

BARONESS THORNTON



Minister in the Government Whips Office
Government Spokesperson for the Department of Health

The Lord Alton of Liverpool
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

8th February 2010

Dear *David*

In my Written Answer of 14 January 2010 (WA 170-171)¹, I advised you that I had asked the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority (HFEA) to examine its records for details of correspondence and telephone communications concerning the use of eggs under its research licence R0152, held by the Newcastle Fertility Centre at LIFE, and to let me have the information you requested.

The HFEA has advised that its members' engagement on such matters would be through the formal processes of a licence committee, the minutes of which are available on the Authority's website (www.hfea.gov.uk). The HFEA Executive is not aware of any other relevant exchanges between members of the Authority.

The HFEA has conducted a keyword search of its records, from 2006 to the present date. This has shown that no letters or telephone calls were exchanged with external authorities regarding the use of eggs under research licence R0152.

Requests made under the Freedom of Information Act are applicant and purpose blind, so it is not possible to identify how many requests were made by members of the press.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glenys Thornton'.

GLENYS THORNTON

¹ To ask Her Majesty's Government with regard to a letter from the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's legal advisor on 7 December 2009 describing the volume of correspondence about the use of eggs under research licence R0152, how many members of the press requested such information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000; what response was provided to each of those applicants; how many letters or telephone calls were exchanged between members of the HFEA on that subject; how many were exchanged with external authorities; and what proportion of the HFEA's time was spent dealing with such enquiries. [HL971]