



AAVs and stockpersons on sea voyages – applying for alternative arrangements in accordance with ASEL 3.0.

Live Animal Exports Division

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines alternative arrangements for on-board personnel requirements on consignments by sea as provided for in the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL) version 3.0. It also provides a guide for exporter applications that can be made under the notice of intention to export (NOI).

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to exporters, Australian Government Accredited Veterinarians (AAVs) and stockpersons.
- 2.2 In accordance with ASEL, the department will consider on-board personnel arrangements as part of an NOI application. In considering the approval of NOIs the department will consider whether the international transport arrangements for the livestock are adequate for their health and welfare. This may include:
- requiring an AAV to accompany a consignment in accordance with ASEL s4.1.9. (See [where the department may require an AAV to accompany a consignment](#)).
 - considering applications to not require an AAV to accompany a consignment where they would have otherwise been required in accordance with ASEL s4.1.10. (See [application process for alternative arrangements to having an AAV on a voyage](#)).
 - considering applications to allow an AAV to be the same person as the accredited stockperson in accordance with ASEL s4.1.11. (See [application process for alternative arrangements to allow an AAV and the stockperson to be the same person](#)).
- 2.3 This document outlines the process exporters must follow when seeking to make applications relevant to the ASEL requirements that allow for alternative arrangements, and the criteria the department would consider for any applications made.
- 2.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with relevant export legislation and standards listed under [related material](#).

3 Requirements and instructions

Where the department may require an AAV to accompany a consignment

- 3.1 ASEL s4.1.9 requires that unless an exporter has an approved application under ASEL s4.1.10, an AAV must accompany each consignment of livestock and must remain with the consignment until the last animal has been unloaded at the final port of disembarkation in these circumstances:

- if the voyage is expected to be an extended long haul voyage; and
 - on voyages with pregnant livestock; and
 - any other voyage when directed by the department.
- 3.2 In accordance with ASEL s4.1.9 c), the department may direct an exporter to have an AAV on any voyage when required. This may be required as part of the basis of an NOI approval, so that the department can be satisfied that the international transport arrangements for the livestock are adequate for their health and welfare.
- 3.3 If the department requires an exporter to engage an AAV for a consignment, we will notify the exporter in writing prior to approval of the NOI. If the exporter wishes to comment on the notice or provide the department with evidence as to why the requirement to engage an AAV cannot be met, the exporter may respond to the notice in writing. Some examples of where an AAV may be required include, but are not limited to:
- The exporter has had a recent or previous notifiable incident.
 - The vessel is new or has had a significant structural change or re-fit, or a change of ownership or management.
 - Previous voyage reports or Independent Observer (IO) reports have noted concerns on the health and welfare of animals exported by that exporter or on a given vessel.
 - Where the route of the consignment, time of year, or destination present a cumulative higher risk to animal health and welfare (see [factors relevant to determining if a consignment is lower or higher risk](#)).
 - An exporter nominates to send higher risk animals.
 - New exporter or a new market for an existing exporter.
 - A vessel has previously had a notifiable incident and the cause is unknown or known to be from a vessel/structural concern.

Application process for alternative arrangements to having an AAV on a voyage

- 3.4 An exporter must follow these steps to apply for an alternative arrangement to having an AAV accompany a consignment:
- The exporter must make a written application to the department at the time of submitting an NOI for any particular consignment. This must be uploaded via TRACE or sent directly to livestockexp@awe.gov.au.
 - The application must include:
 - the consignment LNC number
 - the reasons or grounds in which the application is being made
 - details on how the exporter intends to manage the health and welfare of the livestock throughout the voyage without the presence of an AAV
 - details of the number of accredited and competent stockpersons that will accompany the animals, and their level of knowledge (including any qualifications), skill and experience to appropriately carry and use veterinary medications, such as drugs for sedation and pain relief, without an AAV present

- details of how the stockpersons' additional workload of providing AAV functions will be managed
 - details of a communication plan that will allow the stockperson to make contact with the exporter at any time during the voyage
 - a written contingency plan for circumstances where a significant animal health or welfare issue occurs during the voyage, and how arrangements will be made for the prompt and humane handling, care, treatment, separation, euthanasia and/or disposal of the livestock in compliance with ASEL and all relevant and applicable legislation.
- 3.5 The department will consider any applications made against the criteria outlined in this guideline and provide a written outcome of decision to the exporter. In making the decision, the department may also consider the latest information, advice and research relevant to the application.
- 3.6 Unless otherwise approved in writing, the exporter must have an AAV accompany any consignment that is required to have an AAV as per ASEL s4.1.9.

Assessment of applications received by the department

- 3.7 All applications are considered on an individual consignment basis. In deciding whether to approve an application, the department will consider:
- the reasons or grounds for the application being made by the exporter
 - whether the proposed voyage is of lower risk and that the proposal to not have an AAV on board would not compromise animal health and welfare (see [factors relevant to determining if a consignment is lower or higher risk](#))
 - if the number, knowledge (including any qualifications), skill and experience of the stockperson(s) on board can appropriately manage the health and welfare of the livestock, without the presence of an AAV.
 - any other matters that the department considers relevant to the application.
- 3.8 If an application is approved and any circumstances of the consignment change, this may affect the approval. Any changes will be reviewed by the department when an exporter amends a previously approved NOI. Exporters will be notified if the changes impact any previous approvals given.

Applications to allow an AAV and stockperson to be the same person

- 3.9 An exporter must follow these steps to apply for an alternative arrangement to allow an AAV and stockperson to be the same person:
- The exporter must make a written application to the department at the time of submitting an NOI for any particular consignment. This must be uploaded via TRACE or sent directly to livestockexp@awe.gov.au.
 - The application must include:
 - the consignment LNC number
 - the reasons or grounds in which the application is being made
 - details on how the exporter intends to manage the health and welfare of the livestock throughout the voyage, taking into consideration the number, species and class of livestock on the voyage, including:
 - the number of accredited and competent stockpersons (if any) that will accompany the animals, and their level of knowledge (including any

qualifications), skill and experience in the management and handling of livestock on voyages

- details of how the AAV/stockperson will manage the additional workload to ensure that their ability to provide both AAV and stockperson functions will not be affected (such as the employment of additional suitable crew to assist with stockperson functions)
- a written contingency plan for circumstances where a significant animal health or welfare issue occurs during the voyage, and how arrangements will be made for the prompt and humane handling, care, treatment, separation, euthanasia and/or disposal of the livestock in compliance with ASEL and all relevant and applicable legislation.

3.10 The department will consider any applications made against the criteria outlined in this guideline and provide a written outcome of decision to the exporter. In making the decision, the department may also consider the latest information, advice and research relevant to the application.

3.11 Unless otherwise approved in writing, the exporter must ensure that an AAV and stockperson are not the same person as per ASEL s4.1.11.

Assessment of applications received by the department

3.12 All applications are considered on an individual consignment basis. In deciding whether to grant an application for an AAV and stockperson to be the same person, the department will consider

- the reasons or grounds for the application being made by the exporter
- whether the proposed voyage is of lower risk, and that by having an AAV as the same person as a stockperson would not comprise animal health and welfare (see [factors relevant to determining if a consignment is lower or higher risk](#))
- whether the workload of the AAV/stockperson can be managed in a manner that is appropriate to achieve best animal health and welfare outcomes throughout the voyage
- any other matters that the department considers relevant to the application.

3.13 If an application is approved and any circumstances of the consignment change, this may affect the approval. Any changes will be reviewed by the department when an exporter amends a previously approved NOI. Exporters will be notified if the changes impact any previous approvals given.

Factors relevant to determining if a consignment is lower or higher risk

3.14 Risk factors in each category will be considered to determine a cumulative overall risk level. Having one or more higher risk factors may not necessarily mean that an application will not be approved, as they will be considered in conjunction with lower risk factors which may reduce the total risk level.

Table 1 Determining consignment risk factors

Category	Lower risk factors	Higher risk factors
Route and destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voyage length is short haul or consignment does not cross the equator • The market and route of travel is of close proximity to Australia • Voyage will not travel through waters known to be of higher risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voyage length is long haul or extended long haul, or the voyage crosses the equator • The voyage is travelling to or through the Middle East, Russia, China, Japan, the Suez Canal, Cape of Good Hope, Cape Horn or the Panama Canal

Category	Lower risk factors	Higher risk factors
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consignment is going to a new market • The consignment is going to multiple ports of call
Climatic difference of ports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel between ports of similar climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel between ports with differing climate conditions (that is, travelling from an Australian winter to the destination country's summer, or vice versa) • Livestock sourced or exported from ports in Australia below 26 degrees south that will cross the equator
Vessel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vessel has been regularly used to carry Australian livestock • Vessel has not had a notifiable incident in the last 12 months (for any exporter) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vessel is new (or recently renovated) • Vessel has undergone a recent dry dock repair, or has had recent mechanical issues, which has the potential to impact animal welfare or cause delays • Exporter is using a vessel that has been reported through the IO program to have structural concerns (for example, flooring or ageing vessel) • Vessel has had a notifiable incident in the last 12 months (for any exporter). Consideration may be given to the likely cause of any notifiable incident
Species and class of livestock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller consignments of cattle or sheep that are not considered heavy, long horned or pregnant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cattle weighing more than 500kg • Pregnant livestock • Long horned animals • Buffalo • Goats • Deer • Camels/camelids • Any animals exported under an approved management plan
Previous exporter performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exporter has not had a notifiable incident in the last 12 months • Exporter has proven compliance, based on regional veterinary officer, independent observer, mortality and audit reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exporter has had a notifiable incident in that species in the last 12 months • Exporter has received a non-compliance in the last 12 months (this could be through Livestock Export Consignment Reports (LECR) or through auditing of an exporter's approved arrangement)

4 Related material

For more information see:

- [Export Control \(Animals\) Order 2004](#)
- [Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock \(ASEL\) 3.0](#)
- [Approved Arrangements Guidelines for the export of livestock](#)

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- [Approved Export Program Guidelines](#)
- [TRACE](#)