

VALE COMMENT ON IO 51 Dareen Townsville to Vietnam 2018

Loading

IO SUMMARY: At least 50% of cattle could lie down in the pens at any one time.

VALE COMMENT: actual stocking density not provided as per routine IO summaries.

Ventilation

IO SUMMARY: The ventilation system was operational and effective at all times during the voyage. Three days into the voyage, extra ventilation was provided to the lower decks. Early in the voyage, the cattle on the upper decks appeared to be more comfortable with the ventilation, temperature and relative humidity.

VALE COMMENT: if cattle on upper decks more comfortable, animal welfare was poorer on lower decks.

IO SUMMARY: The dry and wet bulb temperature was taken daily on each deck at 11:00am. The respiratory character of the cattle on every day of the voyage was normal.

VALE COMMENT: once daily temperature monitoring but no heat stress.

Pen conditions

IO SUMMARY: On two occasions, a rain squall wet the pads in the outer corner of the upper decks. The rain did not adversely affect the cattle but the pads became boggy. Waste fodder was added to the pad to provide a remedial action.

VALE COMMENT: rain and seas are a common cause of wet pens in reports.

Health and welfare

IO SUMMARY: The majority of the cattle which became ill and required treatment were not moved to the hospital pens because they were downers. To facilitate isolation and treatments, the downers were left in the original pen and the companion animals were moved to an adjacent pen. The increased frequency of movements to adjacent pens caused some increased level of disruption and their rest time was more often disturbed.

VALE COMMENT: no other option but highlights inherent difficulties in managing animals on floating feedlots.

IO SUMMARY: Seven cattle were identified as downers on day two. From day two until day nine of the voyage, the number of cattle being treated as downers ranged from five to thirteen each day. The success rate for the treatment of downers was mixed during the voyage.

VALE COMMENT: no cause for downers provided, typical of most voyages in which a stockperson is in charge and no veterinarian present.... The cause of the mortalities was not definitively established.