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**Request for dormouse bodies for postmortem examination**

**WHY IS IT NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT POST-MORTEM EXAMINATIONS ON DORMICE?**

Post mortem examinations on free-living dormice provide very valuable information on disease threats to the conservation of dormice, improve our understanding of their population dynamics and may enable the detection of emerging infectious diseases should they occur. These examinations will additionally give the opportunity to collect samples for other studies on dormice. The following samples and information with direct relevance to the reintroduction programme will be collected:

* Data on the area, habitat and circumstances in which the dormouse was found
* Data on dormouse body measurements and body weight leading to an assessment of body condition
* Data from any microchip number present through which we can trace its origin
* Data on diseases present and hence an understanding of the disease threats to free-living dormice
* Data on any zoonotic infections harboured by dormice enabling an assessment of risk to workers

**HOW DO I SUBMIT A DORMICE FOR POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION?**

* Please complete the submission form with as much detail as possible in each box
* Wrap the dormouse in kitchen paper or cotton wool
* Place the wrapped dormouse in a margarine tub or plastic box to prevent crushing during postage
* Put this box in two securely sealed plastic bags, which are tightly closed
* Place the bagged tub or box in a suitable cardboard postage box
* Place a freezer pack in the cardboard postage box to keep the dormouse cool during sending
* Place a print out of the filled submission form in the box (if you do not have a printer please email it to us)
* Use the postage label available from ZSL to submit the package by post
* Add the word DRAHS clearly onto the postage label
* Seal the cardboard postage box securely
* Refrigerate the box when it is ready for sending if there is any delay to posting
* Take the package to post office and ensure it is sent early in the week to arrive on a weekday
* Finally, please ensure you email **DRAHS@zsl.org** to let us know the carcase is on its way to us

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