

VALE COMMENT on IO 91 Yangtze Harmony Townsville to Indonesia March 2019

Daily routine

IO SUMMARY: Sixteen crew were assigned to livestock management duties during the voyage. This included 2 night watch crew that each worked a six hour shift. The observer noted that monitoring all of the 8 decks throughout the night was a huge task for 1 crew member.

VALE COMMENT: interesting that this is the first time this important issue has been raised

Feed and water

IO SUMMARY: Potable water was created by reverse osmosis and stored in fresh water ballast tanks and pumped from Deck 1 to all the above decks. The animals accessed water by plastic water troughs attached to the side of the pen fitted with a float valve. The watering system was pushed to its limit a number of times and is discussed in more detail below.

VALE COMMENT: issues with water supply

IO SUMMARY: The majority of the plastic feed bins were designed for round rails, and these had been modified for the square aluminium rails aboard this vessel. The modification is a poor fix, and they didn't fit securely on the rails. On the first feeding of the day, when livestock are particularly hungry and feeding aggressively, the bins would constantly be dislodged from the rails. There were numerous slightly smaller feed bins with the correct square fixings stored outside on Deck 8. This was raised at the daily meeting and the master advised the crew to action this, but no changes were made.

VALE COMMENT: this ship continues to have infrastructure problems see Report 16 from Aug 2018

IO SUMMARY: The crew's practices were also raised by the observer at the daily meetings, where the crew were observed shovelling the walkway muck over the feed bins into the pens, resulting in small amounts of contamination falling into the feed bins.

VALE COMMENT: contaminated food

IO SUMMARY: Early on in the voyage, the dividing gates between the pens were swung open and left attached to the front of the pen. This restricted access to the water and feed bins. I

VALE COMMENT:

IO SUMMARY: In one pen, the gate was removed entirely and left on the floor of the pen.

VALE COMMENT: a recurring event on these voyages.

IO SUMMARY: Water was pumped from the lowest deck (Deck 1) to all other decks, via a system of poly pipes, into plastic troughs with float valves. This system worked well while there were no leaks and a number of animals were not trying to access the water all at once. The observer noted that, after the first morning feed out, the water supply to the 2 top decks slowed and at times ceased due to the demand below. The observer waited for approximately 20 minutes for the water to commence flowing into the troughs on the 2 top decks. This was raised at the 10:00am meeting and the master advised that the back-up plan was to use a separate pump system and fill the troughs manually. The water system required a high amount of maintenance and constant monitoring for leaks as cattle chewed and licked hoses accessible to them. No impact on animal welfare was observed.

VALE COMMENT: water delivery infrastructure been problematic on this ship on other IO reports....obviously neither AMSA nor Dept acts.

Ventilation

IO SUMMARY: The Yangtze Harmony is a converted cargo vessel with 8 enclosed decks.... maximum temperature observed was 29°C wet bulb temperature, 33°C dry bulb temperature with a humidity of 74%. Temperature readings were taken on all 8 enclosed decks throughout the voyage by a crew member at 10:00am each day. There was a noticeable hot spot within the livestock area of this vessel on the stern end of Deck 8 where there is no superstructure above.

VALE COMMENT: no heat stress as mild conditions and appropriate cattle breed.

Pen conditions

IO SUMMARY: No pen washing occurred on this voyage. The observer noted that in the last few days of the voyage, the pad build up was substantial. As the vessel was very close to land at the time, there was no opportunity to undertake any wash down. This was not helped by the numerous water leaks making pad conditions sloppy in isolated areas. Once the leaks were rectified and sawdust applied, these pad areas were once again acceptable.

IO SUMMARY: the representative photos did not show this problem

Health and welfare

IO SUMMARY: There was 1 mortality whilst underway and another animal was unable to be discharged as it was rejected by importer.

VALE COMMENT: did importer correctly identify an issue unnoticed by the Australian stockperson OR was this a case of inappropriate importer rejection, a constant risk in live export?

Discharge

IO SUMMARY: The unloading of the vessel went smoothly in Panjang although the observer noted that crew numbers were stretched when the vessel came alongside and commenced discharge. The discharge in Jakarta took longer due to the small truck size (8-13 head capacity each) and the unavailability of trucks.

VALE COMMENT: slow unloading routine in many SE Asian voyages.