

# Independent Observer summary report on *MV Maysora*

Sheep and cattle exported to Israel and Jordan in  
May/June 2019

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Report 127, September 2019

## Voyage summary

A consignment of 48,610 sheep and 8,152 cattle commenced loading on the *MV Maysora* in Fremantle on 17 May 2019. Loading was completed on 19 May 2019, and the vessel departed the same day. Some livestock were discharged at Eilat, Israel from 8 – 11 June 2019. The remaining livestock were discharged at Aqaba, Jordan on 12 June 2019. Discharge was completed on the 14 June 2019, making this a 29 day voyage.

An independent observer (observer) boarded the vessel in Fremantle and remained on board until completion of discharge.

The mortality rate for sheep was 0.24% (118 mortalities) and 0.53% for cattle (43 mortalities). These do not exceed the reportable mortality rates. 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 from the observer that accompanied the voyage. The summary has been approved by the observer who accompanied this voyage.

## 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.

The exporter Heat Stress Risk Assessment (HSRA) and load plan was submitted prior to departure as required.

### Loading

The observer noted that there were minor variations to the load plan. Over the first three days of the voyage these minor variations were adjusted by the LiveCorp Accredited Stockpersons (stockpersons).

The loading process was efficient with minimal handling of animals noted by the observer. Fodder and water was available in most pens prior to loading, and in all pens within 12 hours of loading.

## **Personnel**

The Australian Government Accredited Veterinarian (AAV) and two stockpersons were experienced and very effective at locating livestock requiring attention and promptly providing treatment.

The ship's crew were hard working and effective.

## **Daily routine**

A daily meeting took place each morning to discuss any issues regarding animal health and welfare, vessel function, weather and port arrival times.

The AAV inspected all livestock pens each morning and subsequently attended to any health and welfare issues. The stockpersons inspected their assigned cattle pens each morning and performed treatments as required. The AAV and stockpersons repeated their livestock patrol activities throughout the afternoon, as well as moving stock as required.

Night watch crew patrolled the livestock pens from 6.00pm to 6.00am and reported any issues concerning livestock to the master and AAV.

## **Feed and water**

Fodder and potable water were available to the livestock throughout the voyage. Trough space was adequate for the numbers in each pen or pen grouping.

The observer witnessed on several mornings water troughs had been turned off for the morning cleaning and crew had forgotten to restart water flow immediately. The CO and crew worked hard to develop a cross check system for ensuring that water supply was always restarted after trough cleaning. By the end of the voyage, the system was working well. There was no observed animal welfare impact as a result of the disrupted water supply.

The observer noted the required quantities of fodder, chaff and water were loaded and livestock received appropriate fodder, chaff and water throughout the voyage.

## **Ventilation**

Ventilation was effective throughout the voyage. The nature of the open decks (Decks 7-11) meant that individual areas of the open decks were subjected to varying air flow so 'hotspots' tended to be unpredictable and were not observed to persist. The ship made regular minor course changes as required to improve airflow across the open decks.

In the enclosed decks temperature and humidity readings were less variable. During periods of increased humidity, open mouth panting was rarely observed (<1% of animals observed). The observer noted that whilst watching animals with open mouth breathing, most reverted to closed mouth breathing once the observer was seen by the flock.

No interruptions were observed in the vessel's ventilation system. Extra fans were placed in the lower decks near bulkheads to improve air flow in these slightly restricted spaces.

## **Pen conditions**

Sheep pads remained dry and suitable for the duration of the voyage. Cattle pads in some pens was soft to wet following wash down.

Sawdust was applied to pens that had wet areas to firm up pad condition. This did not always absorb sufficient moisture to improve the pad condition, however, no adverse animal welfare issues were noted.

The observer noted that the stocking density allowed for the opportunity for almost all livestock to lie down simultaneously. Most pens were opened up to neighbouring pens for cattle and sheep where similar lines were adjacent, meaning more water troughs were available for livestock.

### **Health and welfare**

Livestock were treated in hospital pens or in general livestock pens when appropriate. Some observation pens were also created to monitor recovering livestock. The AAV and stockpersons promptly treated all sick or injured livestock with appropriate medications. Humane euthanasia was performed as required.

The most common cause of mortality in cattle was pulmonary disease, and in sheep was enteritis/inanition.

The extreme conditions were observed from Day 24 until completion of discharge with temperatures reaching 37.2 degrees Celsius dry bulb, 25.8 degrees Celsius wet bulb and relative humidity around 40%. During this period, the heat stress score for sheep generally ranged from one to two. However for a period of between 5-10 hours each day during the afternoon and early evening, there were isolated examples (<1% of sheep) of heat stress scores rising to three on the open decks before then dropping again later in the night.

For cattle there was a longer period at panting score zero during each 24 hour period with only occasional brief periods at panting score one.

Open mouth panting was rarely (<1%) observed in either sheep or cattle even on the days with the highest wet bulb temperatures (32°C).

### **Discharge**

Sheep and cattle were moved to the discharge ramp in an efficient manner with no welfare issues observed. Pilot sheep were observed to be used effectively and efficiently and therefore human handling was rarely required.

The observer did not witness any livestock enter the discharge ramp that were unfit for discharge.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, the AAV, stockpersons and crew were observed to perform their jobs and functions in accordance with *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (Version 2.3) 2011 (ASEL)*. The exporter arrangements were observed to be implemented during the voyage and to be compliant with ASEL requirements.

## Representative photographs of the voyage

**Day 5 cattle in pen—no issues identified**



**Day 10 sheep in pen—no issues identified**



**Day 13 sheep in pen—no issues identified**



**Day 15 cattle in pen—no issues identified**



**Day 19 sheep in pen—no issues identified**



**Day 24 sheep in pen—no issues identified**

