

Independent Observer summary report on *MV Maysora*

Sheep and cattle exported to Turkey in April 2018

Report 1, January 2019

Voyage summary

The *Maysora* is a mixed open and closed deck, dual use cattle and sheep livestock vessel. Decks 9 to 11 are open twin tier sheep decks (i.e. each of these decks contains both an upper and lower deck).

This voyage comprised two separate consignments for one exporter. The voyage commenced in Adelaide where cattle and sheep were loaded before departing on 6 April 2018 to Fremantle.

The vessel arrived in Fremantle on 10 April 2018 and loaded cattle and sheep before departing on 12 April 2018, with a total 8,104 cattle and 73,836 sheep on-board. The vessel arrived on 2 May 2018, making this a 29-day voyage.

The Independent Observer (IO) joined the vessel in Fremantle.

The overall mortality rate for the voyage was 0.43 per cent for sheep (315 mortalities), and 0.11 per cent for cattle (nine mortalities). This does not exceed the reportable mortality rate as stated in the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (*Version 2.3*) 2011 ([ASEL](#)). The causes of the mortalities were not considered to be linked to any systemic failure by the exporter.

The following comments represent a summary of key observations from the Independent Observer from loading in Adelaide until discharge in Tekirdag, Turkey. The summary has been approved by the IO who accompanied this voyage.

Implementation of procedures to ensure health and welfare of livestock

Exporter documentation

The exporter Heat Stress Risk Assessment (HSRA) and load plan was submitted to the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources prior to departure as required, and livestock were in general loaded onto the vessel in accordance with the load plan, noting some adjustments were made in the first few days to ensure livestock pen densities were satisfactory.

Consignment Specific Export Plans (CSEPs) were available for sheep and cattle addressing procedures relating to provision of fodder, water, bedding (cattle only) medication, humane destruction, livestock officer instructions from loading through to discharge and contingency plans. The instructions included in the CSEPs were observed to be implemented during the voyage and to be compliant with ASEL requirements.

Loading

The health and welfare of all animals was maintained throughout the loading process. Cattle comprised a mix of British and European breed pastoral cattle. Sheep were a variety of age groups and classes.

Personnel

An Australian Government Accredited Veterinarian (AAV) and two LiveCorp Accredited Stockpersons were on board responsible for implementing the exporters' procedures to ensure the health and welfare of the livestock throughout the voyage to completion of discharge. The AAV was an experienced, practical and competent veterinarian who has a long history of working in the Australian and international livestock industry, both in the private and public sectors. The stock people were also experienced.

The Master of the vessel (Master) was an experienced livestock vessel captain who has been in charge of over 50 livestock voyages. There were 33 livestock crew (Ordinary Seamen) on board, with three being allocated to each sheep deck and two to each cattle deck. Their tasks included cleaning, feeding, bedding if required and washing of decks. There is also a hierarchy of officers, electricians, engineers, caterers and housekeeping staff. Two night watchmen were appointed to record temperatures and notify the Bridge, the Master, or the AAV of any issues arising during their shift.

Daily routine

Management meetings were held each morning with the Master, the Chief Officer (CO), AAV, Head stock person, the Independent Observer and others to discuss and review all aspects of stock management.

Feed and water

Sufficient feed (pellets and chaff) were provided for the voyage based on a 19 day sailing time, plus seven day contingency. The assumptions and calculations made by the company for the feed required and loaded were checked and agreed by the AAV and reconciled against the COs Receipt of Cargo and Fodder Manufacturer's Receipt. The feed cargo exceeded ASEL requirements that animals be fed at 2.5 per cent body weight per day and sufficient feed was loaded for ad libitum feeding. Feed was delivered by an automatic system to each pen. Potable water is made on the vessel by two reverse osmosis units.

The IO reported that there was a problem with the pellets tending to go to powder (fines), which lacked fibre and was unpalatable particularly to the sheep. The CO responded by discarding the powdered pellets if the sheep refused to eat it, incurring losses of 7 tons on one occasion. The livestock export company are aware of the problem and they have followed up with the feed manufacturer. The issue was appropriately noted and managed by the CO and the corrective actions were appropriate.

Ventilation

The IO described that temperature and humidity data indicated that the voyage from Fremantle to Tekirdag had three distinct stages. By Day 9, the sea rose to 27 degrees Celsius and the Bridge temperature rose from 19 degrees Celsius and 68 per cent humidity, to 30 degrees Celsius and 71 per cent humidity; Deck 8 (sheep) went from 22 degrees Celsius and 66 per cent humidity, to

31 degrees Celsius and 79 per cent humidity; and Deck 4 (cattle deck) increased from 25 degrees Celsius and 68 per cent humidity, to 30 degrees Celsius and 85 per cent humidity.

As the vessel moved into the Gulf of Aden, the wind direction was often a following wind. The Master decided on many occasions to steer the vessel in a zig zag pattern to capture some cross wind.

Pen conditions

Deck washing (cattle) procedures were performed on a four day cycle.

Health and welfare

Between Day 9 and Day 20, conditions were harsher as the vessel moved toward the Equator (Day 13) and to the Gulf of Aden (Day 15). The sea temperatures reached 30 degrees Celsius on Day 12, and the Bridge temperature went from 30 degrees Celsius to 33 degrees Celsius between Day 12 to Day 19. Sheep water consumption increased from 3.0 to 3.5 litres/head/day between Day 9 and Day 20 of the voyage. During this stage more than 90 per cent of sheep were observed to be slightly panting (closed mouth), and around 5 to 7 per cent were observed to be panting more rapidly with occasional mouth opening. Only one per cent exhibited sustained open mouth panting. An estimated 30 per cent of the cattle, mostly pastoral, were observed to be slightly panting (closed mouth), 65 per cent were observed to be panting more rapidly with occasional mouth opening, with the remaining 5 per cent (only British or European breeds) observed to be panting more rapidly with occasional mouth opening, but no tongue extension.

All of the sheep deaths were attributed to the syndrome inanition/pneumonia, which has been recognised as most significant cause of death in feedlots and live export sheep. Six of the eight cattle deaths were due to Bovine Respiratory Disease, with the other two due to lameness/leg infections.

From Day 21, sheep respiration returned to a normal resting pattern with no panting observed. The cattle generally brightened up and the mud on cattle and cattle pen floors in the lower decks started to dry.

Discharge

The unloading process in Turkey maintained the health and welfare of animals.

Conclusion

The IO determined that the relevant procedures relating to the management of livestock exported by sea were consistent with ASEL.

Representative photographs of the voyage

Day 2 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 2 Sheep in pen—no issues identified



Day 12 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 12 Sheep in pen—no issues identified



Day 19 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 19 Sheep in pen—no issues identified

