VALE COMPARES THE OFFICIAL IO 3 SUMMARY TO INFORMATION FROM FOI DOCUMENTS

May 2018, Bader II, Adelaide, Fremantle, Eilat, Aqaba,; voyage length 30 days (from Adelaide; sheep mortality 0.27% cattle mortality 0; cattle mortality 0.26%;62668 sheep, 5799 cattle

Loading
Official Independent (IO) Summary: "Animals had spent an extra two weeks in feedlot preparation due to consignment delays and were fit and healthy and well adapted to pelleted feed and chaff."
FOI Documents: "This extra time in the feed lots meant the animals were in superb condition and were fully acclimatised to eating pellets/charf [IO speling] prior to loading on the ship– final selection …was in this instance savage with anything that even vaguely looked less than excellent rejected"

Official IO Summary: "The mortalities were due to diseases of healthy sheep and cattle rather than inanition.
FOI Documents "Most of the sheep deaths were due to diseases of healthy animals"…."there were a few deaths due to Innanition [IO spelling] but surprisingly few" "There were no post-mortems done by the [redaction] on the sheep deaths. He was happy to diagnose the causes of their deaths on clinical presentation."
VALE COMMENT: the IO in one of the daily checklist notes that AAV is not thorough and this would seem to be borne out by this observation. It is concerning that no necropsies were performed when no cause of death was grossly obvious. There were other discrepancies noted in the daily checklist responses by the IOs and there is a comment that a [redacted] person would not normally involve themself early in the voyage: was the redaction referring to an AAV or other ship personnel eg Master? [IO Notes 9.5.2018: "the [redaction] has been involved for the last 5-6 days much earlier than normal"]

Official IO Summary: "All sheep had been shorn. The health and welfare of animals was maintained during loading and no animals were rejected, injured or euthanised during the loading process"
VALE COMMENT: the IO joined the voyage in Fremantle so cannot verify these facts for Adelaide loading.

Daily routine.
IO Summary: "Temperatures were consistently monitored by the crew and verified by the IO
VALE COMMENT: this was not the case as Deck A temperatures were not always recorded as per IO Daily Checklist responses

Feed and water
IO Summary: "There was ample feed on the vessel to allow 12kg /cow/day and sheep 1.2 kg/sheep/day and a seven day contingency reserve. The feeding regime of the voyage used an automatic delivery system with pellets being mostly used. It was well monitored and when hotter weather was encountered, the more cooling feed stuffs of chaff and oats were fed."
VALE COMMENT: there is no mention in the official summary of water being unavailable to some sheep due to delivery problems on some of the days with very high WBT.

Ventilation
IO Summary: Crew and animals encountered elevated temperatures and high humidity from the third day of the voyage out of Fremantle. There were no issues with the ventilation during the voyage.
[VALE COMMENT: this is incorrect as ventilation issues were noted on the daily checklist responses]

IO Summary: There was a specific equatorial plan for high temperature periods involving zig-zagging the vessel to increase air flow through the decks, the installation of fans for some pens and a program of washing down cattle and pens. Deck washing (cattle only) procedures were satisfactory, and sheep pads were observed to be in good condition due to regular maintenance and clearing of manure in corridors.
VALE COMMENT: the daily checklist responses indicates that the sheep pads were not always in a good condition but that the responses to those conditions eg shovelling and sawdust provided a satisfactory resolution

Pen conditions
IO Summary: "The monitoring of the hospital pens was thorough and the animals were well looked after. Whenever an animal was well enough to leave the hospital pen it was returned to the general population and still monitored by having a blue paint sprayed on its back. Veterinary drug use was in line with the ailments being treated and the vessel was more than sufficiently supplied with medicaments. A pen was designated a nursery pen when several lambs were born and staff managed the health and welfare of lambs and mothers well. The crew were very caring for the lambs, the Master in particular. The lambs left the vessel with their mothers in strong condition at the end of unloading to go to the feedlot with special care instructions."
FOI Documents: "There were 6 lambs born on the voyage and 3 left the ship in very good condition….one orphan..despite lots of care and treatment…died…another ..moved out the main pen and its mother tied close to it. By the time the crewman was ready to move it the lamb disappeared into the pen and was trampled. There was another that never did well enough though its mother was with it in the nursery pen and died. "
VALE COMMENT: the DAWR summary implies that all lambs left the vessel when in fact, three of the six lambs died.

FOI Documents: "There is a design fault with the Bader cattle pens that allows sleeping cattle to slide their heads under the bottom rail of the pens…"
"Too much room for cattle allows them to sleep totally on their side which with the mentioned lower rail issue on the ship can to stuck head problems There were 20 or so cattle at least that got their heads caught and were freed"
"there were no initially designated hospital pens"
VALE COMMENT: the IO summary does not contain the information about pen problems that is noted in the FOI report.

Health and welfare
IO Summary: "The vessel's crew, AAV and Stock people managed the health and welfare of animals well. The voyage had low mortality rates for both sheep and cattle. The Bader III had its pens set up so the stock had room to move between 2-3 pens and there were two feed bins and two watering troughs per pen. The stocking density of the vessel allowed each animal 17.5 per cent more space than required by the ASEL. This allowed the stock sufficient room to always access food and water, to lay down when required and to have sufficient spacing even when the very hot days of 34 degrees Celsius Wet Bulb Temperature (WBT) were encountered."
VALE COMMENT: the data provided by the IO in checklists and in daily reports indicates that the sheep and cattle suffered from significant heat stress. The maximum WBTs from Day 5 to Day 18 was 30-34 degree Celcius. Cattle died of heat stress and sheep had open mouth panting and were observed to be stressed. At one stage the AAV could not move sheep to treat for eye inflammation due to the risk of moving heat-stressed sheep. Yet there is no mention of heat stress in the IO

summary which is a significant and ingenuous omission by the DAWR in the health and welfare section.

DIRECT QUOTES FROM FOI DOCUMENTS:
"the Awassi..travelled extremely well" "There was a minor increase of deaths in the sheep of upper deck 2 both port and starboard sides. There is no notable reason for this slighter [IO spelling] increase."..

"There were stress indicators in the Sheep. The voyage encountered Equatorial type conditions from the third day out of Fremantle with WBT's [IO punctuation] of 31 degrees for most days with 34 on the worst day. The sheep often were panting and at times there was open mouth breathing.…There were 4-5 levels of respiration seen on this voyage.
1/ temp around 26 degrees wbt normal respiration
2/ temp around 28-29 WBT there was some panting and increased respiration in a few sheep particularly the big merino rams
3/ temp 30-32 degrees wbt. There was a general increase in panting to around 25% of sheep and there were a few sheep that started to open mouth breathe by CHOICE [IO upper case]. The open mouth breathers would always stop this when you walked past making it more voluntary than not.
4/ temp 32-34degrees [IO spacing] WBT. Here like above there was an increase in panting and voluntary open mouth breathing. About 1% of the sheep max at 24 WBT were voluntary open mouth breathing. They were always able to stop
5 / 35 degrees plus WBT we did not see. Also we at no time saw severe heat stress where may [IO spelling ie many] sheep together were open mouth breathing and where they continued to show this more severe behaviour without being able to control it…"

"There were 2 spikes of cattle deaths noted …The first of these is after the severe heat spike and the cyclonic storm just before Jeddah. Here there appear to have been 2-3 deaths where no cause other than likely heat stress can be found. One of these was a small pastoral bull..At no stage did I see definitive open mouth breathing in any of the cattle. Even at 34 WBT. The only obvious sign in the real heat in the cattle was they reduced their food intake and increased their water intake."

"There was a small spike in cattle mortality after the heat spike and at unloading. This could be related to the heat for the first jump and the second was more mismanagement"

"There were some very hot and humid conditions and the stock coped with them very well. Even when the WBT reached 34 degrees at 92% humidity there was no dramatic signs of heat stress. There was an increase in panting and open mouth breathing but not to any severe level. The sheep coped very well in the conditions…..heat seemed to play very little role in the sheep mortalities on this voyage.

"zig zagging the boat….saw a drop of 3 degrees in WBT when this was instituted."

VALE COMMENT: the IO acknowledges heat stress and its effects. it is however concerning that the IO did not provide panting scores and did not appear to recognise the severity of the heat stress. It is also concerning that the IO did not recognise that being able to control open mouth breathing when he approached, that is, in a stressful situation (a sheep is a prey species and humans are a predator) certainly indicates that the sheep were not in terminal phases of heat stress but cannot be taken to indicate that they were not suffering significant heat stress.

FOI Documents: “The Bader has an ongoing 10% reduction on stocking in place normally due to a high mortality trip many years ago [*2013 -VALE comment*]
VALE COMMENT: there was also a note in the daily report that the stockman and AAV commented repeatedly on how much space was present compared to normal. This despite only a 7.5% reduction in stocking density is surprising. It would suggest that either the stocking density was reduced more than 17.5% on this voyage OR that the normal stocking density has not been ASEL minus 10%.

Discharge
IO Summary: Discharge took quite a lot longer than expected, however the process maintained the health and welfare of animals. The IO noted that normal crew routines are interrupted during discharge which appeared to let a few minor issues arise.
FOI Documents: “The period of madan started toward the end of the journey and with a high level of the Islamic faith on the ship and especially the wharf there were issues with the unloading of the stock. On the ship they were fine but due to other factors the overall unloading took much longer than expected. 4 days more”
VALE COMMENT: the daily checklists indicates multiple problems occurring due to discharge including inability/failure to remove dead animals in a timely fashion and issues with water supply. These are not actually minor issues and the IO makes careful note of these in the daily reports.

Conclusion
The observer determined that the relevant procedures relating to the management of livestock exported by sea were consistent with ASEL.
VALE COMMENT: having ewes lambing at sea is not consistent with ASEL

Representative photographs of the voyage
No issues identified.
VALE COMMENT: given the heat stress described, the photos do not appear to be not representative. The IO repeatedly states that it is possible to make any situation look bad –is it also possible to make a bad situation look good? It is very noticeable that there are no photos provided from between Day 2 (maximum WBT 28º) and Day 13 (maximum WBT 30º but identified as a drier day by the IO), days of very high WBT. There are no photos from the days where heat stress and heat stress conditions described eg none from Day 16 (34º WBT).