

Meeting of the sub-group on transport

Transport of unweaned and other vulnerable animals

Sixth meeting, 20 September 10:00-12:30
(Videoconference on Teams)

– MINUTES –

Attendance

Independent expert	Michael Marahrens
Civil society organisations	Animal Welfare Foundation Animals' Angels
Business and professional organisations	UECBV Copa
Member States	The Netherlands Czech Republic Spain Portugal
European Commission	DG SANTE G5
Guest(s)	Millieu/Ecorys Consortium

Discussion

Members agreed to have the minutes sent in a separate mail with a clear deadline. Comments of members on the minutes will be sent as from now on with everyone in copy. Members agreed that minutes should reflect solely what was said during the meeting; any other input should be made available in the Digital Tool.

The Commission will further reflect on the topics addressed by EFSA in their opinions and circulate a new list of issues to be covered in following meetings.

1. Welcome and short introduction on the topic

The Commission gave a short introduction on the issue to be discussed and invited members to reply to the questions provided prior to the meeting.

2. EU electronic database:

- a) Is the current EU electronic database for transport of animals enough?

b) What more needs to be done/updated/expanded in line with the latest IT development and progress?

- Members stressed the importance of ensuring that TRACES is linked to national databases of transporters. It is difficult to update TRACES from the side of Member States (MS). MS need both technical and financial support in this regard.
- TRACES needs to be linked to the GPS system. In this sense it would be easier to attach the recording of the GPS report, after transport.
- More transparency is needed with some information made visible for the public while respecting GDPR rules. These need to include essential information in intra-certificate, journey logs and approval certificate of vehicles.
- Central database of approval of vehicles, classification, what species and concrete categories are allowed to be transported is fundamental. Also, valid certificate for drivers and co-drivers, assembly centres available and control posts should be included.
- All the information in TRACES needs to be reliable and validated. On imports, a MS raised the issue of TRACES not allowing to indicate the reason why the results of official controls on the welfare of animals is not satisfactory.
- There are 3 categories for transporters, including type one, type two and a 3rd category named “registered transporter” not being clear. Instructions on how to include transporters in the database would be appreciated. For long journeys, the retrospective checks should be based on SNS data and temperatures.
- A member indicated that in the current OCR the connection with the GPS is already foreseen. Temperatures would also need to be included and registered, as well as a harmonised procedure for approval and certifications.
- Other members informed on the problem to identify whether animals are unweaned or not when the records from TRACES are printed out. There should be records in TRACES of the age of the animals in weeks and not in months. This should be made clear.
- TRACES and Eurostat have contradictory data and this should be clarified. The Member who raised this issue promised to share a TRACES office letter explaining the reason for this.
- Questions arose on the vulnerability of an EU database as a failure in the system would imply issues for the transport operations across all MS. Also on who bears the responsibility of entering the information and keep it up to date.
- Additional information to include in the current template of the certificates of approvals of vehicles, example the category of animals, the presence of gooseneck and loading surface of each deck of it, type of drinkers installed
- Make Traces accessible to all competent authorities, even transit authorities. As NGO we experienced that veterinarians of transit regions or countries cannot investigate into or search for a transport but only those competent for departure and arrival

3. What kind of data needs to be recorded electronically that is not currently recorded? (e.g. fitness for transport, checks at departure, transit or exit points, real journey times and conditions at arrival etc.)

- The checks done by the competent authority should be recorded together with the outcomes. Also results of retrospective checks to that one consignment. These outcomes should condition the approval of the next journey.
- The database should be used as a notification system between MSs to notify non-compliance (current system is mainly by email). This would allow to keep under control any recurrences leading to certain consequences in terms of corrective actions to be taken. The existing databases for authorisation and controls need to be linked to the EU database.
- A link in the database to the GPS of the vehicle would cover for section 4 of the journey log, which would be no longer needed.
- Link to the temperature records.
- The database should include more detailed categories of types of animals per vehicle, an information essential to calculate density. Also, violations and sanctions. Not clear whether the CA of a MS can see

the authorisation/approval of vehicles of other countries/regions. The list of assembly centres, control posts etc must be made public.

- On harmonisation of sanctions and list of non-compliant operators, there is already a regulation on this same issue by which the police have a list of serious and non-serious offences and outcome of controls.
- TRACES should allow for the traceability of air tags.
- The system should also allow recordings on the reasons why the animals had to be euthanised.
- Some members suggested to have a common source to calculate foreseen journey duration and weather forecast.
- TRACES should also allow the CA at the place of departure to receive a notification that animals have arrived at place of destination to allow for retrospective checks.
- It should be made mandatory to fill in all boxes in TRACES to authorise the journey.
- The seasonality of consignments/weather conditions is an important issue. Some MS use their national weather forecast but weather predictions have their limitations. TRACES should allow for a “red light” system by which if the CA of transit activates the red light (meaning they will not allow animals to be transported because of weather conditions), then CA at place of departure will not allow the journey to happen.
- Different experiences were shared with regards to publishing and harmonising infringements.
- The CA should always fill in the outcomes of their official controls in TRACES, as in the past it was seen that some CA do not always enter the outcomes of their controls in TRACES.

4. Does the current journey log template include all the necessary information? How could it be used for future retrospective checks and as possible condition to approve or not the next journey?

- The current journey log does not include all necessary information. New template by sea and mixed transport operators is needed and should include the category of animals and the number of each category; number of decks and presence of gooseneck and in how many decks (specifying when in the gooseneck), animals will be loaded; whether there will be food in one of these decks.
- Section 4 of the journey log should foresee space to describe the setbacks of animals falling ill, which is useful information for retrospective checks as well as remarks from the competent authority and police.
- It should be automatically included if a consignment is approved that the CA has checked the weather forecast provided by the organiser. One of the members stressed that animals coming from the north are not used to high temperatures of the south. CA to be at place of departure for long journeys, 100% checks. Therefore, temperature/weather forecast should be added to the journey log.
- A consignment from a vessel arriving to a TC is later loaded into another vehicle and it is not possible to know where the final destination is. In conclusion, a port cannot be a place of destination.
- Journey logs including sea travel have a different logic and should be designed differently.
- In the view of some members, the journey log should be simplified.
- Official controls upon the completion of the journey are risk-based so it is not possible to expect complete information on time of arrival for every transport.
- The way the OCR deals with infringements based on transport is too vague. More concrete measures should be considered.
- sea transport is in many forms and also journey log template should be different (involving TC or not, etc.)
- include, in the planning, not only the indication of transfers but also of waiting times when there is not any transfer, for example at borders, and waiting times due to drivers breaks

5. Are there any mobile apps already available at MS level? What purpose do they serve? How do they work?

- A member mentioned that HU transporters use an app to calculate stocking density. This is also the case in DK for the calculation of journey time. The app in HU is used by drivers.

- An app was presented by a German official vet in the ANIT committee, connected to the TRACES system and it involves weather forecast and other very useable solutions.
- Members agreed on arranging for a presentation on these apps in one of the next meetings of the subgroup.

6. Module on THETIS strengthening official controls on livestock vessels:

a) experience of Member States testing the module

b) view on its usefulness

- The module on THETIS for the record of official controls on livestock vessels is in general very well received. Because the purpose of the system is to share the documentation and information, it is crucial that there be improvement in accessibility to the content.
- Members stressed the importance of getting feedback from TC in case of exports: this is an important means of information which MS do not often receive. For the ones they do, they rarely can trust the information.
- The definition of the organiser is very important task for the revision. Having only one who is responsible will streamline the whole process and will avoid shared responsibilities.