

Independent Observer summary report on MV Ocean Ute

Cattle exported to Vietnam in April 2019

Report 107, October 2019

Voyage summary

A consignment of 3,826 cattle was loaded onto the MV *Ocean Ute* in Townsville on 7 and 8 April 2019. The cattle were discharged from the vessel at Hai Phong, Vietnam on 20 and 21 April 2019 making this a 15 day voyage.

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

The mortality rate for cattle was 0.16 per cent (6 mortalities). The mortality rate does not exceed the reportable level. 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 and has 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 livestock management from loading through to discharge, including contingencies.

Loading

The cattle were loaded in accordance with the load plan. During loading, the heavier steers and bulls were unloaded into the pens closest to the loading ramp. Extra bedding had been placed in these pens.

The observer noted none of the pens were overcrowded and were compliant with the minimum pen area as per *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (Version 2.3) 2011* ([ASEL](#)) requirements.

Personnel

The two LiveCorp Accredited Stockpersons (stockpersons) accompanying the consignment had extensive experience on livestock vessels. They adhered to ASEL requirements throughout the voyage.

The stockpersons were observed to continuously monitor the cattle, inspect for signs of lameness or injuries and check the feed and water troughs to ensure there was available feed

and water at all times. When feed and water levels were low, they immediately made contact with the bosun to make sure that crew members rectified the feed and water status.

Daily routine

There was a daily meeting which took place at approximately 10:00am attended by the Chief Officer (CO), bosun, stockpersons and the observer. The meetings were held to discuss cattle conditions, feed, water, stock welfare issues and any findings from the day before. The importance of compliance with ASEL regulations was discussed during the daily meeting.

All cargo crew members work on a 6 hour rotating system 24 hours per day. They were regularly observed monitoring cattle for injuries, including during the night, monitoring feed and water levels and also regularly clearing the alleyways of excess fodder and faecal matter.

Feed and water

Cattle were fed four times throughout the day, at 7:00am, 10:30am top up, 1:30pm chaff and a 3:30pm full trough feed.

Throughout the voyage and discharge, the livestock were never without access to good quality uncontaminated fodder or without access to quality fresh water. The crew were observed regularly checking fodder and water levels.

Ventilation

No issues were observed with the ventilation.

Temperature checks were recorded twice daily at various times throughout the day. The range of temperatures was recorded as 28°C – 33°C.

Pen conditions

Pad management was monitored daily by the stockperson and also the bosun.

All decks were washed once over a 2 day period. After the deck wash, sawdust was spread in the hospital pens and the pens holding the heavier steers and bulls. In the 24 hours following the wash, all decks dried well due the good ventilation supply to the pens.

Health and welfare

Sixteen cattle were placed in the hospital pen for lameness and all were treated with anti-inflammatories.

There were 6 mortalities during the voyage. The cause of death was attributed to either pneumonia or euthanasia due to a fractured bone or a cow unable to rise.

Discharge

Discharge was supervised throughout the duration by the 2 stockpersons. Crew and stockpersons ensured clean feed and water was supplied to cattle until they were on loaded onto the receiver's trucks. There were no issues during the discharge and it was undertaken professionally and with animal welfare a first priority.

Conclusion

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

The crew members and the stockpersons were professional in ensuring that ASEL requirements were being followed while undertaking their duties in animal husbandry on board the vessel.

Representative photographs of the voyage

Day 2 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 5 Cattle in pen —no issues identified



Day 8 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 11 Cattle in pen —no issues identified



Day 12 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 15 Discharge—no issues identified

