

## **Perspective of the Competent Authorities responsible for Authorisation of Animal Experiments**

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Since 1986 it has been established in the German Animal Welfare Act that experiments on animals only shall be allowed if it is ensured that no other methods or procedures are available to achieve the same purpose. A review has to be done both by the applicant and the competent authority. This legal mandate concerns not only experiments on animals which require a licence but also experiments not requiring a licence but which must be declared. Especially after the inclusion of animal welfare in the German Constitution in 2002 the competent authorities have more than ever been asked to question the statements of all applicants. Important is not only the replacement of experiments on animals but also the reduction of the amount of animals used in the procedures and the refinement of methods to minimize pain and suffering, especially in the view of the revision of EU Directive 86/609. ZEBET was established to provide help in these affairs, particularly in the form of statements. In discussions with applicants, ZEBET statements bear considerable weight. Because these competent authorities have to put their emphasis more on experiments for the purpose of the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of diseases and basic research, rather than on experiments expressly required by legal instruments, I would like ZEBET to stress the development of alternatives to animal experimentation concerning the former, as opposed to the latter.