

Independent Observer summary report on MV *Maysora*

Cattle and Sheep exported to Israel and Jordan in December 2019

Report 207, June 2020

Voyage summary

A consignment of 11,318 cattle was loaded onto the MV Maysora at Fremantle between 8 and 10 December 2019. The vessel departed on 10 December 2019. Cattle were discharged at Eilat, Israel between 28 and 30 December 2019. The sheep and remaining cattle were discharged at Aqaba, Jordan between 30 December 2019 and 2 January 2020, making this a 26 day voyage.

The mortality rate for cattle was 0.80% (90 mortalities), and 0.28% (119 mortalities) for sheep. This does not exceed the reportable mortality rates.

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, including contingencies.

Loading

The observer did not note any issues during loading.

The pens were stocked in accordance with the load plan, and space provided in excess of [*Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock 2011 \(version 2.3\)*](#) (ASEL) requirements.

Personnel

The Australian Government Accredited Veterinarian (AAV), LiveCorp Accredited Stockperson (stockperson), Chief Officer (CO), bosun and master worked together effectively throughout the voyage in order to manage the livestock.

Daily routine

A management meeting between the master, CO, AAV and observer was held at 10:30am each morning. Topics of discussion included weather conditions, temperature and humidity records, feed and water consumption, health and wellbeing of livestock, respiratory characteristics and mortalities. Strategic management plans were discussed during these meetings.

Initially three crew members were assigned to night watch duties, this was increased to 5 crew members on day 2 of the voyage as there were early indications of cases of Bovine Respiratory Disease (BRD). Night watch shifts commenced at 5:00pm and finished at 6:00am, consisting of livestock checks which were reported to the bridge every hour. The AAV and/or stockperson was on call during the night watch.

The day shift commenced at 6:00am when water and feed troughs were emptied and cleaned followed by feeding.

The AAV and CO reviewed the decks together twice daily. The AAV inspected the sheep decks around 6:30am, met with the CO at around 6:30-7:00am and commenced mortality checks, post-mortems and administered treatments from 8:00am till around 10:00am.

Stockpersons were allocated 2 decks each and undertook their rounds twice daily or more as required. During these rounds, medication was administered as needed. The AAV maintained overall responsibility and supervision of the cattle decks.

Feed and water

Fodder was loaded in excess of ASEL requirements.

Livestock received a morning and afternoon feed. Fodder was observed to be good quality and free of contaminants. Troughs were cleaned as needed throughout both day and night shifts.

Chaff was fed post wash-down and provided on alternate days to both cattle and sheep throughout the voyage.

The observer noted that there were no systemic issues regarding feed and water during the voyage.

Ventilation

Ventilation was effective throughout the voyage. Additional fans were utilised in order to manage identified hot spots. Zig zagging of the vessel was implemented on 2 days of the voyage. On one of these days the observer noted a reduction in wet bulb temperature from 28.7°C to 27.1°C and the dry bulb from 32.5°C to 31.5°C in 10 minutes.

Pen conditions

In the majority of pens at least 75% of animals could lie down at the same time, with all animals observed to be resting simultaneously in some pens.

Comprehensive discussions were undertaken by the AAV, CO and master at the beginning of the voyage to formulate a wash down program in order to manage pad conditions during the voyage.

Sheep pads remained dry throughout the voyage.

Cattle pads were soft to muddy with depths ranging from heel to hock.

Cattle pens were washed down three times during the voyage in order to manage pen conditions. Sawdust was applied following wash down.

Pad conditions were reported to have been managed proactively throughout the voyage, however were observed to deteriorate somewhat during discharge where no wash down could be performed. They were observed to be acceptable, however were generally deeper than they had been for the voyage up until that time.

Health and welfare

The observer noted that the livestock were generally relaxed during the voyage.

Signs of significant respiratory issues in a group of cattle arose on day 2 of the voyage. A BRD management program was implemented. As part of this program measures such as aerial disinfection, reduced stocking densities and medical treatment in cattle exhibiting treatment were implemented.

The pilot sheep were well managed throughout the journey, with adequate food, water, shade, bedding and companions. There were 10 pilot sheep in total, allowing frequent rotation throughout the discharge process.

The observer noted that throughout the voyage sick animals were identified, treated and if necessary humanely euthanased within an acceptable timeframe.

Discharge

Electric prodders, whilst not used excessively, were not solely used as a tool of last resort. In response to this the master prohibited anyone but the AAV and stockperson from using electric prodders during discharge.

Conclusion

The observer noted that throughout the voyage the master, CO, AAV, stockpersons and crew worked together effectively in a bid to minimise losses through the management and reduction of potential stressors.

Representative photographs of the voyage

Day 1 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 2 Sheep in pen—no issues identified



Day 8 Cattle in pen—some coat contamination



Day 11 Sheep in pen—no issues identified



Day 17 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 21 Sheep in pen—no issues identified

