



Australian Government

Independent Observer summary report on *MV Friesian Express*

Cattle exported to Indonesia and Malaysia in May 2024

July 2025

Voyage summary

Livestock: 1,773 cattle

Vessel: *MV Friesian Express*

Loading location and date: Darwin, 13 May 2024

Vessel departure location and date: Darwin, 14 May 2024

Discharge location and dates:

- Belawan, Indonesia, from 21 May to 22 May 2024
- Pasir Gudang, Malaysia, on 24 May 2024

Voyage length: 12 days

Independent Observer: Boarded at Darwin and remained onboard until completion of discharge.

Voyage mortality rate: 0.11% (2 mortalities). These mortalities are unlikely to be linked to any systemic failure by the exporter.

Notifiable mortality rate: 0.5% for cattle

Summary of observations

This report summarises key observations of the implementation and effectiveness of exporter arrangements to ensure the health and welfare of livestock. The report has been approved by the observer who accompanied the voyage.

Exporter documentation

The observer reported no issues regarding exporter documentation.

Loading

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to loading were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Personnel

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to personnel were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Daily routine

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to daily routine were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Feed and water

The observer noted that on days 2 and 3 of the voyage, no cattle were fed chaff. From days 4 to 12 of the voyage, approximately 15% of the cattle in the consignment were fed chaff and the remaining cattle were not. The Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL) requires that at least 1% of the required feed is chaff or hay. No adverse effects on animal health and welfare were observed as a result of chaff not being fed.

Ventilation and voyage conditions

The maximum wet bulb deck temperature reported by the accredited stockperson during the voyage was 29.3°C, which was recorded on day 10 on decks 2 and 3. The reported daily maximum wet bulb temperatures throughout the voyage ranged from 24°C to 29.3°C. No adverse effects on animal health and welfare were observed as a result of the temperatures throughout the voyage.

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to ventilation were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Pen conditions

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to pen conditions were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Health and welfare

No systemic issues observed.

The stockperson reported that:

- 1) During the voyage, 50 cattle were treated for conditions including lameness, limb injuries and infections, eye injuries and conditions, nasal discharge and laboured breathing.
- 2) A total of 2 cattle mortalities occurred on this voyage with the cattle found deceased.
- 3) The stockperson performed post mortems for both cattle mortalities, with one attributed to a musculoskeletal issue and the other attributed to a respiratory infection.

Discharge

Based on observations made during this voyage, the exporter arrangements relating to discharge were appropriate and effective in managing livestock health and welfare.

Department actions

While no adverse animal health and welfare outcomes arising from exporter arrangements were observed, the department required the exporter to report on corrective actions taken to ensure livestock on future voyages are fed chaff as required by the ASEL standard 5.3.7.

Representative photographs of voyage

Day 2 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 4 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 5 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 7 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 9 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Day 11 Cattle in pen — no issues identified



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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