

# Independent Observer summary report on *MV Yangtze Harmony*

## Cattle exported to Vietnam in October 2019

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Report 192, December 2019

### **Voyage summary**

A consignment of 3,054 cattle was loaded onto the *MV Yangtze Harmony* at the Port of Townsville on 3 October 2019 and departed on the same day. The cattle were discharged from the vessel at the Port of Thi Vai, Vietnam, between 13 and 14 October 2019, making this a 12 day voyage.

An Independent Observer (observer) boarded the vessel at Townsville, then remained on board until completion of discharge.

The mortality rate for the cattle was 0.06% (2 mortalities), which 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 represent a summary of key observations and have 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 cattle were loaded according to the load plan, which was compliant with the *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock 2011 (version 2.3)* ([ASEL](#)) requirements. The cattle were observed to have sufficient space to access feed and water.

No animal welfare issues were observed during loading apart from one animal that injured its hoof and was euthanised on board before the vessel's departure.

#### **Personnel**

A LiveCorp Accredited Stockperson (stockperson) accompanied the voyage responsible for implementing the exporters' procedures to ensure the health and welfare of the livestock throughout the voyage. The stockperson was experienced in livestock export voyages, and promptly and effectively separated into hospital pens any cattle that showed signs of ill health separated, then treated them.

The livestock crew were experienced and competent.

### **Daily routine**

Daily management meetings were held each day at 10:00am and were attended by the master, Chief Officer, Bosun, stockperson and the observer. Activities over the past 24 hours were discussed as well as planned activities for the next 24 hours.

The cattle were fed 4 times per day to ensure there was a continuous supply of feed. Chaff was used to supplement the pellet feed and to encourage shy feeders to eat the pellets by mixing the two together. This worked well for the shy feeders for the first 48 hours of the voyage. Once the cattle were fed, the livestock crew cleaned the corridors, lay sawdust on any pooled water from leaking troughs, and clean and maintain water troughs and feed bins.

Two night watch crew monitored the cattle in two shifts from 18:00pm to midnight, then midnight to 06:00am.

### **Feed and water**

Pelletised feed was delivered by an automated delivery system to multiple outlets on each deck and the livestock crew manually filled buckets, then hand-deliver feed to the feed bins on each pen. Pelletised feed was loaded in Townsville in excess of ASEL requirements.

Water was generated on the vessel by two reverse osmosis plants. An automated system delivered water to the float-valve controlled troughs at each pen. The livestock crew undertook water trough maintenance and cleaning twice per day.

There were no ASEL requirements for bedding on this voyage, however, the exporter loaded 24 tonnes of bagged sawdust as bedding for the heavier cattle.

The cattle were able to consume adequate feed and water throughout the voyage.

### **Ventilation**

Ventilation was provided to each pen by 30 cm PVC pipes with outlet holes around 40 cm apart directing air into the pens. Ventilation was reliable and effective during the voyage.

Temperature readings were taken daily at 9:00am using a sling psychrometer. Average wet bulb temperatures across all decks for the duration of the voyage ranged from 23°C to 28°C.

### **Pen conditions**

Pads were kept dry by the application of sawdust where moisture build-up occurred. The pads were still in a semi-dry state up to day 6 of the voyage when a full wash down of the decks was done.

The stockperson moved some cattle in the first 48 hours of the voyage to even out the pen densities as per the load plan. The stocking density of all pens allowed animals to lie down and rest.

## **Health and welfare**

Twenty-seven cattle were treated in the hospital pens, predominantly for lameness. Cattle found to be lame were separated for treatment into hospital pens. All treated cattle were successfully discharged.

There were two mortalities: One steer was injured during loading, then euthanised on board before departure. One steer was found dead in its pen and post-mortem findings showed respiratory disease as the cause of death.

There were no issues with the overall health and welfare of the cattle. No indicators of heat stress symptoms were observed during the voyage.

## **Discharge**

The unloading process ran smoothly with no injuries reported and all the livestock had access to clean water and fodder during discharge.

No animal health or welfare issues were observed as a result of the discharge of the consignment.

## **Conclusion**

The observer noted that the stockpersons and the crew ensured that the health and welfare of the cattle were maintained during 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 6 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



Day 8 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



Day 10 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



Day 11 Cattle in pen – no issues identified

