

VALE Comment on Report 6 *Awassi Express*, May 2018

Report 6 December 2018: 7 months after voyage end

Temperature

IO COMMENT "Two wet and dry bulb thermometers were located on each deck, with measurements taken every four hours. An average of the two readings on each deck was calculated and recorded by the CO who then calculated relative humidity. The IO confirmed that all spot checks performed confirmed the accuracy of the recorded values."

VALE COMMENT: the measurements on this ship appear to be more rigorous than on other short haul voyages (eg Report 5 MV Gudali Express)

Feed and water

IO SUMMARY: "Feeding troughs were prone to being knocked off the rails by the animals, however the issue was managed by tying the troughs down to the rails on day one. "

VALE COMMENT: this is a ship that has transported cattle for many years. There should not be trough issues.

IO SUMMARY: "Hose connections were prone to small leaks, however this did not affect water availability to the animals. The IO explained on the first night, not all the fixed automatic water troughs were turned on and, when this did occur, the first part of the water was rust coloured. Additionally, the mobile troughs were not tied down yet and some were subsequently knocked off as the cattle were still settling. Night staff would systematically rectify this, and therefore still complied with ASEL requirements. Overall water management was considered satisfactory."

VALE COMMENT: this is a ship that has transported cattle for many years. Water troughs should not be mobile for cattle. Whilst this was managed by the crew, it indicates poor ship design.

Pen conditions

IO SUMMARY: While the amount of sawdust loaded with the vessel complied with ASEL requirements, it was not routinely used due to limited supplies.

VALE COMMENT: it is inappropriate that animals travelling on a moving vessel for 14 days should not be supplied with bedding. This comment confirms the inadequacy of ASEL provisions.

IO SUMMARY: "Small leaks in the hoses to the water troughs need to be continually addressed throughout the voyage. On two occasions, major leaks occurred overnight resulting in localised flooding. Cattle were effectively managed, with the crew moving them in to alternative pens and sawdust used to absorb residual moisture. Pad conditions varied from dry and crusty, to moist and boggy throughout the journey, however this was not seen as problematic by the IO."

VALE COMMENT: leaking hoses feature in numerous report. Whilst the leaks are managed by the crew, there seems to be an issue with vessel design or maintenance

Health and welfare

IO SUMMARY: No heat stress was noted. Some cattle were observed panting, especially when lying down. This stopped when they stood up, and they did not appear distressed.

VALE COMMENT: no wet bulb temperatures were supplied. Pastoral cattle should not be panting lying down unless they are diseased, heat stressed or post-exertion..

IO SUMMARY: The IO noted that the most stressful situation observed was animals getting their heads stuck in the pen bars. While they could sometimes be freed immediately by the first crew member to observe this, on some occasions, freeing took some time and required multiple crew members.

VALE COMMENT: cattle getting their heads stuck also reported on the Bader. Again this would suggest poor vessel design.