

MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Planet of the Apes – a cruel reminder of the unethical and unscientific way we treat our fellow earthlings**

As *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* hits cinemas across Australia this week, patrons are to be reminded of the indiscriminate experimental procedures that we subject our closest relatives to – even in Australia.

The message behind the prequel *“Rise of the Planet of the Apes”* is that drugs react differently in humans than they do in other animals – despite the genetic similarity, (hence the pandemic that results in the Apes taking over the world in the movie), yet primates are STILL used for research into human ailments.

**Chief Executive, Helen Marston:** *“The genetic, sentient and cognitive similarities between primates and humans which supposedly make primates ‘good’ candidates for scientific testing is exactly what makes it unethical to experiment on them.”*

Despite these concerns, baboons are used in heart research, marmosets in brain and vision experiments, and macaques are infected with HIV and AIDS – regardless of primates’ inability to develop HIV. Research experiments are often invasive, with the primate often killed once the test is completed.

- According to the latest statistics (y/e 2012), 235 primates were used in experiments in Victoria.
- In the last five years, a total of \$37.5 million dollars has been provided by Australia’s leading funder of medical research, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), to 46 grants for primate based medical and scientific research.\*
- Data from public opinion polls show an increasing number of Australians are concerned about the use of primates in scientific research. A 2013 survey commissioned by HRA and conducted by Nexus Research showed that 60% of Australians are opposed to their use in medical research, with a further 17% undecided.

For more information about the use of primates in research, see our [case studies](#).

***Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*** opens in cinemas Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July.

Humane Research Australia is holding a movie and brunch fundraiser this Sunday. For details, please visit [Events Page](#).

\*“Answers to Estimates Questions on Notice. Health and Ageing Portfolio” Budget Estimates 2013-14, 5/6 & 7 June 2013. Question:E13-104.