

Analysis of major deficiencies detected during the non-discriminatory inspections and action plan to address them as provided for in Article 27(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005

Member State: Ireland

Year: 2015

Abbreviations used in this document.

AFIT	Agricultural Field and Inspection Testing System (DAFM's inspection recording system)
AWD	Animal Welfare Division
CA	Competent authority
CCA	Central competent authority
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
RO	Regional (Veterinary) Office
MS	Member State
OV	Official Veterinarian
VPHIS	Veterinary Public Health Inspection System

Explanatory Notes:

- (i) Category 1 inspections refer to official controls at slaughter plants, assembly centres and holdings.*
- (ii) Category 2 inspections refer to official controls at livestock markets and the ports of Dublin, Rosslare and Waterford and the airport of Shannon*

- (iii) The results of the risk based documentary checks carried out on the returned journey logs is included in the report.*
- (iv) In this report, category 1 inspections include all transport inspections carried out at slaughter plants and those carried out at the place of departure which is typically an assembly centre (bovine and ovine animals) or holding (pigs) on consignments before they are transported on a long journey (exported).*
- (v) Category 2 inspections include inspections carried out at livestock markets, as well as inspections carried out on consignments of animals at Rosslare port and Waterford port just prior to animals loading onto a vessel for export. Inspections at Dublin Port and Shannon Airport are also included*
- (vi) Ireland implements a system whereby approximately 25% of returned journey logs are selected for detailed checks after the completion of the journey. The selection of these journey logs is based on the risk of non compliance associated with the transporter responsible for the individual journeys. DAFM officials with responsibility for assessing these journey logs are instructed to deal with minor deficiencies at a local level and report any major deficiencies to the CCA for further action.*
- (vii) In addition to the journey log checks mentioned (iii) above, non-compliances detected on foot of the information provided to the Irish CA as part of the ongoing system of formal collaboration with the French Authorities that has been in place since 2011 are included under documentary checks (Watering and feeding, journey times and resting)*

1. ANALYSIS OF THE MAJOR DEFICIENCIES DETECTED DURING NON-DISCRIMINATORY INSPECTIONS 2015

For the purpose of this annual report, the following have been considered to be major deficiencies:

Any deficiency that had a direct negative impact on the welfare of the animals being transported or one which is likely to have a direct negative effect on the animals at some point during the planned journey. The decision to define a deficiency as “major” takes

into account all relevant issues relating to the journey such as the type of animals being transported (e.g. the effect of wet/insufficient bedding on young animals versus adult animals), the length of the intended journey (e.g. necessity for the provision of water and temperature control on long journeys), the current and expected weather conditions and so on. The definition also takes into account the action taken to address the non compliance and the timeframe in which the issue was rectified. Water drinkers not working would be considered a major non-compliance but providing it was rectified immediately on foot of a routine check by an OV or by the transporter prior to the commencement of the journey, it is not recorded as a major non-compliance.

Further detail and analysis of major deficiencies

1.1 Fitness for transport

The numbers for 2015 were similar to previous years with most incidents being detected during pre- export checks at an assembly centre or holding and involved very low numbers of animals as a proportion of the total movements in the population. Individual cases were deemed unfit for transport as result of issues such as lameness, conjunctivitis, ringworm and occasionally age. As stated in previous reports, in Ireland the loading of approximately 90-95% of consignments of animals for export is supervised by an OV. The fitness to transport assessment by the OV usually includes a check on the animals at various stages of the export process including during routine identification checks associated with health certification and during loading itself. Therefore animals that are unfit to transport by virtue of illness or age are routinely removed from the consignment by either the OV or the transporter/organiser at any stage of this process and the number detected does not necessarily reflect an attempt on behalf of the transporter/organiser to transport animals that are inherently unfit for the intended journey. Therefore although considered major deficiencies, in this context they are routinely and regularly addressed before export and not considered to be a major issue. The fitness for transport non-compliances detected during transport checks at slaughter plants and during routine ante mortem inspections were of a more serious nature. They involved non-compliances such as transport of an animal with a fractured limb, significant lameness or other disease processes. All were followed up by cross reporting the incident via DAFM's formal cross reporting system to the relevant RO for follow up

and in some cases a by issuing a legal notice to the keeper, suspending the transporter and withdrawing their certificate of competence..

1.2 Transport practices/space allowance/height

The majority of the deficiencies recorded in this category of non-compliance were minor issues relating to inadequate hygiene or lack of disinfection which were rectified on the spot. A written instruction was issued to one authorised transporter forbidding the transport of animals weighing greater than 270 kgs in the neck of a particular vehicle.

1.3 Means of transport

As has been the case in previous years the majority of non-compliances detected in this category were minor issues such as vehicles with loose fixtures and fittings, sharp projections, leaking water drinkers. Such non compliances usually arise as a result of ongoing wear and tear to vehicles with inadequate maintenance. In the majority of cases the problem was either rectified on the spot or where there was no imminent risk to the welfare of the animals, within an agreed timeframe. In one case a legal notice was issued to the operator instructing him to stop his journey and return the animals to the place of departure. In another case operators of livestock vessels were instructed to amend their procedures and to increase the monitoring and recording of deck temperatures, following an incident of overheating on the vessel deck and mortalities of animals in a livestock vehicle.

1.4 Watering / feeding / journey times and rest periods

As mentioned above the system of formal collaboration between the Irish and French authorities is ongoing since 2011. Over 200 consignments of animals (mainly calves) originating in Ireland and Northern Ireland were checked in France by the French CA to verify that journey time and rest period requirements were adhered to. All of the alleged journey time and rest period infringements that were notified to the Irish CCA during 2015 were checked and investigated. . No major infringements were identified.

1.5 Documentation

Most of the non-compliances that occurred during category 2 inspections were detected during documentary checks at Rosslare port and all related to minor omissions from journey logs, section 1.

Several cases related to either no transport documentation or no authorisation and arose from unannounced roadside checks.

2. ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS THE MAJOR DEFICIENCIES

The majority of non-compliances detected during transport checks carried out in 2015 were minor issues.

2.1 Fitness for transport

Because of the potential impact on animal welfare it is imperative to continually monitor the level of non-compliance with fitness for transport requirements and analyse the reasons behind their occurrence. The *Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council (FAWAC)* was established in Ireland a number of years ago to provide a forum for discussion on animal welfare topics and encourage participation by all the stakeholders in addressing animal welfare issues. The Education Committee of FAWAC produces Animal Welfare Guidelines for various species and topics. This Committee produced a booklet entitled “Best Practice for the Welfare of Animals during Transport” in 2007. This booklet has been made available to transporters and keepers over the years and it contains a comprehensive outline of the conditions that would deem an animal unfit for transport. To expand on this initiative DAFM has published the documents “*Practical Guidelines to Assess Fitness for Transport of Adult Bovines*”, “*Practical Guidelines to Assess Fitness for Transport of Pigs*” and “*Practical Guidelines to Assess Fitness for Transport of Equidae*” on the DAFM website. These documents which were prepared by UECBV (European Livestock and Meat Trading Union) and various NGOs with experience in the area of animal welfare during transport are a very useful and user friendly guidance document that is geared particularly towards operators. It provides operators with additional information to aid them when checking whether animals are fit for a journey and ensure that they take the appropriate action in marginal cases in particular. The documents have been circulated to all DAFM staff involved in carrying out transport checks, for dissemination to operators.

2.2 Transport practices

Of the non-compliances identified and reported on in 2015, most were minor and rectified on the spot and accompanied with a verbal warning.

2.3 Means of transport

As above Ireland continues to operate an inspection system whereby approximately 90-95% of consignments of livestock are checked prior to being transported on a long journey (exported). This check includes a check of the animals, means of transport and accompanying documentation. The results of these checks are available for analysis and follow up action where necessary. DAFM will continue to implement this very high inspection rate in relation to all long journeys during 2016, resources allowing.

DAFM's transport inspection forms have been revised and have been integrated into the AFIT system. The new inspection system includes a provision whereby in the event of a serious non-compliance being identified at an inspection the AFIT system will automatically generate the need for a re-inspection. This will ensure that any major non-compliance is followed up and closed out.

2.4 Watering / feeding / journey times and rest periods

The formal system of collaboration between France and Ireland mentioned above continues to be a valuable enforcement tool in that it allows both CAs to monitor compliance with journey time and rest period requirements by Irish transporters, particularly those transporting calves.

The lack of control post capacity for resting and feeding calves at Cherbourg has been addressed and is less of a problem at peak export periods. The new control post is now fully operational and additional capacity is planned for 2016. It presently has the capacity to accommodate 5 trucks of un-weaned bovines (1500 animals). This development has further enhanced the very significant progress that has been made in recent years in relation to compliance with journey time and rest period requirements for calves exported from Ireland to the continent.

Ireland continues to implement the Court of Justice ruling that Regulation 1/2005 applies to exports to Third countries.

2.5 Documentation

The documentary non-compliances detected during journey log checks (section 1) during transport (at Rosslare port) are very minor in nature (e.g. total space provided/estimated total weight of consignment not filled in), and the non compliance rate has continued to fall. Transporters have been temporary suspended for failure to return journey logs.

2.6 Other actions to address transport issues during 2015

Pet Transport

Various claims regarding the illegal transport of puppies to the United Kingdom were made. A campaign of unannounced inspection on vehicles travelling on the car ferries between the two countries took place. These resulted in identifying some unauthorised transport taking place but mostly of non-commercial transporters. Several meetings took place with the car ferry companies regarding procedures for the transport of pets on vehicles and the dangers of heat stress of pets in unaccompanied vehicles.

Transport targets 2016

The CCA will undertake a campaign to focus on equine transport authorisation and particularly to increase the level of compliance in transporter authorisation transport between Ireland, France and the United Kingdom. This will take place at the same time as sales and sporting events when the traffic between the countries is at its busiest.

Disclosure

The approval process was strengthened to include a declaration by the applicant regarding any previous criminal or animal welfare convictions.

Education

The CCA held an Animal Welfare Conference in June 2015, to which NGO's involved in the re-homing and export of horses and dogs were invited.

Livestock Vessels

During 2015 no voyages involving the export of livestock from Ireland to third countries took place. Several livestock vessels applied for approval and were inspected and notified of the result.

Under the provision set out in Article 1 (3) of Regulation 1 of 2005, Ireland implements stricter national measures on sea transport. This is because the geographical position of Ireland means that vessels have to traverse the Bay of Biscay which at times can be prone to poor and unpredictable sea conditions and therefore vessels have to meet very high standards to ensure that the welfare of the animals being transported is protected at all stages of the sea journey. The national legislation was reviewed in 2015 and a consultation exercise was held before the legislation was redrafted and upgraded. This legislation is due to come into effect in 2016 and the main change is to allow vessels with a reduced deck height to be approved for the carriage of smaller animals.

Training

Staff training took place at assembly centres and livestock markets and covered the handling of animals and improving the design of facilities. The training was conducted by an animal behaviour specialist and more sessions will be offered in 2016 in response to demand from CA staff.

Further staff training of the RVO technical and professional staff took place in 2015 and included a refresher course on all aspects of transport and included training on the operation of commonly used navigation systems, as provided for in article 16 of Regulation 1/2005. DAFM now have the capacity to carry out a percentage of checks on navigation systems to compare returned journey logs with data recorded by the navigation systems to assess compliance with journey time and rest period requirements by transporters. Training planned for 2016 includes a review of the delegated function of certificate of competence with focus on the curriculum content and practical

demonstrations of the approval process for livestock vehicles and a demonstration of loading livestock vehicles and a pet transport vehicle.

Cross Divisional Reporting System. Enforcement Action

In 2015 DAFM continued the existing cross divisional reporting system to allow DAFM officials to report any welfare issue detected at a slaughter plant, livestock market or assembly centre to the RVO in which the keeper/transporter's is located using a standard reporting format. The welfare/transport non-compliance was further investigated at regional level in addition to the action taken by the reporting official when the non-compliance was originally identified. This system ensures that welfare/transport non compliances detected are followed up and closed out. Non compliances identified in 2015 resulted in several authorised transporters being suspended; their certificate of competence being withdrawn and re- attendance at the training course.

Enforcement Action

Enforcement actions used in 2015 included the use of Fixed Payment Notices, oral and written warnings, issuing of statutory notices and notifications to the CA of other Member States. Several transporters had their authorisations suspended, while some drivers had their certificate of competence withdrawn and reissued following re-attendance and passing the exam.