Independent Observer summary report on MV *OCEAN UTE*

Cattle exported to Indonesia in August 2019

Report 168, December 2019

Voyage summary

A consignment of 2,869 cattle was loaded on the MV *Ocean Ute* at the Port of Darwin on 7 August 2019. The vessel departed on 7 August 2019. The vessel discharged the cattle at the Port of Tanjung Priok, Indonesia between 12 and 14 August 2019, making this a 8-day voyage.

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

The mortality rate for the cattle was 0.07% (2 mortalities). This does not exceed the reportable mortality rate. The causes of the mortalities were not considered to be linked to any systemic failure by the exporter.

The following comments are 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 and contingencies.

Loading

No welfare incidents were observed during loading. Feed troughs were partially filled with pellets, and water was available via nose bowls prior to loading. Compliance with the load plan was satisfactory and the majority of stock were allocated more space than required by the *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock 2011 (version 2.3)* (ASEL).

Personnel

There was an experienced LiveCorp Accredited Stockperson (stockperson) on board responsible for implementing the exporters' procedures to ensure the health and welfare of the livestock throughout the voyage.

The master, Chief Officer (CO), bosun and crew were all experienced in livestock export voyages. Specific livestock crew were assigned to management of the cattle.

Daily routine

A management meeting was held each day at 10:00am with the master, CO, bosun and the stockperson to discuss animal welfare and changes to the feeding regime, amongst other matters.

The stockperson checked the cattle a minimum of three times each day, and administered treatments and readjusted pen numbers as required. Crew undertook feeding, watering and cleaning duties throughout the day. Cattle were fed three times daily. Clearing of alleyways and nose bowls occurred daily, and the nightwatch crew would also perform cleaning duties as needed.

Nightwatch crew covered 4 x 4 hour shifts per night, from 4:00pm to 8:00am.

Feed and water

Water was delivered to the cattle through fixed metal automatic nose bowls located at both corners of pens on the walkway side. Water consumption increased over the voyage as stock learnt to drink from the nose bowls and as temperatures increased.

Fodder (pellets and chaff) was delivered automatically to the decks and then manually transported to the pens by the crew, with the amount of feed provided exceeding ASEL requirements.

It was noted that the objective was to have ad lib feed available throughout the voyage (for weight gain purposes); therefore, the amounts fed out to cattle were adjusted daily based on the amount consumed the previous day.

Ventilation

The conditions on deck were comfortable for the cattle throughout the voyage. Air was blown out over pens via PVC piping. The changes in temperature and humidity from Darwin through to arrival in Indonesia were minimal.

A crew member took temperature readings twice a day with the maximum on deck temperature recorded at 31°C dry bulb, 28 °C wet bulb and 79% humidity.

Pen conditions

Flooring comprised an adhesive non-slip coating over steel. The depth of the manure pad increased over the voyage and remained acceptable. Spilled feed was shovelled into the pens, which combined with manure to create a friable pad consistency throughout the voyage.

Due to the short duration of the voyage, there was no deck washing.

Health and welfare

The observer did not see any unacceptable issues relating to animal health and welfare during the voyage. Six cattle exhibited early symptoms of lameness or respiratory issues and were treated by the stockperson. All cattle recovered sufficiently and were able to walk off the ship during discharge.

Discharge

Low-stress cattle handling techniques were used by the crew and stockperson to move the cattle during discharge. The discharge to the gangway was quiet and efficient. Movement of the cattle down the gangway to the trucks was managed by local Indonesian handlers. This was done competently; however, long wait times for the arrival of trucks extended the time taken to discharge the cattle. The crew ensured the cattle were fed and had access to water throughout discharge.

Conclusion

The observer noted a high degree of diligence from the stockperson, officers and crew for safeguarding the welfare of the cattle.

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 4 Cattle in pen—no issues identified

Day 5 Cattle in pen— no issues identified

Day 6 Cattle in pen—no issues identified

Day 7 Cattle in pen—no issues identified