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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Directorate F - Food and Veterinary Office

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FINAL REPORT OF AN AUDIT  
CARRIED OUT IN  
PORTUGAL  
FROM 26 JANUARY 2015 TO 30 JANUARY 2015  
IN ORDER TO  
DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ANIMAL WELFARE TRAINING  
PROGRAMMES

*In response to information provided by the Competent Authority, any factual error noted in the draft report has been corrected; any clarification appears in the form of a footnote.*

### ***Executive Summary***

*This audit took place in Portugal from 26 to 30 January 2015 to determine the effectiveness and suitability of the activities to ensure staff looking after or handling farm animals possess the appropriate ability, knowledge and professional competence. The audit focussed on live animal transport and the slaughterhouse sector.*

*The report concludes that training on animal welfare delivers the knowledge of aspects that are important for the industry to comply with animal welfare rules using learning tools that are appreciated by the industry, with competence notionally assessed as part of these qualifications, providing a good level of aptitude for those entering the different sectors. The CA's system of supervision and regular evaluation of training courses ensures their suitability.*

*Other than those courses there are few activities dealing with animal welfare that allow staff looking after or handling farm animals to update their knowledge and competence, mainly due to the lack of information in Portuguese; the OV's working in the field and the CCA's and the Commission's websites are the main sources of information.*

*The report makes one recommendation to the Portuguese authorities regarding the provision of certificates for road drivers and attendants involved in the transport of live animals.*

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
AWO	Animal Welfare Officer
CA	Competent Authority
CCA	Central Competent Authority
DGAV	the Directorate General for Food and Veterinary issues – <i>Direção Geral de Alimentação e Veterinária</i>
DRAP	the Regional Directorate for Agriculture and Fisheries – <i>Direção Regional de Agricultura e Pescas</i>
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office
OV	Official veterinarian
UFCD	Short Term Training Unit – <i>Unidade de Formação de Curta Duração</i>

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This audit took place in Portugal from 26 to 30 January 2015 as part of the planned audit programme of the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO).

An opening meeting was held with the competent authorities (CAs) on 26 January. At this meeting, the objectives of, and itinerary for, the audit were confirmed by the mission team. The audit team comprised two auditors from the Food and Veterinary Office and was accompanied throughout the audit by representatives from the central competent authority (CCA) – the Directorate General for Food and Veterinary issues (*Direção Geral de Alimentação e Veterinária – DGAV*).

## 2 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The objective of the audit was to determine the effectiveness and suitability of the activities to ensure staff looking after or handling farm animals possess the appropriate ability, knowledge and professional competence.

The CCA had been asked to select two sectors from the four (pigs, broilers, transport and slaughter) for which there are specific EU requirements regarding operator competence. The CCA selected the live animal transport and slaughterhouse sectors and therefore the scope of the audit was on the relevant activities in those sectors.

In pursuit of the objectives, the following meetings were held:

Meetings		Comments
Competent Authorities	4	As well as an opening and final meeting, two meetings took place with CA staff responsible for carrying out official controls in slaughterhouses.
Live animal transporters	3	Two meetings with two groups of trained transporters (10 in total) and one meeting with one group of transporters (4 in total) who had not undergone training.
Animal Welfare Officers (AWOs)	4	Two meetings with two groups of trained AWOs (8 in total) and two meeting with two groups of AWOs (8 in total) with certificates of competence issued based on having more than three years' professional experience.
Trainers	1	A meeting with training bodies and trainers providing training in the live animal transport and slaughterhouse sectors.

### **3 LEGAL BASIS**

The audit was carried out under the general provisions of EU legislation and, in particular Article 45 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules.

EU legal acts quoted in this report are provided in Annex 1 and refer, where applicable, to the last amended version.

### **4 BACKGROUND**

The EU strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015 (COM(2012) 6 final/2) that was adopted in January 2012<sup>1</sup> indicated that one of the key issues which needed to be addressed was that many stakeholders lack sufficient knowledge about animal welfare. Subsequently a study on animal welfare education was launched to identify the animal welfare topics which should be included in the professional curricula of those involved with animals and which actions would be needed to improve awareness among those professions. This study should be finalised in 2015.

This series of FVO audits, of which this is the second, aims to identify activities that are suitable and effective in delivering high levels of knowledge and competence to the professional sectors on animal welfare, and therefore achieve a high level of compliance with animal welfare requirements.

### **5 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1 TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN THE LIVE ANIMAL TRANSPORT SECTOR**

##### **Legal requirements**

Article 17(1) and Annex IV of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/docs/aw\\_strategy\\_19012012\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/docs/aw_strategy_19012012_en.pdf)

## Findings

1. The EU requirements for training courses in the live animal transport sector in Portugal are met through vocational training provided by approved training bodies and the dissemination of information via the CCA's website.
2. Under the provisions of the national instructions a degree in veterinary medicine or zootechnics can be recognised as equivalent to a certificate of competence for long and short distance transport of specific species. However, this provision is not envisaged in Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. Point 1 of Annex IV of this Regulation requires road drivers and attendants to follow a training course which includes the requirements of Annexes I and II of the same Regulation and pass an independent examination.

Details of, and feedback on, the vocational training and other activities are set out below.

### *Vocational training*

3. The training courses length and main themes have been determined based on the CCA's knowledge of the legislation and of the animal transport industry in Portugal and the CCA's awareness of problems commonly noted by official controls.
4. Training and examination criteria relevant to animal welfare during transport have been laid down in national instructions in 2012 (*Norma Orientadora* n. 10/2012). These instructions:
  - lay down the criteria for the approval of the training course, including the trainer's experience and qualifications;
  - identify the CAs responsible for the approval of the training courses on animal welfare during transport – the Regional Directorates for Agriculture and Fisheries (*Direções Regionais de Agricultura e Pescas – DRAPs*);
  - determine the topics to be delivered and the minimum duration of the course (22 hours), including the amount of time to be assigned to each topic;
  - determine the criteria for the examination including the modalities, pass mark and independence of the examining jury.
5. In addition to the requirements included in the national instructions, training bodies have to be certified by the Directorate General of Employment and Industrial Relations (*Direção Geral do Emprego e Relações de Trabalho – DGERT*).
6. Regarding the delivery of the training course:
  - This is composed of theoretical parts and case studies. Although the national instructions do not envisage an in-field component, one of the trainers met by the audit team had included a simulated inspection of a trainee's vehicle in the course content.

- The national instructions require training bodies to provide the trainees with a copy of the material used during the training course.

7. Regarding the final examination:

- The jury is chaired by a representative of the DGAV and includes a representative of the DRAP and the trainer.
- The national instructions require that the exam papers are different for each training course.
- There is a centralised database of pooled questions which the jury can refer to when designing the exam paper. These are generally practical questions which relate to possible real-life situations.
- After correcting the exam papers, the answers to the questions are discussed with the trainees to provide the correct answer to who has replied incorrectly and clarify any misinterpretations.

8. In order to ensure the quality of the vocational training:

- The DRAP representatives can attend the training course to verify that the training body has respected the course content requirements and evaluate the quality of the course.
- The training body is required to submit a technical summary report for each training course concluded to the DRAP for evaluation. This report has to include feedback from the trainees and the trainer on the course quality and content and an analysis of possible issues that may have arisen during the course.

***Activities additional to vocational training***

9. Alternatively to the vocational training described above drivers and attendants can follow a Short Term Training Unit (*Unidade de Formação de Curta Duração – UFCD*) on transport. This course provides financial support to the trainees, is of slightly longer duration and has the same contents as the vocational training. In the last two years 73% of the transport training courses given were within the UFCD framework with the remaining 27% being those that are paid fully by the trainees.

10. The DGAV has produced a number of brochures on the welfare of animals during transport, and made them available on its website.

11. Both trainers and trainees indicated that:

- the use of videos and images to illustrate good and bad practices and the group discussions to exchange experiences of opinions are useful learning tools;
- with the exception of the brochures produced by the DGAV there are very few sources of information in Portuguese on the protection of animals during transport.

### **Conclusions on training activities in the live animal transport sector**

12. The CA has set up training courses for drivers and attendants which focus on aspects that are important for the live animal transport sector in Portugal. The tools used by the training bodies are greatly valued by the trainees, facilitating the learning experience. This is of particular importance due to the few sources of information in Portuguese on the subject. Financial aid is encouraging better levels of attendance.
13. The system allows for the recognition of qualifications not foreseen by Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 and persons who benefited from this would not have been trained and examined on Annexes I and II of this Regulation.

## **5.2 TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE SECTOR**

### **Legal requirements**

Article 21 (a) and (c) of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009.

### **Findings**

14. The EU requirements for training courses in the slaughterhouse sector in Portugal are met through vocational training provided by approved training bodies.

The organisation, details of, and feedback on, the vocational training are in essence identical to the ones set out for transport already indicated above (see Points 3 – 8 of Section 5.1).

#### ***Vocational training***

15. The respective details relevant to animal welfare during slaughter have been laid down in another national instruction in 2012 (Norma Orientadora n. 11/2012). Training courses for AWOs have a duration of 28 hours whereas training courses for operators have a duration of 14 hours.

#### ***Activities additional to vocational training***

16. The CA has set up a system to assign certificates of competence by way of a simplified procedure to persons that can demonstrate at least three years of relevant professional experience, as foreseen by Article 29(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009. This procedure requires the applicant to reply to a questionnaire which is then used by the CCA to evaluate his/her competence.
17. The CA collaborated with the Portuguese Meat Industry Association (*Associação Portuguesa dos Industriais de Carnes – APIC*) in the production of an informative brochure on the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 and organised sixteen meetings with stakeholders to disseminate information on the requirements of this Regulation.

18. The majority of the trained and untrained AWOs indicated that they refer to the official veterinarian (OV) in the slaughterhouse when seeking information regarding the welfare of animals during slaughter. A number of AWOs also made reference to the Commission's brochure on the responsibilities of AWOs<sup>2</sup>.
19. Similarly to the staff involved in the transport of live animals, staff involved in the slaughter of animals and related operations indicated that:
- the use of videos and images to illustrate good and bad practices and the group discussions to exchange experiences of opinions are useful learning tools;
  - there are very few sources of information in Portuguese on the protection of animals during slaughter.
20. Most of the AWOs who attended the training course indicated that this was overall helpful but more assistance is required to draft adequate standard operating procedures and to recognise signs of consciousness.
21. Two of the untrained animal welfare officers met by the audit team indicated that they used manufacturers' manuals for electrical waterbath stunners as guidance for the recognition of signs of consciousness in poultry. The signs identified were however signs of meat quality issues (reddened pygostyle and wing tips) instead.
22. The OVs met by the audit team indicated that, following training on the slaughter of animals and related operations, slaughterhouse staff were more aware of animal welfare criteria.

#### **Conclusions on training activities in the slaughterhouse sector**

23. The CA has set up training courses for staff involved in the slaughter of animals and related operations which focus on aspects that are important for the slaughter sector in Portugal. These courses are conferring the necessary knowledge on animal welfare to the trainees although more attention may be required in drafting standard operating procedures and recognising signs of consciousness. The tools used by the training bodies are valued by the participants, facilitating the learning experience. This is of particular importance due to the few sources of information in Portuguese on the subject.

## **6 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS**

Training on animal welfare delivers the knowledge of aspects that are important for the industry to comply with animal welfare rules by using learning tools that are appreciated by the industry and competence is notionally assessed as part of these qualifications, providing a good level of aptitude for those entering the different sectors. The CA's system of supervision and regular evaluation of training courses ensures their suitability.

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/slaughter/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/slaughter/index_en.htm)

There are few activities dealing with animal welfare outside training that allow staff looking after or handling farm animals to update their knowledge and competence, mainly due to the lack of information in Portuguese; the OV's and the CCA's and the Commission's websites are the main sources of information.

## **7 CLOSING MEETING**

A closing meeting was held on 30 January 2015 with representatives of the CAs, at which the main findings and preliminary conclusions of the audit were presented by the audit team.

## 8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Competent Authorities are invited to provide, within 25 working days of receipt of the report, an action plan containing details of the actions taken and planned, including deadlines for their completion, aimed at addressing the recommendation set out below:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p>To modify the current system so that certificates for road drivers and attendants involved in the transport of live animals are only issued to persons who have been trained and examined on all the items listed in Point 2 of Annex IV of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, as required by Point 1 of Annex IV of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.</p> <p>Recommendation based on conclusion 13.</p> <p>Associated finding 2.</p>

## ANNEX 1 – LEGAL REFERENCES

<b>Legal Reference</b>	<b>Official Journal</b>	<b>Title</b>
Reg. 882/2004	OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1, Corrected and re-published in OJ L 191, 28.5.2004, p. 1	Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules
Reg. 1/2005	OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1-44	Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97
Reg. 1099/2009	OJ L 303, 18.11.2009, p. 1-30	Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing