



Australian Government

Independent Observer summary report on *MV Al Messilah*

Cattle and sheep exported to Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates in October 2022

May 2023

Voyage summary

Livestock: 404 cattle and 50,147 sheep.

Vessel: *MV Al Messilah*.

Loading location and date: Fremantle, 5 October 2022.

Vessel departure date: 6 October 2022.

Discharge location and dates:

- Shuwaikh, Kuwait: 21 to 22 October 2022.
- Hamad, Qatar: 24 to 25 October 2022.
- Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates (UAE): 26 to 27 October 2022.

Voyage length: 23 days.

Independent Observer (observer): Boarded at Fremantle and remained onboard until completion of discharge.

Voyage mortality rate: 0.14% (69 mortalities) for sheep. These mortalities are unlikely to be linked to any systemic failure by the exporter. There were no mortalities for cattle.

Notifiable mortality rate required to trigger an investigation: 0.5% for cattle, 1% for sheep.

Summary of observations

This report summarises key observations of the implementation and effectiveness of exporter arrangements to ensure the health and welfare of livestock. The report has been approved by the observer who accompanied the voyage.

Exporter documentation

Relevant exporter documentation for the voyage was made available to the observer. The observer reported no issues regarding exporter documentation.

Loading

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to loading were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Personnel

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to personnel were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Daily routine

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to the daily routine were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Feed and water

The observer noted that feed pellets broke down into fines (fodder dust), which was observed in sheep troughs at each feeding throughout the voyage. Sheep troughs on the portside area of the vessel were observed to be the most affected with fines. The crew regularly removed fines from troughs and livestock were observed eating throughout each feed cycle. No direct adverse effects on animal health or welfare were observed relating to the presence of fines.

Ventilation

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to ventilation were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Pen conditions

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to pen conditions were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Health and welfare

The AAV reported that:

- 1) A total of 69 sheep mortalities occurred on this voyage. 13 sheep were euthanised as a result of gastrointestinal issues and one for a wound. Post-mortems were performed by the AAV on 65 of the mortalities, with the main causes identified as inanition, wound or laceration and a respiratory abnormality. The AAV reported that 4 mortalities did not have post-mortems conducted stating they were autolysed.
- 2) During the voyage, there were 127 treatments of sheep and 0 treatments of cattle. Conditions treated for included lameness and inanition.

Discharge

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to discharge were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Department actions

No adverse animal health and welfare outcomes arising from exporter arrangements were observed, and no regulatory action was taken for this voyage.

Representative photographs of voyage

Day 3 Sheep in pen — no issues identified



Day 6 Sheep in pen — no issues identified



Day 9 Sheep in pen — no issues identified



Day 12 Sheep in pen — no issues identified



Day 14 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 19 Sheep in pen — no issues identified



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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