

Independent Observer summary report on *MV Gulf Livestock 1*

Cattle exported to Indonesia in May 2019

Report 134, October 2019

Voyage summary

A consignment of 6,005 cattle were loaded onto the *MV Gulf Livestock 1* at Broome on 26 May 2019. The vessel departed on 27 May 2019. The vessel discharged the cattle at Panjang, Indonesia 1 June 2019, making this a 7 day voyage.

The Independent Observer (observer) noted that the cattle were originally scheduled for loading in the week commencing 19 May 2019. Due to stability and navigation issues identified by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), the departure date of the vessel was delayed for one week to allow these issues to be resolved.

While the issues with the vessel were being resolved, the cattle were housed at the registered premises and were inspected twice by the Department of Agriculture's regional veterinarian. During this time, the cattle were observed to have gained weight. Therefore AMSA directed the exporter to reduce the number of cattle to be loaded in order to assist with the stability issues identified. The exporter followed these instructions. No animal welfare issues were identified as a result of the delay.

An observer boarded the vessel at Broome and remained on board until completion of discharge.

There were no mortalities during the voyage.

The following comments represent a summary of key observations and has been approved by the observer who accompanied the 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

During loading, three experienced LiveCorp Accredited Stockpersons (stockpersons) supervised the rest of the crew to ensure the cattle were moved with minimal force or stress. The observer noted that on some decks the gates that interconnected between some pens were left open. A stockperson advised this was to allow more space for cattle to move around. The vessel was loaded in accordance with *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (Version 2.3) 2011 (ASEL)* requirements.

Personnel

There were three highly experienced stockpersons on board the vessel, one head stockperson and two additional stockpersons. The observer noted their genuine care for the welfare of the livestock on board and that they approached their work with animal welfare as a top priority.

The master of the vessel had overall responsibility for the vessel, all personnel and livestock. The Chief Officer (CO) represented the master in communicating with the stockpersons, bosun and the crew.

Daily routine

A daily management meeting was attended by the CO, bosun and head stockperson where the conditions of the livestock were discussed, including feed, water and if any welfare issues arose from the previous day.

The stockpersons completed their rounds at least three times daily where they checked feed and water levels, pad condition, assessed the livestock for illness and monitored the general welfare of the livestock.

The observer completed 2 random night observations and observed nightwatchmen actively cleaning water troughs and monitoring for sick or injured cattle.

Temperature checks were recorded once daily at 10:00am.

Feed and water

The cattle were fed the same feed at the registered premises that would be available to them on the vessel. This allowed for an easy transition for cattle from the registered premises to the vessel.

Cattle were fed at three times daily with an occasional fourth top-up feed.

The crew were requested to pay attention to keeping the water troughs clean of faeces and the observer noted crew were regularly checking fodder and water levels.

Ventilation

The ventilation was observed to be very efficient. Deck 4 was observed to be warmer and more humid than other decks, mainly due to the proximity of the engine room. The observer also noted a strong ammonia smell on this deck. To alleviate this issue, the stockperson installed additional fans on this deck. No animal welfare issues were noted.

Pen conditions

No wash down of the pens was undertaken due to the short duration of the voyage. The pads were only a few centimetres deep and remained quite dry. Sawdust was used for hospital pens and for covering ramps during loading and discharge.

Health and welfare

There were no mortalities on this voyage. One steer was hospitalised due to being a shy feeder and mildly lame. Five other cattle were treated in their pens for mild lameness. Treatments administered included anti-inflammatories and antibiotics.

Discharge

Cattle were fed and watered throughout discharge. Sawdust was placed on ramps and in receiving trucks. Discharge was completed with minimal stress on the cattle. The observer noted the placement of a shade cloth structure that blocked cattle from seeing people during the discharge, and considered this assisted in a smoother discharge of the livestock.

The crew and stockpersons were very professional during discharge and placed animal welfare at a top priority.

Conclusion

The observer noted this was a successful voyage where the stockpersons and crew were professional and caring throughout the voyage. The welfare of the cattle was observed to be paramount to all stockpersons, crew and officers.

The exporter arrangements were observed to be implemented during the voyage and to be compliant with ASEL requirements.

Representative photographs of the voyage

Day 3—Cattle in pens- no issues identified



Day 3 Cattle in pens — no issues identified



Day 3 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 5 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 5 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 5 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



