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Directorate F - Food and Veterinary Office

DG(SANCO)/9210/2003 – MR Final

FINAL REPORT OF A MISSION
CARRIED OUT IN SWEDEN
FROM 29 SEPTEMBER TO 3 OCTOBER 2003
IN ORDER TO EVALUATE CONTROLS OF ANIMAL WELFARE
DURING TRANSPORT AND AT THE TIME OF SLAUGHTER

Please note that factual errors in the draft report have been corrected in bold, italic, type. Clarifications provided by the Swedish competent authorities are given as footnotes, in bold, italic, type, to the relevant part of the report



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1. INTRODUCTION

The mission took place in Sweden from 29/09/03 to 03/10/03. The inspection team comprised two inspectors from the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) and one observer from the European Free Trade Association Surveillance Authority.

The mission was undertaken as part of the FVO's planned mission programme. It forms part of a wider series of missions to all Member States evaluating control systems and operational standards in this sector.

The inspection team was accompanied during the mission by representatives from the central competent authority (CCA), the Swedish Board of Agriculture.

An opening meeting was held on 29 September 2003 with the CCA **and a representative of the National Food Administration (Livsmedelsverket)**. At this meeting, the objectives of, and itinerary for, the mission were confirmed by the inspection team, and additional information required for the satisfactory completion of the mission requested.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE MISSION

The objective of the mission was to evaluate the implementation of EU legislation concerning animal welfare during transport and animal welfare at the time of slaughter. In pursuit of this objective, the following sites were visited:

COMPETENT AUTHORITY VISITS			Comments
Competent authority	Central	2	Opening and closing meetings.
	Regional	2	County Offices.
	Municipal	2	Municipal Offices, where the organisation of checks was clarified and reports assessed.
LIVE ANIMAL CONTROL SITES			
Farm		1	Where controls on the collection of laying hens prior to transportation was evaluated.
Slaughterhouses		4	Two red and two poultry meat. Three were selected by the inspection team at the opening meeting. The fourth was a poultry slaughterhouse which had been scheduled to coincide with the collection of birds on farm.

3. LEGAL BASIS FOR THE MISSION

The mission was carried out under the general provisions of Community legislation and, in particular:

- Council Directive 91/628/EEC of 19 November 1991 (as amended) on the protection of animals during transport¹, in particular Article 10 which enables Commission experts to carry out on-the-spot checks.

¹ OJ L 340 of 11.12.1991 p.17, (amended by Council Directive 95/29/EC, OJ L 148 of 30.6.1995 p.52)

- Council Directive 93/119/EC of 22 December 1993 on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter or killing², in particular Article 14 which enables Commission experts to carry out on-the-spot checks.
- Commission Decision 98/139/EC of 4 February 1998 laying down certain detailed rules concerning on-the-spot checks carried out in the veterinary field by Commission experts in the Member States³.

4. *BACKGROUND*

A previous mission on animal welfare during transport in Sweden was undertaken from 4 to 8 March 1996. In its conclusions the report indicated that animal transport was overall carried out under acceptable conditions.

5. *MAIN FINDINGS*

5.1. Legislation

The EU legislation relevant for this mission has been transposed in different legal texts, mainly

The Animal Welfare Act, 1988/534 and amendments

The Animal Welfare Ordinance, 1988/539 and amendments⁴

Although a comprehensive review of legislation was not carried out, it was noted that:

- Swedish legislation allows a maximum space density for road transport of pigs of 305 Kg per square meter, equivalent to 0.36 square metres for pigs of around 100 kg, whereas EU legislation requires a maximum of 235 Kg per square metre, equivalent to 0.425 square metres for pigs of 100 kg.
- In some issues Swedish legislation goes beyond EU Directives, e.g., mandatory bedding for animals staying overnight in slaughterhouses and registration of transporters whenever there is a commercial element in the transport and transport times can last more than 30 minutes.

² OJ L 340 of 31.12.1993 p.21

³ OJ L 38 of 12.2.1998, p.10

⁴ *In response to the draft report, the Swedish competent authorities indicated that in addition to the Animal Welfare Act and the Animal Welfare Ordinance, the relevant EU legislation has been transposed in the following legal texts: Swedish Board of Agriculture regulations (SJVFS 2000:133) on the transport of live animals and Swedish Board of Agriculture regulations (SJVFS 2000:160) on the handling of certain species at the time of slaughter.*

5.2. Competent Authority

5.2.1. Central Competent Authority

The Central Competent Authority (CCA) with regard to animal welfare legislation is the Swedish Board of Agriculture. The CCA co-ordinates activities of the other competent authorities and gives advice on these activities. The CCA issues regulations with the mandate of the provisions in the Animal Welfare Act and the Animal Welfare Ordinance. Among other things the CCA grants certain approvals and authorisations as well as submits statements on important animal welfare issues.

The CCA exercises no power over regional or local competent authorities. The CCA does not have the mandate to issue binding regulations on how regional or local competent authorities should carry out animal welfare supervision. However, the CCA has issued recommendations (*Allmänna råd*) on the subject. A central supervision group made up of representatives from different authorities, meet 5 times a year, in order to improve co-ordination. Here different issues are studied, particularly on enforcement issues and how to provide better education to the sectors involved.

The CCA regularly initiates national animal welfare control and enforcement projects within specific areas, and also organises training for the different authorities involved.

From the 1st of January 2004 the duties of the CCA of Agriculture regarding the animal welfare legislation will be transferred to another authority, an Animal Welfare Agency (*Djurskyddsmyndigheten*). At the same time a new provision in the Animal Welfare Act will enter into force. In order to ensure better harmonisation of checks, this new authority will be authorised to issue mandatory regulations to the regional and local competent authorities in how they should carry out animal welfare supervision.

The CCA employs about 250 district veterinarians, who are mainly practising clinical duties, though they are also involved in approval of route plans⁵.

5.2.2. Regional authorities

Sweden is divided into 21 counties. In every county, there is a County Administrative Board (CAB) with one to four county veterinary officers. Among other duties, the CAB supervises, co-ordinates and advises the local animal welfare authorities in the county. The County Administration has a responsibility to deal with complaints against a decision taken by a municipality. They can confirm or overrule such decisions. The CAB must also make decisions regarding whether animals not adequately cared should be taken in charge and whether the person who owns or keeps animals

⁵ *In response to the draft report, the Swedish competent authorities noted that district veterinarians are employed full-time by the Swedish Board of Agriculture and work as official veterinarians. They are, inter alia, involved in approval of route plans and in their capacity as State employees they also perform clinical duties.*

should be prohibited from having animals in their care. However, it cannot force the municipalities to carry out a certain number of checks or impose any given policy, due to their autonomy.

The duty of supervision and co-ordination of local authorities was interpreted in different ways in the two county offices visited during the mission. In one of them a county veterinary officer visited the municipalities, and performed an assessment on issues such as:

- working time employed in animal welfare checks;
- number of inspections carried out, sufficient/insufficient, taking into account number of locations to be inspected;
- quality of reports.

When questioned about the overall performance of the municipalities in that county, he indicated that about 1/3 of them were performing an adequate number of checks, whereas about 2/3 of them were not.

In the other county office, a county veterinarian explained that they would not carry out these evaluation checks, as their legal advisers had advised them not to do it, in order not to interfere with the autonomy of municipalities ***or compromise the position of the county authorities in their role as appeals body for decisions of the municipalities.***

5.2.3. Local authorities

Every municipality, of which there are 290, has an Environment and Public Health Service. This body is responsible for the supervision of animal welfare legislation in the municipality, including animal welfare during transport and at slaughterhouses. Inspections are carried out by animal welfare inspectors (AWI) employed by the municipality. According to a recent survey about two thirds of the inspectors have a university education (environmental health officer programme, animal science, farm-foreman programme, biology, veterinary sciences etc). Most of the animal welfare inspectors do not have a degree in veterinary sciences, but when necessary they can consult a veterinarian.

Since the 15th of April 2002 all veterinarians exercising their profession, including the official veterinarian responsible for meat inspection, are obliged to report all cases of suspected poor animal welfare. The veterinarians are required to report if no correction of the conditions is made.

Since the 1st of July 2003 the veterinary inspectors (VIs) working in slaughterhouses for the National Food Agency must also take immediate action if an animal is suffering or is likely to be subjected to unnecessary suffering at the slaughterhouse. Such immediate actions include:

- Prohibition on slaughter and
- Humane killing of an animal.

The police also have competencies in animal welfare, carrying out checks of transport and assisting regional or local authorities, when necessary. They can also adopt urgent, corrective measures concerning animals under the supervision of the CAB.

5.3. Training

During 2001-2002, the CCA held regional educational days on animal welfare legislation regarding animal transport for AWI, county veterinarians, as well as some district veterinarians. Representatives for the police authorities and some transporters have also been present at the educational days in certain regions. The Vocational Training and Working Environment Council (Transport Trades) (TYA) has organised education for animal transporters.

A national project of animal welfare at the time of slaughter began in the autumn of 2002 and is planned to continue until February 2005. Participation of municipalities is voluntary, but a very high number of them have joined the project. The objective is to increase competence of officials involved in slaughter checks and to improve harmonisation of checks carried out in the different municipalities. Existing shortcomings will be evaluated, and statistics *produced. Checklists for use by inspectors during inspections of slaughterhouses or killings have been produced.* As a part of this project, the CCA held a seminar in January 2003 for the county veterinarians about animal welfare at slaughter or killing. The county veterinarians have subsequently held regional seminars for the AWIs. A representative from the CCA participated at these seminars. Additionally, in 2002 the Swedish Association of Local Authorities organised educational days for AWIs on animal welfare in slaughterhouses.

The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in association with Umeå University (environmental health officer programme) offers education and continued education for the different sectors involved, including officials as well as personnel in slaughterhouses and transporters. Police and public prosecutors can also attend those courses.

5.4. Organisation of checks of transport

Between 1999 and 2000 the CCA arranged a project concerning animal welfare during time of transport. At that time, different targets were set for the municipalities participating in this national project. In particular, regarding animal transportation, the goal for that period and those municipalities was that 10 transports should be checked in each municipality. In the context of this national project on transport, CCA produced a checklist. However, this was not being used in the municipalities visited.

Since this project no targets have been set. No specific calculation have been made as to determine what is the adequate sample of the animals transported each year that should be inspected, as required by Article 8 of Council Directive 91/628/EEC (as amended). The CCA recommendations specify that the inspections should be carried out both at random and targeted when needed.

128 of 290 municipalities (44%) carried out checks on transports during 2002, with a total of 578 checks. The autonomy of municipalities implies that the CCA cannot take legal action against municipalities that do not carry out their tasks. A representative of the Competent Authority (CA) explained that available resources and reluctance in some municipalities to take fees for inspections might be the reason why some municipalities are more active than others.

According to the report submitted to the European Commission on the checks on transport carried out in 2002, 578 checks were carried out, and enforcement action was taken in 20 cases. The report does not mention the number of animals inspected, which is not in compliance with Article 8 of Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended.

5.5. Authorisation of transporters

Transporters of vertebrate animals must be registered by the CCA (or by a competent authority of another Member State). When registered by CCA, the registration is valid for two years, after following this procedure:

- The transporter needs to enclose, with the application, an inspection certificate for the vehicle(s) issued by the AWI within the municipality. To this effect, the means of transport has to undergo a check by a AWI, who has to issue a report to the CCA stating that the vehicle complies with the legislation. The use of a checklist provided by the CCA is recommended. Although vehicle approval is not an explicit requirement of Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended, it was noted that the CCA issues a standard form for this certificate and the inspection of the vehicle offers further guarantees of compliance with animal welfare rules
- The transporter must sign a declaration equivalent to the written undertaking required by Article 5.A.1(a) of Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended. It is ***an additional condition for registration that the transporter*** does not have a prohibition to transport animals or a prohibition from having animals in his/her care.
- When a company established in a third country is concerned, the person in charge of the transport must sign a written agreement to comply with the requirements of the animal welfare legislation. The transporter must also certify that the personnel the necessary knowledge and ability qualifying them transport vertebrate animals and to administer appropriate care to the animals transported.

The inspection team noted that:

- The checklist for inspection of vehicles prior to approval was not in use in all the municipalities visited.
- In one municipality, the maximum stocking density for a vehicle was established on the basis of the transporter's declaration of maximum number of animals of a certain species, without further verification.

5.6. Checks at places of departure

There are no assembly centres or markets in Sweden⁶, and a health certificate does not usually accompany animals during transport. Checks at places of departure are infrequent.

Consignments of animals seen during the mission were accompanied by a commercial document in which the time of loading of the first animal was not always indicated, as well as equivalent information for animals picked up from subsequent farms.

5.6.1. Collection of laying hens

The collection of spent laying hens prior to transport to slaughter was seen. The farm manager explained that he himself had trained the employees to catch no more than three birds at a time. However this number was frequently exceeded and one catching team in particular placed the birds into the modules in an inappropriate manner. The CA took no action.

The CA had identified that journey times for spent laying hens transported from Gotland island to a slaughterhouse were approaching the maximum and required a detailed plan before approval of any consignment. In addition, in the farm visited during the mission, journey time from loading onto the truck to delivery at the slaughterhouse could be over 12 hours for some of the birds (point 31(i) of Chapter II of the Annex of Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended). In this case the problem had not been identified by the CA.

5.6.2. Route plans

Route plans were examined in one of the municipalities. According to the system in place, route plans are submitted for approval to the district veterinary officer of the place of departure. Within two days a copy should be sent to the municipality of the place of departure, which carry out the follow up and are expected to receive the returned route plan. In this municipality officials indicated that plans had often not been received within two days of their approval. Regarding failure to return route plans, a warning letter had been sent to a transporter for repeated infringements, and since then that transport company moved to another municipality.

5.7. Checks during transport

Checks are always performed with the police and this authority can also carry out checks during transport as part of their routine traffic control. None of the municipalities visited during the mission had carried out checks during transport in 2002.

⁶ *In response to the draft report, the Swedish competent authorities indicated that there are a couple of approved assembly centres in Sweden.*

5.8. Checks at destination

5.8.1. Checks of means of transport at slaughterhouses

This task falls under the remit of the AWI. The VI in the slaughterhouse is responsible for reporting all cases of suspected poor animal welfare and to take immediate action if an animal is suffering.

The level of checks carried out by AWIs differed greatly between municipalities. In some cases no reports on transport by AWI were available. No checklist had been used for the checks, and the number and kind of deficiencies detected was very limited. Consequently, there was no evidence that compliance with all relevant EU legislation had been assessed.

The level of involvement of VIs in the slaughterhouses also differed:

- In one, the VI indicated that she would not assess transport conditions, which was the responsibility of AWI.
- In other slaughterhouses, VIs were more involved in the control of transport conditions.

Where VIs were involved, this frequently meant collaboration with the quality assurance managers of the slaughterhouse, who directly contacted the farmer or transporter involved. Several VIs explained that they would endeavour to solve any problem together with the company and the farmer/transporter, and would only report it to the municipality if a solution was not found. A manager of a slaughterhouse and an AWI indicated that as public access to official reports is generally allowed in Sweden, there is sometimes a reluctance to report incidents in writing.

Regarding the vehicles and checks seen, the inspection team noted that:

- The lorries were of a high standard, partitioned, and with adequate protection against adverse weather conditions. Inside the truck animals are usually distributed in the different boxes according to their origin and category.
- Assessing space densities in the different compartments (or carrying out a check during transport) could be hindered as trucks are normally divided into boxes, and have solid lateral protections.
- Direct access to all animals on journeys of more than 8 hours would be difficult on such vehicles.
- Regarding space density, an AWI indicated that he would assess the situation visually.
- Handling and unloading of cattle and pigs was conducted in a calm and efficient way. Regarding both broilers and laying hens waiting for slaughter, crates were not sufficiently high to allow the birds to stand in a natural position. Both companies also transported bigger birds than those seen during the visits. Such conditions would be contrary to Chapter I.A.2

of the Annex to the Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended. This situation had not been detected by the CA.

5.8.2. *Check of fitness of animals at slaughterhouses*

Awareness of the requirements of fitness for transport is generally high, including the need to kill unfit animals that would suffer if transported. During the visits, it was noted that:

- In a slaughterhouse for laying hens, well-kept records indicated the percentage of animals dead on arrival. In one particular case 15% of birds arrived dead. This was officially reported to the municipality of origin, but there was no feedback on the action taken. Other cases included transport of high stocking densities, badly feathered birds and high level of fractures. In other cases the VI and the company had directly contacted the transporter/farmer.
- In poultry slaughterhouses, a system has been introduced to evaluate the incidence of foot-pad dermatitis⁷. The aim is to decrease the prevalence from 11 % to 5%. Feet from a sample of birds from every consignment are scored, more points being assigned to birds in better conditions. If the number of points falls below a certain range, the farmer is warned and requested to take action. If lower scores are recorded, the slaughterhouse does not accept further consignments until more space per bird is provided on farm and any other corrective measures are taken.
- In other slaughterhouses, cases of transport of unfit animals or inadequate transport conditions had been addressed by directly contacting the transporter/farmer. Some cases had been referred to the municipality, however no feedback had been reportedly received.
- In a pig slaughterhouse operated by a company controlling around 70% of the Swedish market, a representative of the Company indicated that autopsies would be carried out where there were three or more pigs dead on arrival, as part of their quality assurance system.

5.9. **Checks at slaughter or killing**

A target for inspections has been set whereby AWI of the municipality should inspect slaughterhouses at least once a year or more if necessary. The CCA recommends that these visits should be carried out as follows:

- The operations manager at the slaughterhouse as well as the official veterinarian responsible for meat inspections should be present for the inspection.

⁷ *In response to the draft report, the Swedish competent authorities indicated that approximately 98% of Swedish broiler producers are affiliated to an animal welfare programme run by a commercial organisation. The evaluation of foot health is part of this programme and is carried out in poultry slaughterhouses under the supervision of the official veterinarian.*

- The animal welfare inspector should establish a regular contact with the official veterinarian at the slaughterhouse in order to obtain information about, among other things, conditions of transportation of animal arriving at the slaughterhouse.
- Information could also be obtained from the official veterinarian about the health of animals arriving at the slaughterhouse and suspected cases of poor animal welfare on farms delivering animals to the slaughterhouse.

When the VI at the slaughterhouse reports a case to the municipality, the AWI must take action. Normally, the AWI carries out an urgent inspection following the complaint, and the subsequent course of action varies according to the severity of the problem.

The inspection team noted that:

- The target of a once a year AWI inspection had been met in three out of the four establishments visited.
- Regarding the number of checks carried out and the degree of involvement of AWIs the situation varied between municipalities.
- In some cases deficiencies had been detected and adequately followed up to ensure future compliance. However this was not always the case, and some of the deficiencies noted in the establishments visited, had not been followed up.

5.9.1. Facilities and handling

County officials are responsible for the pre-approval of lairages before slaughterhouses are built and for final approval after construction.

Facilities were mostly adequate and in both red meat slaughterhouses visited, there were facilities for milking cows, if necessary. However the inspection team noted:

- In the slaughterhouse for laying hens AWI was not involved or aware of training of personnel.
- VIs varied in their involvement in staff training. One VI considered it to be purely the company's responsibility.
- In a slaughterhouse for pigs, the operator beat the animals in an excessive and inappropriate way, to force them to enter the gondola. Neither the VI nor the AWI reacted to this. In the other slaughterhouses handling was generally calm and appropriate.
- In a slaughterhouse for laying hens, after shackling the birds, their heads and wings hit against the transport modules.
- In a slaughterhouse for broilers, birds fell three times onto a different conveyor belt before reaching the point of shackling. This led to a level of excitement that would not comply with point 2 of part II of Annex A of Council Directive 93/119/EC.

5.9.2. *Stunning and bleeding*

Stunning and bleeding were generally correctly performed during the mission. However, it was also noted that:

- In a slaughterhouse using CO₂ there was no backup system on the spot for stunning animals. In another slaughterhouse there was no backup stunning equipment for sheep and the equipment did not have a voltmeter display.
- The time between stunning and bleeding cattle was longer than the maximum 60 seconds allowed in Swedish legislation. Annex D.1 of Council Directive 93/119/EC indicates that bleeding must be started as soon as possible after stunning.
- In the slaughterhouse for broilers, stunning and bleeding were inadequate. Some birds showed wing flapping and positive corneal reflex after passing through the stunning bath. In some cases these signs were seen after neck cutting, as the cut had not been adequately performed. A smaller bird had not been stunned at all. An “own check” carried out by the slaughterhouse personnel that morning had not detected any problem with stunning or bleeding. A previous inspection by the municipality had recommended better stunning, particularly for smaller birds.
- In the slaughterhouse for laying hens, due to the construction of the water bath, it was not possible to verify whether the level of the water was sufficient to ensure good contact with the birds’ heads, as required by Council Directive 93/119/EC, Annex C II, B 1.

Although not in the scope of this mission, it was noted that in one establishment, slaughtermen killing pigs were not changing or cleaning knives after every animal. When the inspection team pointed this out to the VI, he acknowledged that this was not correct, but did not take remedial action.

5.10. **Follow up actions**

If animal welfare legislation is violated, the system in place is as follows:

- Observations and recommendations are normally made by the AWI.
- More stringent actions can be taken, such as official injunctions from the municipality requiring certain conditions to be fulfilled.
- Follow up checks on vehicles, so that the AWI can verify if the faults and shortcomings have been corrected.
- Sanctions can be imposed either by municipalities or by the Public Prosecutor, depending on the nature of the infringement detected. For a serious infringement, the matter would be referred to the Public Prosecutor. For less serious infringements, but where no corrective action has been taken within a given deadline, the municipality itself could impose the sanction.

- Where there is a complaint against an injunction or a decision from a municipality, the County Administration is responsible for looking at the case. They can confirm or overrule such decisions.

In the two county offices visited there were no cases where the last procedure had been followed. Regarding enforcement actions, a representative from the CCA explained that no detailed information is received at their level concerning actions taken by the municipalities. Neither CCA nor municipality level received information on the outcome of cases referred to the Public Prosecutor.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Legislation

Although Swedish legislation goes beyond EU requirements for certain criteria, for space densities for pigs of around 100 kg it is not in compliance with Annex A.VI of Council Directive 91/628/EEC (as amended).

6.2. Competent authorities

- (1) There is no uniform approach between the counties in relation to how to perform the duty of regional supervision.
- (2) Although efforts have been made to increase co-ordination between different competent authorities, animal welfare issues are given a different priority by the municipalities, counties and VIs in slaughterhouses. As a result follow up and feed back of deficiencies is not always effective.
- (3) The new animal welfare authority, which is envisaged to be operational from 2004, could potentially improve co-ordination and harmonisation of activities regarding animal welfare between the authorities involved.

6.3. Training

Extensive training has been provided to all the staff involved in animal welfare issues⁸.

6.4. Checks of transport

6.4.1. Organisation of checks

No targets for inspections have been set by the CCA, therefore it is difficult to ensure that an adequate sample of the animals transported each year is inspected, as required by Article 8 of Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended.

⁸ *In their response to the draft report, the Swedish competent authorities noted that training has been provided to all the staff at the inspected slaughterhouses whose work involves handling live animals.*

6.4.2. Authorisation of transporters

The system for authorising transporters goes beyond the requirements of Article 5.A.1(a) Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended, as the vehicle inspection, which is not specifically incorporated into EU legislation, adds further guarantees for compliance with animal welfare rules.

6.4.3. Checks at departure, during transport and at destination.

- (1) Checks at departure are infrequent, problems such as inappropriate loading of spent hens have therefore not been detected.
- (2) Checks on transport are mainly carried out at destination. Both quality and quantity varied in the municipalities visited. The degree of involvement of VIs in checking transport conditions was not consistent. As this task does not fall within their remit, their approach depended on their personal attitude. The approach of communicating not to the municipality, but to the company and/or farmer/transporter leads to a certain degree of underreporting.
- (3) The existing system whereby route plan control is split between district veterinary officers, who are responsible for approval, and municipal authorities, which are responsible for return of route plans, does not provide an effective control. Although on occasion, corrective action is taken after failure to return route plans, the lack of uniformity in the control system in the Swedish territory may lead to transporters moving to municipalities with less strict controls.
- (4) The standard of the lorries inspected during the mission was good, and animals were fit for transport. There is a high level of awareness of animal welfare requirements both with officials as well as in the companies, as reflected in their quality assurance systems.
- (5) CA has not always ensured that consignments of animals are accompanied by documentation indicating the time of departure, which is contrary to requirements of Article 4 of Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended.

6.5. Checks at slaughter and killing

- (1) Stunning and bleeding were generally adequate, with the exception of a slaughterhouse for broilers and to a lesser extent the design of the water bath in the slaughterhouse for laying hens. In most cases, deficiencies noted by the inspection team regarding stunning equipment had already been detected by the municipalities or by the VI, but had been inadequately followed-up.
- (2) The lack of a detailed checklist in place may have led to certain deficiencies seen by the inspection team, going unnoticed by the VIs or the AWIs. The ongoing national project on slaughter addresses this issue and may further improve the situation.

- (3) In general VIs were motivated to supervise animal welfare issues but as they only have a limited official role in this regard, this was not always given a high priority.
- (4) The high degree of discretion for the VI, as to whether to report deficiencies to the municipalities in writing or not and his/her limited role in animal welfare issues, results in enforcement action not always being sufficient to ensure compliance. The variable level of supervision of AWIs by the CABs may also contribute to this situation.

6.6. Follow-up action

Insufficient feedback had been received on the outcome of some cases reported to the police or to the prosecutor from the municipality, or of cases reported to a municipality by a VI, due to a lack of co-ordination.

6.7. Overall conclusion

There is a high level of training and awareness of animal welfare issues. CCA is working to improve surveillance through the new obligation for all veterinarians to report deficiencies and the ongoing standardisation of the inspection in the slaughterhouses. However the co-ordination, co-operation, reporting, follow up and feed back of information between the authorities involved is not always effective. At the moment the CCA has not the competence to ensure uniform application of the EU requirements. The establishment of a new Animal Welfare authority is seeking to address this problem.

7. CLOSING MEETING

A closing meeting was held on 3 October 2003 with the central competent authority, The Swedish Board of Agriculture. At this meeting, the main findings and conclusions of the mission were presented by the inspection team. The representatives of the CCA agreed with the findings and conclusions and gave an undertaking to address deficiencies.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. To the competent authorities of Sweden

The competent authorities are requested to inform the Commission services of the actions taken and planned to address the following recommendations and to provide a timetable for the completion of these actions. This should be done within 1 month of receipt of the final mission report.

The CA should ensure that:

- (1) Legislation is amended so that loading densities for pigs of around 100 kg respect the requirement of Chapter VI (D) of the Annex of Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended.

- (2) There is a more uniform understanding of how the counties should supervise the municipalities.
- (3) Targets for transport checks are set and provide an adequate sample of animals transported each year as required by Article 8 of Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended, including checks at departure for spent laying hens.
- (4) All consignments of animals are accompanied by documentation enabling the CA to check the date and time of departure, according to Article 4 of Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended.
- (5) Recording and reporting of deficiencies found at transport checks is sufficient to ensure appropriate follow-up action and feedback (Articles 8 and 18 of Council Directive 91/628/EEC, as amended).
- (6) Checks of both transport and slaughter are further harmonised to ensure that all the relevant EU requirements are met and uniformly applied throughout the country.
- (7) Measures are taken so that checks at slaughterhouses cover all parts of Council Directive 93/119/EC, in particular that:
 - (a) There is a back up system at the place of slaughter, as required by Article 6.2 of Council Directive 93/119/EEC.
 - (b) Stunning equipment has the necessary devices, as required by Council Directive 93/119/EC, Annex C II, 3A.2
 - (c) Poultry slaughterhouses are evaluated for compliance regarding stunning and killing and measures taken where any deficiencies are detected.

9. ADDENDUM TO MISSION REPORT DG (SANCO)/9210/2003

Competent Authority's initial response to the recommendations in the draft report

As of 1 January 2004, the Swedish Board of Agriculture's role as central competent authority under the Animal Welfare Act has been taken over by the newly established Animal Welfare Agency based in Skara. The Animal Welfare Agency will inform the Commission of any measures taken or planned in response to the recommendations.