

# Independent Observer summary report on *MV Anna Marra*

## Cattle exported to China in July 2019

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Report 162, December 2019

### **Voyage summary**

A consignment of 8,050 cattle was loaded onto the *MV Anna Marra* in Portland between 21 and 22 July 2019. The vessel discharged the cattle at the Port of Huanghua, China, between 7 and 9 August 2019, making this a 20-day voyage.

The mortality rate for the cattle was 0.16% (13 cattle). This does not exceed the reportable mortality rate. The causes of the mortalities were not considered to be linked to any systemic failure by the exporter.

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

The following comments are a summary of key observations and have been approved by the observer who accompanied the voyage.

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

#### **Exporter documentation**

Exporter arrangements were available to address procedures relating to cattle management from loading through to discharge, including contingencies.

#### **Loading**

The cattle were loaded according to the load plan, which was compliant with the *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock 2011 (version 2.3)* (ASEL) requirements.

Feed and water were available in most pens prior to loading, and in all pens within 6 hours of loading. The ventilation system was running continuously before and during loading.

No animal welfare issues were observed during loading.

#### **Personnel**

An experienced Accredited Government Australian Veterinarian (AAV) and two experienced LiveCorp Accredited Stockpersons (stockpersons) on-board the vessel were responsible for implementing the exporters' procedures to ensure the health and welfare of the livestock throughout the voyage.

The master, the Chief Officer (CO) and bosun took an active interest in the welfare of the cattle throughout the voyage.

The livestock crew were responsible for feeding, watering and general tidying. Other crew were responsible for wash-down, and moving bedding and chaff.

### **Daily routine**

A management meeting was held daily at 10:00am and was attended by the master, CO, chief engineer, AAV, both stockpersons, and the observer. Topics discussed included fodder and water, animal health and welfare, ship function, wash down, weather and port arrival times.

Cattle were fed early morning and afternoon, with late morning top-up as directed by the stockpersons. Chaff was fed three times daily to the pregnant cattle.

The stockpersons and AAV diligently inspected all cattle pens each morning, and subsequently attended to any health and welfare issues arising, including treatments. The stockpersons and AAV repeated their stock patrol and treatment activities throughout the afternoon, as well as moving stock as necessary.

Nightwatchmen patrolled the cattle pens from 7.00pm to 6.00am and monitored feed and water troughs and immediately reported any issues concerning the cattle directly to the master and AAV.

### **Feed and water**

Pelletised feed was loaded in excess of the ASEL requirements. Fodder and water trough space was adequate for the number of cattle in each pen. The pellet and chaff supply to different classes of cattle was well managed by the stockpersons during the voyage.

Water was supplied continuously to the troughs with no interruptions and the livestock crew kept the troughs in excellent condition.

### **Ventilation**

Ventilation was reliable and consistent throughout the voyage. Auxiliary fans attached to the deck ceilings near bulkheads provided further local airflow in these slightly restricted spaces.

Temperature and humidity readings were similar for all livestock decks with a maximum 24-hour average wet bulb temperature reading of 29.2 °C. The cattle did not display any symptoms of heat stress or variations in appetite or cattle behaviour were observed during the voyage as a result of weather.

### **Pen conditions**

The pad condition on all decks was well managed throughout the voyage through the efficient and effective use of deck wash downs. Some pens were manually shovelled out to reduce the risk of injury to the cattle. The pads were firm to soft until day 6, when the wash-down cycle began. The stocking density allowed most cattle to lie down simultaneously in their pens across all the decks.

No health or welfare issues were observed in the cattle in relation to the pad condition.

## **Health and welfare**

The AAV and stockpersons made observations and maintained records of illness, lameness, and respiration rates among the cattle, and looked for any changes in cattle behaviour that indicated developing stress as the voyage progressed.

The sick, lame or injured cattle were promptly treated with the appropriate treatments. Cattle were treated in hospital pens, or when appropriate in their home pens. During the voyage around 400 individual treatments were administered by the AAV and stockperson for pinkeye, respiratory disease, lameness, and wounds. The number of treatments were representative of the AAV's early detection and treatment of issues as they were identified.

There were 13 mortalities during the voyage. The primary causes of the mortalities were euthanasia for lameness, respiratory disease, and enteritis.

There were no health or welfare issues observed as a result of inappropriate veterinary care of the cattle. The observer noted the vessel's crew, stockpersons and AAV performed their duties in accordance with the ASEL requirements.

## **Discharge**

Cattle were moved to the unloading ramp in an efficient manner with no welfare issues observed. Feed and water were available to all cattle during the discharge period.

Two animals that did not respond to treatment were humanely euthanased after being deemed unfit for discharge by the AAV.

## **Conclusion**

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

**Representative photographs of the voyage**

**Day 2 Cattle in pen – no issues identified**



**Day 7 Cattle in pen – no issues identified**



**Day 10X Cattle in pen – no issues identified**



**Day 13 Cattle in pen – no issues identified**



**Day 16 Cattle in pen – no issues identified**



**Day 18 Cattle in pen – no issues identified**

