

Independent Observer summary report on *MV Shorthorn Express*

Cattle and buffalo exported to Vietnam in April 2019

Report 116, October 2019

Voyage summary

A consignment of 2,532 head of cattle and 151 head of buffalo was loaded onto the *MV Shorthorn Express* at the Port of Darwin on 24 April 2019. The livestock were discharged at the Port of Hai Phong, Vietnam, on 4 May 2019, making this an 11 day voyage.

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

The mortality rate for the cattle was 0.32% (8 mortalities). The mortality rate for the buffalo was 1.32% (2 mortalities). These do 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 this 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 and contingencies.

Loading

The observer did not note any issues with loading. Livestock were loaded in accordance to the load plan, with pen adjustments being made as required during the voyage to ensure animals had adequate space.

Personnel

The LiveCorp Accredited Stockperson (stockperson) was highly experienced and had a focus on the welfare of the animals on board.

The crew displayed good animal handling skills during the voyage.

Daily routine

A daily meeting attended by the Chief Officer, stockperson and the observer was held to discuss the previous days performance, cattle welfare and any issues which may have arisen.

The stockperson carried out deck rounds at 7:00am and 4:00pm. Each round took approximately 2 hours to complete and included checking livestock, assessing the load plan and monitoring feed and water consumption.

Two night watchmen shared duties on rotation from 8:00pm to 6:00am, duties included walking the decks to check on stock, feeders, water troughs, broken water pipes and any problems that arose during the night.

Feed and water

Fodder was loaded in accordance with *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (Version 2.3) 2011 (ASEL)* requirements. Livestock received a morning and afternoon feed. Livestock had access to water via 2 automatic water bowls per pen. Livestock were also provided with manually filled water troughs. Water troughs were cleaned daily during feeding times.

Ventilation

The observer did not note any issues with ventilation. The airflow intake and outtake was running efficiently throughout the voyage. Average temperatures below deck for the duration of the voyage were 31°C dry bulb, 28°C wet bulb, and 79% humidity.

Pen conditions

A dry pad formed throughout the voyage providing bedding for livestock. Sawdust was used to assist with pad maintenance.

Health and welfare

The observer noted good management of animals by the stockperson, boson and crew. Where necessary livestock were moved to hospital pens. Animals that received treatment were recorded by the stockperson.

Discharge

The observer did not note any issues with discharge. Livestock were fed and watered throughout the discharge process. Crew on board the vessel used appropriate stock handling techniques.

Conclusion

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

Representative photographs of the voyage

Day 3 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 3 Buffalo in pen—no issues identified



Day 8 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 8 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 9 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 9 Cattle in pen—no issues identified

