

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM'S POLICY FOR PEST MONITORING

INTRODUCTION

1. This policy addresses the in-house monitoring of insect pest activity in storage and public display areas of the Museum's sites at London and Cosford.
2. Some pest monitoring is already carried out by external pest control companies. The following areas are covered:
 - a) Rodent detection in public areas across all three RAFM sites
 - b) Moth trapping in the clothing store at RAFM Stafford

These external contracts are managed by the Buildings Services Department.

3. It is the aim of this policy to address other vulnerable collection areas not already covered by existing contracts.
4. Monitoring for insect pest activity will enable the Museum to take appropriate action to prevent damage to the collections.
5. A reasonable level of insect pest activity will be tolerated in areas where there is low risk to collections.

OBJECT ENTRY

6. All incoming items will be checked for insect pest infestation, and isolated where necessary (see Entry Procedure RAFM/DCM/2/6/4/2). Professional advice will be sought on the treatment of affected items from an appropriate collections care advisor (see Annex A of the Pest Monitoring Procedure (RAFM/DCM/2/6/27/2)).

ROUTINE MONITORING

7. Areas containing vulnerable collections will be monitored using insect traps. All insect traps will be checked regularly.
8. Two types of insect trap have been selected in order to detect different insect pest activity. These will be deployed seasonally according to the life cycle of the insect species they are used to detect:
 - a) Blunder trap *triangular card floor trap with sticky base to trap wandering insects*
 - b) AF pheromone trap *plastic floor or hanging trap with glue board insert containing pheromone lure to attract moths*

The table at Annex A lists the most common insect pests which pose a threat to museum collections and the damage they can cause. Also indicated are the appropriate trapping method, the annual deployment cycle and the trap checking frequency.

9. Traps will be replaced if they are found to contain insects. At the same time they will be checked for 'stickiness' and replaced if the adhesive is failing.
10. All traps will be replaced annually, to ensure that any build up of dust and natural deterioration of the adhesive doesn't adversely affect their performance. All traps will be date-labelled at the time of deployment to facilitate this.
11. Glue board inserts for AF pheromone traps will be replaced at the end of April and at the end of June.
12. Traps will be individually numbered and marked on floor plans in order to assist collation and to plot the distribution of any insect pest activity detected.
13. Trapped insects will be identified and the information recorded. This information will be circulated to Curatorial Heads of Departments, Director Collections Division and the Buildings Services Manager every quarter, and retained by the Department of Collections Management (DCM).

REMEDIAL ACTION

14. Should insect pests be detected the affected area will be monitored rigorously to locate and eradicate the source.
15. The Museum Registrar will inform Curatorial Heads of Departments, Director Collections Division and the Buildings Services Manager of any infestations detected.
16. Appropriate professional advice will be sought before any treatment is carried out on collection items or buildings. A list of suitable contacts is given at Annex A of the Pest Monitoring Procedure (RAFM/DCM/2/6/27/2).
17. Wherever possible non-chemical methods will be used to treat collection items and collections storage areas.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

18. Where it is necessary for staff to enter showcases to deploy or check traps this will be done in accordance with the relevant showcase Risk Assessment as held by the Building Services Department. Staff will also receive training in manual handling and lifting techniques as appropriate.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

19. Staff responsible for checking traps will be trained in insect pest identification.
20. Detailed floor plans will be produced showing the locations of all traps, and will be used to plot incidences of infestations over time.
21. The existing monitoring programme for RAFM Stafford as undertaken by external contract will be reviewed by a museum pest management consultant.
22. The locations and distribution of traps will be periodically reviewed to ensure that the programme provides appropriate coverage across display and storage areas.

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Annex A

Insect pest species	Type of damage	Trapping method	Deployment cycle	Checking frequency (end of month)
Varied carpet beetle <i>Anthrenus verbasci</i>	The larvae will attack and damage wool, fur, feathers, silk and skins and are major textile pests.	Blunder trap	All year round	Quarterly <i>March, June, September, December</i>
Silverfish <i>Lepisma</i> Booklice <i>Liposcelis</i>	These pests all thrive in damp conditions when they will damage paper and books.	Blunder trap	All year round	Quarterly <i>March, June, September, December</i>
Webbing clothes moth <i>Tineola bisselliella</i> Case-bearing clothes moth <i>Tinea pellionella</i>	The larvae will attack and damage wool, fur, feathers, silk and skins and are major textile pests.	AF pheromone trap	April to September	Monthly
Brown house moth <i>Hofmannophila pseudospretella</i>	The larvae will eat animal and plant protein.	AF pheromone trap <i>Although there is no pheromone lure which specifically attracts this species, they will also be caught on the AF pheromone trap.</i>	April to September	Monthly