

Independent Observer summary report on MV *Ganado Express*

Cattle and Buffalo exported to Vietnam in October 2018

Report 27, September 2019

Voyage summary

A total of 1,736 cattle and 500 buffalo were loaded on the MV *Ganado Express* at Darwin on 31 October 2018 and 1 November 2018. The vessel departed on 1 November 2018. The vessel discharged livestock at Hon La, Vietnam between 10 and 11 November 2018, making this a 12 day voyage.

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

The mortality rate for cattle was 0.12% (2 mortalities) and 0.2% for buffalo (1 mortality). 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. 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.

Loading

The livestock were loaded according to the load plan and there were no issues noted by the observer. During the voyage, adjustments were made by shuffling stock from tight pens to ones understocked.

Personnel

The Australian Government Accredited Veterinarian (AAV) and LiveCorp Accredited Stockperson (stockperson) were both experienced and well qualified in animal handling, management and welfare. The observer noted they had a good working relationship and were both experienced in treating livestock in their pens.

The boson has worked on livestock vessels for 20 years. This is his fourth voyage as boson. Ten full-time crew assisted him during the day and three part-time crew during the night watch.

The night watch crew worked split shifts from 6:00pm to 6:00am and their duties included monitoring animal health and welfare, repairing broken water lines and replenishing contaminated feed and filling water troughs.

Daily routine

The crew worked from 7:00am to 5:00pm with various breaks throughout the day. The AAV and stockperson worked throughout the day and evenings, constantly following up on the crew and walking the vessel to find any livestock needing medical care.

Feed and water

Fodder is stored in nine tanks across the vessel. This voyage was loaded with fodder well in excess of *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (Version 2.3) 2011* ([ASEL](#)) requirements.

The vessel's water holding capacity is 2,613 tons and can produce 180 tons of water per day. Drinking water quality was maintained at high standards during the day. The crew worked diligently to keep clean water on offer at all times. Night watch-crew patrolled all decks looking for problems and cleaned out contaminated troughs and nose bowls. There were no welfare concerns noted by the observer.

Ventilation

All decks are fully enclosed with fresh air being pushed in and exhaust air pulled out by the ventilation system. The observer noted the airflow on all decks of the vessel was even, and no dead spaces or hot spots were noticed. There was a slight tinge of ammonia on all decks. The ammonia smell was not oppressive but noticeable.

Pen conditions

Initially, the AAV and stockperson agreed that deck washing was not required due to the short duration of the voyage. However, due to port congestion, the discharge of the livestock was postponed for 2 days, the AAV, stockperson and Chief Officer (CO) agreed to wash Decks 1-3 on day 8. Decks 4 and 5 were managed well with sawdust.

Health and welfare

The observer noted that after a few days at sea, most of the livestock settled into the conditions and routine. The voyage went without any major issues and minor issues were resolved quickly. The observer noted healing dehorning wounds on 4 buffalo however, there were no negative animal health and welfare impacts observed with these animals.

Discharge

The discharge of the livestock was undertaken professionally and with safety in mind. The observer noted that low stress handling techniques were used effectively at discharge and there was minimal and appropriate use of electric jiggers. All the livestock had clean water and feed available during discharge and no injuries to the livestock were noted.

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 4 cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 5 buffalo in pen—no issues identified



Day 7 buffalo in pen—no issues identified



Day 8 cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 11 cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 12 cattle in pen—no issues identified

