

Independent Observer summary report on MV *Maysora*

Cattle and sheep exported to Israel and Jordan in January and February 2019

Report 70, October 2019

Voyage summary

The MV *Maysora* commenced loading in Fremantle on 23 January 2019, and departed on 25 January 2019 carrying a total of 36,050 sheep and 11,160 cattle. Discharge at Eilat, Israel was between 11 and 14 February before sailing to Aqaba, Jordan to discharge the remaining livestock between 14 and 15 February 2019, making this a 24 day voyage.

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

The mortality rate for sheep was 0.19% (68 mortalities) and 0.16% for cattle (18 mortalities). These do not exceed the reportable mortality rate. 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 and has been approved by the observer.

Independent observations of the implementation of procedures to ensure health and welfare of livestock

Exporter documentation

The exporter Heat Stress Risk Assessment and load plan were submitted to the Department of Agriculture prior to departure as required. Load plan calculations are based on the average weight of each breed/type being allocated to a particular deck and area based on the *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock 2011 (version 2.3)* ([ASEL](#)). An additional space requirement for animals was imposed on the sheep consignment, which allowed each animal 17.5% extra space than that required under ASEL.

Exporter voyage instructions relating to the care and management of the livestock during the voyage were made available, as were relevant specific management plans.

Loading

Livestock were not loaded strictly in accordance with the load plan. Adjustments were made soon after the voyage commenced to more evenly distribute livestock. Some areas of the vessel that are known to be hotter held less animals than the number specified on the load plan. The observer noted that it was common for all or most of the cattle or sheep in a pen to be able lie down at one time.

Personnel

The Australian Government Accredited Veterinarian (AAV) was experienced in their role, hardworking and dedicated to the welfare of the livestock.

There were two LiveCorp Accredited stockpersons (stockpersons) and an additional stockperson who accompanied the voyage. All stockpersons demonstrated competent and careful handling of the livestock with high regard for the welfare of the livestock.

The master and Chief Officer (CO) were very experienced. The crew consisted of 33 livestock personnel with generally 3 or 2 crew allocated to each deck. Their tasks included cleaning, feeding, bedding if required and washing of the decks. The crew seemed to be hard working, diligent and patient with the livestock.

Daily routine

The stockperson routinely worked from 6:00am until 5:30pm including breaks. The AAV commenced activity at 4:00am before walking the decks. The AAV was actively involved in the treatment, care of the livestock and issues that impacted on the welfare of the livestock.

The livestock in the lower decks were fed in the morning between 6:00am and 9:00am and their afternoon feed was between 3:30pm and 5:00pm. The livestock in the upper decks were fed in the morning between 10:30am and midday and the afternoon feed was between 1:00pm and 3:00pm. The feeding schedule was varied to deliver extra feeding.

Meetings were held daily at 10:30am with the master, CO, bosun, AAV, 3 stockpersons and observer. At the meeting the discussions included status of the hospital pens, general health, treatments, feeding strategies and any other issues that arose on a daily basis.

There were 2 crew assigned to night watch duties that included recording temperatures and informing the bridge of any issues that arise during their shift.

Feed and water

The feeding system supplies pellets by augers and gravity to troughs for almost every pen. Separate chutes also exist to enable manual filling of troughs that are not automatically supplied and for additional feeding. Whilst most troughs are automatically filled, the crew were required to adjust the pile of pellets to enable filling the whole length of the trough, and to ensure the troughs were at the correct height for the pens of younger sheep.

The crew were instructed to clear out the finely ground and unpalatable pellets from feed troughs. However the observer noted some troughs were found to be full of the finely ground material throughout the voyage. However there was no evidence of a significant animal welfare relating to trough maintenance issues.

Fresh water is made by 2 reverse osmosis plants. Water is automatically supplied to a ball regulated trough valve for each pen. No issues were noted with the water supply system.

Ventilation

The lower decks 1 to 6 are enclosed. Decks 7 to 11 are open. The ventilation system performance was satisfactory for the voyage. However the lower decks recorded higher temperatures and humidity than the upper decks.

Pen conditions

The cattle pens on Decks 1 to 8 were washed over a four day cycle that commenced on day 5. The washes were performed in an efficient manner. Bedding was distributed to each cattle pen on the day before arrival in the port of Eilat. Many pens on the lower decks did become sloppy by four days after a wash. However cattle Decks 7 and 8 did not reach a sloppy state at any time.

The sheep pads remained satisfactory on each day of the voyage.

Health and welfare

The AAV and stockpersons routinely and regularly administered medications for animals in their original pens and in hospital pens without recording medication use. Some of the cattle with respiratory disease remained in their original pens. Lamé cattle were generally transferred to a hospital pens to enable rest on bedding and provision of chaff.

Pilot sheep were trained with a maximum time without feed of 2 hours but access to water at all times. However, on occasions, sheep were found out of pens in the aisles.

Discharge

Discharge in Eilat and Aqaba was managed well. The stockpersons and the AAV were involved. Feed and water were maintained at all times to the stock that remained on board. There was one incident that involved moving a number of sheep into the race too quickly during discharge in Eilat resulting in 2 sheep being smothered. The episode was an exception as sheep were generally moved quietly and smoothly through the races and onto the ramp.

One other incident occurred during discharge in Eilat that involved cattle on the discharge ramp. The incident resulted in the smothering of one animal and injuries to another animal that resulted in euthanasia of the second animal. The observer was not present at the discharge ramp at that time and did not observe the incident.

Conclusion

There were no significant non compliances with the exporter's arrangements for the voyage that impacted on animal welfare.

However, the treatments records were not compliant with the ASEL or the exporter arrangements which impacted the accuracy of the voyage records and mandatory reporting.

The AAV worked well with the crew to achieve the best possible animal welfare outcomes.

Representative photographs of the voyage

Day 3 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 5 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 7 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 10 Sheep in pen — no issues identified



Day 14 Sheep in pen — no issues identified



Day 15 Sheep in pen — no issues identified

