

Independent Observer summary report on MV *Bahijah*

Cattle exported to Israel in November 2018

Report 29, September 2018

Voyage summary

The *Bahijah* commenced loading on 31 October 2018 in Fremantle and departed the following day carrying a consignment of 6,582 cattle to Israel. The discharge of livestock in Eilat, Israel was completed on 20 November 2018, making this a 21 day voyage.

The Independent Observer (observer) joined the vessel in Fremantle.

The mortality rate for the voyage was 0.03% for cattle (2 mortalities). This does not exceed the reportable mortality rate. The mortalities were not considered to be linked to any systemic failure by the exporter.

The following comments represent a summary of key observations from the observer from loading in Fremantle until discharge in Israel. The summary has been approved by the observer who accompanied this voyage.

Implementation of procedures to ensure health and welfare of livestock

Exporter documentation

Exporter arrangements were available to address procedures relating to livestock management from loading through to discharge and contingencies. The exporter arrangements were observed to be implemented during the voyage and to be compliant with the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (Version 2.3) 2011 ([ASEL](#)) requirements.

Loading

No health and welfare concerns were noted during loading. During the first few days of the voyage, cattle were moved from pens with a higher stocking rate to those with more space. In addition, the stocking rate of the pens located adjacent to the engine room walls were reduced on day 3 because of local increased temperature.

Some gates between pens were removed to allow for more movement and improved access to feed and water.

Personnel

An Australian Government Accredited Veterinarian (AAV) and a LiveCorp Accredited Stockperson (stockperson) accompanied the consignment.

The health and husbandry of the cattle were very well managed by a diligent and professional crew under the supervision of the master, Chief Officer (CO), AAV and the stockperson.

Daily routine

Daily meetings were held at 10:00am attended by the AAV, stockperson, master, CO, and observer. The boson attended on non-deck washing days. Daily reports were lodged by the CO at midday after the AAV's input.

Recordings of temperature were taken every 4 hours on all decks and a daily average recorded for each deck.

The cattle were inspected by the AAV, stockperson, CO and crew at least twice daily. The master occasionally walked the decks.

Overnight one crew member checks each deck every hour and provides an entry in the overnight cattle watch log.

Feed and water

Two feeds were provided each day. Additional feeds of chaff or pellets were provided based on AAV advice at the daily meeting. Overall fodder consumption was calculated as a combination of the number of troughs filled and known capacity of the troughs. The amount of fodder remaining on board was reported at the daily meeting.

Overall, the consignment was fed in accordance with ASEL requirements. However a random audit of a sample of pens indicated a small number of pens were fed less than the rate specified in ASEL on the day of sampling.

Water was delivered by an automatic 'float and tap' to each trough. The water system required constant monitoring. Leaks and hose malfunctions were fixed as they were noticed.

Ventilation

No signs of heat stress were detected.

Not all the wet/dry bulb temperature recording infrastructure was in working order. Temperature and humidity was recorded on a handheld device every 4 hours on all decks and averaged for reporting purposes.

A known ventilation issue was noted relating to one intake tower that was located very close to the engine room doors and ventilation. With a following wind, the close proximity can result in the intake of hot air and a corresponding increase in the temperatures immediately behind the engine room walls on Decks 5, 6 and 7. On average, temperature readings were two degrees warmer behind the engine room walls compared with surrounding pens. As discussed under "Loading", stocking in these pens was lightened to address this issue.

Pen conditions

Deck washing was undertaken on three occasions. Overall, the cattle responded well to wash down of pens. The wash was generally split over two days.

Sawdust bedding was spread in the pens of the heavier cattle for loading and in hospital pens. Further sawdust was used after the final wash.

Health and welfare

The health and husbandry of the cattle were very well managed by a diligent and professional crew under the supervision of the master, AAV and the stockperson.

Conclusion

No significant non-compliances were observed in relation to the exporter instructions. The overall handling of the cattle was efficient and professional. The observer did not witness any deliberate disregard for any animal welfare.

Representative photographs of the voyage

Day 5 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 8 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 10 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 13 Cattle in pen —no issues identified



Day 16 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 18 Cattle in pen—no issues identified

