

Independent Observer summary report on *MV Ocean Ute*

Cattle exported to Indonesia in January 2019

Report 65, September 2019

Voyage summary

A consignment of 6,134 cattle were loaded on the *MV Ocean Ute* in Townsville on 16 and 17 January 2019. The first discharge was in Jakarta, Indonesia between 27 and 28 January 2019. The second discharge was at Panjang, Indonesia, on 29 January 2019, making this a 14 day voyage.

The mortality rate was 0.05% (3 cattle). This does not exceed the reportable mortality level. The cause of the mortalities was 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 (observer). The summary has been approved by the observer who accompanied the voyage.

Implementation of procedures to ensure health and welfare of cattle

Exporter documentation

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

Loading

Fodder and water was made available, as the cattle were loaded. The stockperson inspected pen densities and some adjustments were made in the first few days of the voyage. No welfare concerns or breach of the *Australian Standards for the Export of Cattle (Version 2.3) 2011* ([ASEL](#)) requirements were observed.

Personnel

Personnel included the master, Chief Officer (CO), bosun and 14 other crew. The night watch was nominated by the bosun. Crew and officers were diligent applying ASEL requirements and no compliance issues were observed.

Two LiveCorp Accredited Stockpersons (stockpersons), who were responsible for the health and welfare of the cattle, accompanied the voyage. Both were described as having extensive experience.

Daily routine

Management meetings were held every day at 10:00am. The CO and boson provided updates to stockpersons regarding the fodder consumed and the quantity remaining. The stockpersons and

CO gave directions to the boson, who ensured these instructions were understood and followed by the crew.

Feed and water

The vessel has a mechanical system to deliver feed from storage silos to the pens. However, due to problems with speed, uniformity of delivery and damage to the pellets, the system was not used to deliver pellets to individual pens. Instead, dump points were set up at the end of walkways, below stairs, and around infrastructure; as well as in some pens that would otherwise be capable of holding cattle. From these points, fodder was manually delivered by buckets to feed troughs. Water was delivered by PVC pipes to small black plastic troughs protected by a steel railing. Refilling is triggered by a float activated valve.

Fodder calculations in the load plan utilised the correct ASEL standards for the class of cattle on the voyage.

Ventilation

The temperatures experienced were relatively mild. However, humidity was often high. The top temperature recorded in the daily reports was 34°C (dry bulb), 31°C (wet bulb) and humidity recorded as high as 88%.

Airflow was supplied via air ducts running at the front and rear of the animal pens, and directed via outlet holes into the cattle pens rather than into the walkways. No issues with ventilation were reported.

Pen conditions

The pad conditions on the voyage were good with no issues reported. The observer noted the ventilation system was able to lift moisture despite the high humidity conditions.

Deck washing was postponed due to severe weather. Pitching and rolling would have impeded drainage and could have caused vessel instability and increase the risk of accident for crew and cattle. Washing of Decks 6 and 7 was cancelled, with Decks 1–5 rescheduled. Wood shavings were not spread after washing.

Health and welfare

The stockpersons gauged how well the livestock were doing each day, and took action to maintain the cattle in good health. Adjustments in feeding, chaff provision and spacing of cattle were made on a consignment, line of cattle, pen and individual basis to maximise health.

Three mortalities via euthanasia were recorded as lameness, respiratory and neurological symptoms made these cattle unable or unsuitable for discharge.

Discharge

No issues were noted during discharge. Feed was monitored and continued to be provided to cattle remaining on the vessel as per the stockperson's instruction.

Conclusion

The selection and preparation of suitable cattle contributed to the success of the voyage. Constructive interaction of stockpersons, officers and crew was evident. Cattle were regularly assessed, and those that required treatment were dealt with as a priority.

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

Representative photographs of the voyage

Day 1 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



Day 3 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



Day 5 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



Day 8 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



Day 10 Cattle in pen – no issues identified



Day 13 Cattle in pen – no issues identified

