

Independent Observer summary report on *MV Ganado Express*

Cattle exported to China in October 2018

Report 23, December 2018

Voyage summary

The *MV Ganado Express* has a total of five enclosed decks for the carriage of livestock.

The *Ganado Express* commenced loading on 4 October 2018 in Portland and departed the following day carrying a consignment of 3,863 cattle to China. The livestock were discharged in Beihai, China, on 21 October 2018. This constituted a journey of 18 days.

The independent observer (IO) joined the vessel in Portland on the day of departure.

The overall mortality rate for the voyage was 0.03 per cent for cattle (one mortality). This does not exceed the reportable mortality rate as stated in the *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (Version 2.3) 2011* (ASEL). This mortality was not considered to be linked to any systemic failure by the exporter.

The following comments represent a summary of key observations from the IO from loading in Portland until discharge at the Port of Beihai, China. The summary has been approved by the IO who accompanied this voyage.

Implementation of procedures to ensure health and welfare of livestock

Exporter documentation

Consignment specific export plans (CSEPs) were available addressing procedures relating to provision of fodder, water, bedding, medication, humane destruction, livestock officer instructions from loading through to discharge and contingencies. The instructions included in the CSEPs were generally observed to be implemented during the voyage and to be compliant with ASEL requirements. There were provisions for extra watering arrangements in the CSEPs which didn't have to be implemented during the voyage.

Loading

The livestock were loaded in Portland without any perceived or reported incident and the health and welfare of the animals was maintained throughout the process. All animals observed by the IO were in acceptable body condition. The vessel was inspected by the IO at the start of loading and no non-compliance with ASEL including ventilation and feed and water requirements for stock, was observed.

Livestock were in general loaded onto the vessel in accordance with the load plan, noting constant adjustments were made through the journey to ensure livestock pen densities were satisfactory. The IO did not observe anything which concerned them with respect to stocking

density. More than half of the stock in any pen were able to be recumbent at any one time, and there were stages of the journey where almost all of the cattle of multiple pens were recumbent at the same time.

Personnel

There were two very experienced LiveCorp Accredited Stock people on board responsible for implementing the exporters' procedures to ensure the health and welfare of the livestock throughout the voyage. Both stock people demonstrated experience in live export and a knowledge of factors and conditions which need addressing to maintain good standards of animal health and welfare aboard live export voyages.

The crew were diligent and conducted themselves in an appropriate manner with regards to the welfare of the animals on board. They were responsive to instruction from the stock people and aware of the welfare needs of the animals on board.

Daily routine

There was a meeting held daily between the Chief Officer, bosun, both stock people and witnessed by the IO each day at 10.00 am. Journey and supply updates occurred and a discussion about management issues ensued. The meetings varied in length and intensity with what was required.

Temperatures were recorded once daily in mid-morning with a whirling hygrometer to go on the daily report at midday.

Feed and water

Feeding occurred two to three times daily on all decks in response to instruction from the stockperson. Chaff was regularly supplied at the stockpersons instruction whilst in transit. Excess feed was swept up and tossed into pens to aid in moisture control.

Water was supplied by reverse osmosis and each pen had a minimum of one 'nose bubbler'. These were checked at least six times daily, and though cattle took a day or two to adjust to the delivery system there were no issues with water on this voyage.

Ventilation

Ventilation was provided by a series of six supply and exhaust units which provided adequate pen air turnover (PAT) on the IOs assessment for the duration of the journey.

Pen conditions

Pen conditions were very challenging on this journey due to the hot and humid conditions with multiple washings being performed to maintain cleanliness. Adequate measures were made to maintain the welfare of the cattle at the highest possible standard in the circumstances.

Health and welfare

The health and welfare of the stock on board this vessel was very good. The health and welfare of sick animals through the journey was obviously a priority for both stockpersons aboard the vessel.

Discharge

The discharge of animals in Beihai was efficient and the health and welfare of the animals was maintained throughout the process.

Other

This was a very good journey. Both stock people and all the crew showed a diligence and responsibility for the health and welfare of the animals on board. The conditions on board were challenging to keep the stock clean, but ultimately because of how this was managed their welfare was not adversely affected.

Conclusion

The observer determined that the relevant procedures relating to the management of livestock exported by sea were consistent with ASEL and additional conditions of export.

The IO found that from the timing of loading to discharge, the processes, procedures and attention to the maintenance of pens and facilities was good. The master, all the vessel's officers and crew were dedicated and diligent in performing their duties to ensure the well-being of the animals. The stock people worked well with the crew to maintain the health and welfare of the cattle in line with ASEL requirements.

The IO noted that pad conditions were difficult to maintain to optimum levels but the crew and stock people worked well together to maintain them at the highest possible standard in the circumstances that prevailed.

Representative photographs of the voyage

Day 0 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 1 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 8 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 9 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 14 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 15 Cattle in pen—no issues identified

