into five different categories:

Sub-threshold: When a procedure did not cause suffering above the threshold for regulation, i.e. it was less than the level of pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm that is caused by inserting a hypodermic needle according to good veterinary practice.

Non-recovery: When the entire procedure takes place under general anaesthetic and the animal is humanely killed before waking up.

Mild: Any pain or suffering experienced was only slight or transitory and minor so that the animal returns to its normal state within a short period of time. For example, the equivalent of an injection or having a blood sample taken.

Moderate: The procedure caused a significant and easily detectable disturbance to an animal's normal state, but this was not life threatening. For example, surgery carried out under general anaesthesia followed by painkillers during recovery.

Severe: The procedure caused a major departure from the animal's usual state of health and well-being. This would usually include long-term disease processes where assistance with normal activities such as feeding and drinking were required, or where significant deficits in behaviours/activities persist. Animals found dead are commonly classified as severe as pre-mortality suffering often cannot be assessed.