



**Australian Government**

# **Independent Observer summary report on *MV Al Messilah***

## **Cattle and sheep exported to Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Oman in December 2022**

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**February 2023**

### **Voyage summary**

Livestock: 113 cattle and 58,732 sheep.

Vessel: *MV Al Messilah*.

Loading location and date: Fremantle, 2 to 4 December 2022.

Vessel departure date: 4 December 2022

Discharge location and dates:

- Shuwaikh, Kuwait: 20 to 22 December 2022.
- Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates (UAE): 24 to 25 December 2022.
- Muscat, Oman: 26 December 2022.

Voyage length: 24 days.

Independent Observer (observer): Boarded at Fremantle and disembarked in Jebel Ali, UAE.

Voyage mortality rate: 0.25 per cent (144 mortalities) for sheep. These mortalities are unlikely to be linked to any systemic failure by the exporter. There were no mortalities for cattle.

Notifiable mortality rate required to trigger a mortality investigation: 0.5 per cent for cattle, 1 per cent for sheep.

### **Summary of observations**

This report summarises key observations relating to the implementation and effectiveness of exporter arrangements to ensure the health and welfare of livestock. The report has been approved by the observer who accompanied the voyage.

### **Exporter documentation**

Relevant exporter documentation for the voyage was made available to the observer. The observer reported no issues regarding exporter documentation.

## **Loading**

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements during loading were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

The observer boarded the vessel after commencement of loading on 3 December 2022.

## **Personnel**

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to personnel were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

## **Daily routine**

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to daily routine were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

## **Feed and water**

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to feed and water were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

## **Ventilation**

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to ventilation were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

## **Pen conditions**

The observer noted that:

- 1) Water leaks were observed in one pen, which were caused by overflowing water troughs. These leaks were repaired within 24 hours by crew with no impact on pen conditions or animal health and welfare observed.

## **Health and welfare**

The observer noted that:

- 1) A total of 144 sheep mortalities occurred on this voyage. The AAV reported that 47 sheep were euthanased for gastrointestinal causes (36), respiratory issues (4), lameness (3) infection (2), urolithiasis (1) and unknown (1). Post-mortems were performed by the AAV on 68 of the mortalities, with the main causes identified as gastrointestinal issues, respiratory issues, infection or lameness.
  - a. 70 per cent of the mortalities were attributed by the AAV to inanition which the observer noted was likely due to shy feeding.
- 2) Sufficient trough space was accessible for livestock throughout the voyage. Shy feeding lambs were identified and marked by the AAV and Stockperson on day 6 and separated into their own pen. By day 10, these lambs were reported by the observer to be in better condition.
- 3) During the voyage, the AAV reported 39 treatments of sheep and 0 treatments for cattle. Conditions treated for included lameness, blindness, downer sheep, flystrike, inanition, and rectal prolapse.

## **Discharge**

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements during discharge were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

The observer disembarked on Day 22 in Jebel Ali, UAE. Less than 10 per cent of livestock remained on board (5,299 head of sheep) for discharge in Oman.

## **Department actions**

No adverse animal health and welfare outcomes arising from exporter arrangements were observed. No regulatory action was taken.

## Representative photographs of voyage

**Day 3 Sheep in pen — no issues identified**



**Day 4 Cattle in pen — no issues identified**



**Day 6 Sheep in pen — shy feeding lambs marked and separated into own pen**



**Day 10 Sheep in pen — no issues identified**



**Day 14 Cattle in pen — no issues identified**



**Day 21 Sheep in pen — no issues identified**



### Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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