

Independent Observer summary report on MV Greyman Express

Cattle exported to Vietnam in April 2019

Report 114, October 2019

Voyage summary

A consignment of 3,024 cattle was loaded onto the MV *Greyman Express* at the Port of Darwin on 20 April 2019. The vessel departed on 20 April 2019. The cattle were discharged at the Port of Hon La, Vietnam between 27 and 28 April 2019, making this a 9 day voyage.

An Independent Observer (observer) boarded the vessel at Darwin and remained on board until completion of discharge.

The mortality rate for cattle was 0.13% (4 mortalities). This does not exceed the reportable mortality rate. The causes of these mortalities were not considered to be linked to any systemic failure by the exporter.

The following comments represent a summary of key observations and has been approved by the observer who accompanied the voyage.

Independent observations of the implementation of procedures to ensure health and welfare of livestock

Exporter Documentation

Exporter arrangements were available to address procedures relating to livestock management from loading through to discharge, including contingencies.

Loading

In preparation for loading, sawdust was laid in the pens and on ramps that held the heavier animals. Nose bowls were filled and water was available for the cattle during the loading process. Loading went smoothly and the cattle were observed being handled quietly. No animal welfare issues were observed.

The vessel was loaded in accordance with the load plan although some pens, particularly on the lower decks were initially loaded in excess of the load plan. The stockperson made adjustments to these pens within the first couple of days of the voyage, with no impact on animal welfare.

Personnel

The LiveCorp Accredited Stockperson (stockperson) was experienced and was dedicated to the welfare of the cattle. The stockperson worked well with the crew to maintain animal health and welfare throughout the voyage.

The crew were observed to be competent when handling the cattle. Communication between the stockperson, bosun and Chief Officer (CO) was clear, with the bosun and CO observed to be responsive to stockperson's directions/instructions.

Daily routine

A management meeting was held each day at around 10:00am and was attended by the bosun, CO, the stockperson and the observer. Issues discussed included stocking density, management of troughs, feed and water calculations and the list of treatments.

The night watch duties ran from 6:00pm to 6:00am in two shifts of 6 hours each. One crew member maintained water troughs, cleaned nose bowls and monitored cattle.

Feed and water

Feed and water quantities loaded were in excess of *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (Version 2.3) 2011* ([ASEL](#)) requirements for a 7 day voyage. In addition, there were 20 tons of fodder left over from a previous voyage.

Water was always available and fodder was provided four times daily. The observer noted the cattle were able to freely access food and water.

The observer saw the crew regularly cleaning water troughs. All troughs were in good condition and well maintained.

Ventilation

The observer noted the ventilation was consistent and generally effective on all decks. There were a couple of warmer areas identified around the engine room on Decks 4 and 5 and the cattle in these pens showed increased respiratory rates. In order to mitigate the effects of the higher temperatures in the affected pens, the stockperson reduced the stocking densities and monitored the animals remaining in these pens. The observer noted that a reduction in the stocking density improved conditions and there were no impacts on animal welfare.

Temperature readings were initially taken daily at 11:00am on all decks. The observer requested the temperatures be taken at 2:00pm to better reflect the hottest daily temperature. The observer noted that temperatures were consistently hotter at this time, however humidity levels were slightly lower.

Pen conditions

Pen conditions were well maintained by the crew by minimising water spills and through the use of additional sawdust. Pad conditions were good with all pads in reasonable condition for the majority of the voyage.

Health and welfare

There were approximately 30 treatments administered during the voyage for a range of issues including pneumonia, lameness and eye infections. Treatments were observed to be performed capably and with minimal disturbance to animals. Medications were administered in line with the ailments being treated and supplies of medications were sufficient to meet the treatment requirements of this voyage.

The stockperson monitored existing unwell animals and euthanised animals when required with the priority on the animal's welfare.

Four mortalities occurred during the voyage and attributed to pneumonia in all cases. Post mortems were conducted on 2 animals.

Discharge

Discharge went smoothly and the observer did not witness any welfare issues. The process took around 24 hours, during which water was maintained to all animals.

Conclusion

The observed noted the stockperson and crew were well organized and worked well to ensure the health and welfare of the animals throughout the voyage.

The exporter arrangements were observed to be implemented during the voyage and to be compliant with ASEL requirements.

Representative photographs of the voyage

Day 1 Cattle in pen no issues identified



Day 3 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



Day 3 Cattle feeding - no issues identified



Day 4 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



Day 5 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



Day 10 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



