



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
Directorate F - Food and Veterinary Office

Ares(2012)224773

DG(SANCO) 2011-6053 - MR FINAL

FINAL REPORT OF AN AUDIT
CARRIED OUT IN
SLOVAKIA
FROM 06 TO 14 SEPTEMBER 2011
IN ORDER TO EVALUATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTROLS FOR ANIMAL
WELFARE ON FARMS AND DURING TRANSPORT

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 report describes the outcome of an audit carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) in Slovakia, from 6 to 14 September 2011.

The objective of the audit was to evaluate the implementation of EU animal welfare legislation applicable to pig, broiler and laying hen farms and transport of animals, in particular the measures put in place to give effect to Council Directives 2008/120/EC, 98/58/EC, 1999/74/EC, 2007/43/EC, Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 and to follow up the recommendations from report DG(SANCO) 2008/7769 (hereafter: report 2008/7769) regarding a specific audit on animal welfare on farms, during transport and at the time of slaughter which was carried out as a part of a general audit to Slovakia in 2008 and described in report DG(SANCO) 2008/8380 (hereafter: report 2008/8380).

Significant efforts have been made by the CAs and the industry to meet the deadline for phasing out unenriched cages. The pig sector is aware of the forthcoming deadline in 2013, and as stated by the CAs most of the pregnant sows and gilts are already kept in groups. As regards the compliance with the legislation on the welfare of broilers, the system of controls has been put in place but not evenly implemented between the regions.

Regarding animal welfare during transport, despite the recommendations made in a 2008 report and recent actions taken by the CCA, the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 remained poorly implemented and controlled in many areas, such as authorisation of transporters, approval of vehicles, fitness for transport, availability of the records from the navigation system and planning and controlling of long journeys.

Some steps have been taken to ensure adequate verification of the effectiveness of inspections but this was not sufficient to detect certain shortcomings and, in the absence of audits, contributed to the deficiencies in the performance of the district visited, particularly regarding the transport checks.

Four out of seven recommendations which were a subject to a follow up from previous mission had been satisfactorily addressed and minor further steps are needed to achieve full compliance. For three recommendations (two on checks on transport and one on the verification of effectiveness of official controls) insufficient actions had been taken so far to ensure that the requirements of the legislation are respected.

The report makes recommendations addressed to the Slovak competent authorities aimed at rectifying the identified shortcomings and further enhancing the control measures in place.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

CA	Competent Authority
CCA	Central Competent Authority
CDMR	Cumulative Daily Mortality Rate
DG(SANCO)	Health and Consumers Directorate-General
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
FBO	Food Business Operator
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office
MS	Member State
OV	Official Veterinarian
SNS	Satellite Navigation System

1 INTRODUCTION

This audit took place in Slovakia from 6th to 14th September 2011 as part of the FVO's planned audit programme. The audit team comprised three FVO auditors and was accompanied throughout the audit by a representative of the Central Competent Authority.

2 OBJECTIVES

The objective of the audit was to check how official controls, as laid down in Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, are implemented:

- To assess the effectiveness of actions taken in response to recommendations in previous FVO report DG (SANCO)2008/7769 (hereafter: report 2008/7769).
- The implementation of national measures aimed at the control of animal welfare on laying hen, broiler and pig farms.

In pursuit of these objectives, the audit team saw a range of checks carried out and looked at documents relating to previous checks. The following meetings were held and sites visited:

Visits			Comments
Competent authority	Central	2	Opening and final meetings
	Regional	2	Meetings with representatives of regional and district CAs in Košice and Žilina regions.
Farms		5	One pig farm in Košice region and two laying hen and two broiler farms were visited in each region. Broiler farms were selected by the CA.
Assembly centre		2	One assembly centre in each region.
Transporter's premisses		2	A transporter authorised for long journeys in Košice region was visited. In Žilina region the premises of the transporter has been visited together with the visit to the assembly centre, but no vehicle was present on the day of visit.

3 LEGAL BASIS

The audit was carried out under the general provisions of Union legislation, in particular Article 9 of Directive 1999/74/EC, Article 10 of Directive 2008/120/EC, Article 7 of Directive 98/58/EC, Article 28 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 and Article 45 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. A full list of the EU legal instruments referred to in this report is provided in the Annex and refers, where applicable, to the last amended version.

4 BACKGROUND

A previous specific audit concerning animal welfare took place in Slovakia from 13 to 17 October 2008 (ref: DG(SANCO) 2008/7769) as part of a general audit carried out in Slovakia in 2008 (ref: DG(SANCO) 2008/8380). The audit reports DG(SANCO) 2008/7769 (hereafter: report 2008/7769) and DG(SANCO) 2008/8380 (hereafter: report 2008/8380) are published on the website of the Directorate– General for Health and Consumers:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/ir_search_en.cfm

Report 2008/7769 concluded that the CAs are implementing a system of controls for animal welfare in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. However, limited guidance and training on specific areas have resulted in certain deficiencies, such as inadequate enriched cages and transport of unfit animals, not being identified. Poor enforcement and insufficient supervision have also contributed to deficiencies not being identified or not being corrected.

Report 2008/8380 concluded that on the basis of the outcome of nine specific audits and the analysis of the relevant reports, it can be concluded that, for the sectors investigated, the Slovak CA comply with the majority of the audited horizontal issues in regard to official controls; however, weaknesses were seen in some areas, such as insufficient dissuasiveness of sanctions and verification of effectiveness of controls.

The CCA indicated that certain actions had been taken in response to the recommendations, and the effectiveness of several of these actions was assessed during the current mission.

5 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 COMPETENT AUTHORITY

A detailed description of the CAs can be found in the country profile for Slovakia which is accessible at: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/last5_en.cfm?co_id=SK

Further information on the CAs can be obtained at the website: <http://www.svps.sk/>

5.2 LEGISLATION

A comprehensive check of national legislation was not carried out. However, during the evaluation of the control system for animal welfare, the audit team noted that the national legislation on chickens kept for meat production, transposing Directive 2007/43/EC, does not provide for the possibility of recognising the previous experience of keepers as equivalent to participation in training courses (Article 4 of Directive 2007/43/EC) and requires that all keepers participate in the CCA approved courses before issuing the certificate of competence.

5.3 FARMS

5.3.1 Laying hen farms

Legal requirements

Commission Directive 2002/4/EC requires Member States to establish a system for registering every production site covered by the scope of Council Directive 1999/74/EC. The last two bullet points of Point 1 of the Annex of this Directive (2002/4/EC) require registration of the farming

method(s) and of the maximum capacity of an establishment in number of birds present at one time. Article 1(4) of the Directive requires that changes in the registered data are notified to the CA without delay and the register is updated immediately when such information is received.

Article 8 of Directive 1999/74/EC requires the CA has to carry out checks to monitor compliance with the requirements of this Directive and Article 3.1 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 requires a risk based approach to checks.

Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 requires that competent authorities carry out their official controls in accordance with documented procedures, containing information and instructions for staff, performing official controls.

Article 5.2 of Directive 1999/74/EC requires that the Member States shall ensure that rearing of laying hens in unenriched cages is prohibited with effect from 1 January 2012.

Farm registration

In response to a recommendation from report 2008/7769 to take measures to ensure that responsibilities are clearly defined in relation to establishing the maximum capacity of holdings with laying hens and that the register of establishments with laying hens is updated immediately when notification is received concerning changes in this data, as required by Article 1.4 of Directive 2002/4/EC the CCA indicated that they are responsible for the registration of laying hens holdings and the regional CAs are responsible for establishing the maximum capacity of holdings with laying hens. In case of any changes in this register (for example a new holding or a holding which ceases production), the regional CA informs the CCA which immediately makes changes in the register.

In addition, the CCA stated that in order to verify the current situation the regional and district CAs were requested to provide data on controls on the maximum capacity of laying hens farms in order to update the register.

The audit team noted that the data in the register were correct regarding the laying hen farm visited in Žilina region, but this was not the case for the farm visited in Košice region, where the maximum capacity of the farm in the central register did not correspond to the data registered at the regional level, because the regional CA did not send the updated information to the CCA.

Conclusion

Even though the responsibilities regarding keeping and updating of the register of the laying hen farms are now well defined, the data in the register are still not fully reliable, as the regional CA did not always update the CCA regarding changes.

Checks of laying hen farms

Findings

At the time of the audit there were 62 registered laying hen farms in Slovakia. Six had unenriched cages and 14 had both enriched and unenriched cages; the others were barn or free range farms.

The audit team received an update from the CCA on the situation regarding the phasing out of unenriched cages to meet the 2012 ban. The CCA stated that there will be no farms with unenriched cages in Slovakia after 1 January 2012.

In response to a recommendation from report 2008/7769 to take measures to ensure that the quality of inspections in holdings with laying hens is improved and adequate assessment is made of all the requirements for enriched cages, in June 2010 the CCA amended guidance 815/08-224 and the check list to include all requirements necessary for checking farms with enriched cages. However, the audit team pointed out that the the definition of usable area (Article 2(d) of Directive 1999/74/EC) is missing in the check list.

The frequency of inspection set by the CA for one visit per laying hen farm every year has not been respected in Košice region; three farms out of six were visited in 2010 and one in 2011. The CA explained that this was due to the changing situation because many farms were not in operation due to the ongoing reconstruction in 2010 and 2011 and the checks were therefore not performed. No deficiencies had been detected on the farms visited.

In Košice region the audit team visited a farm with enriched cages and followed the inspection of the OV responsible for animal welfare checks on the farm. The OV trusted the technical data provided by the cage manufacturer and did not perform any measurements to verify the correctness of these data. As a result, he did not detect that the length of the perches was not sufficient. In addition, the OV accepted plastic mats as an adequate litter in enriched cages; Article 2(b) of Directive 1999/74/EC defines litter as any friable material enabling hens to satisfy their biological needs.

In Žilina regions both farms (one with enriched cages and the other with an alternative system of production) had been visited in 2010 by the CA. Deficiencies had been detected on the alternative farm regarding insufficient numbers of drinking devices and insufficient length of perches. At the follow up visit a month later, the number of drinkers had been corrected but the length of the perches was still insufficient.

During the visit on the farm with enriched cages in Žilina region, the OV explained that he did all necessary measurements and calculations and no deficiencies were detected during the previous check in May 2011. The audit team found the farm visited in compliance with EU legislation.

Conclusions

As a result of the OVs accepting the technical specifications provided by the producers regarding the layout of the enriched cages instead of performing checks to confirm this data, some non-compliances regarding the enriched cages remained undetected. Even though the CA updated the check list for laying hens to include the provisions for enriched cages, the definition of usable area is still not included.

From the information provided by the CCA the laying hen sector will meet the 2012 deadline for phasing out unenriched cages.

5.3.2 Pig farms

Legal requirements

Article 8 of Directive 2008/120/EC requires the CA to carry out inspections on a representative sample of the different rearing systems. Article 3.1 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 requires a risk based approach to checks.

Article 3(4) of Directive 2008/120/EC requires Member States to ensure that sows and gilts are kept in groups during a period starting from four weeks after the service to one week before the expected time of farrowing. Article 3(9) lays down that this provision shall apply to all holdings newly built or rebuilt or brought into use for the first time after 1 January 2003 and that from 1 January 2013 these provisions shall apply to all holdings.

Point 4 of Chapter 1 of Annex I to Directive 2008/120/EC requires that pigs have permanent access to a sufficient quantity of material to enable proper investigation and manipulation activities, such as straw, hay, wood, sawdust, mushroom compost, peat or a mixture of such, which does not compromise the health of the animals.

Findings

The CCA stated that the majority of farms in Slovakia already keep pregnant sows and gilts in

groups and so would be in a good position regarding the deadline of 1 January 2013 for such systems to be in place (Article 3(4) of Directive 2008/120/EC); however, the current practices regarding the timings of moving animals from individual stalls into group housing will have to be reviewed and adjusted to fully meet the requirements of Directive 2008/120/EC. The CCA also stated that most of the farms which will not comply with the new requirements will cease breeding sows and continue with fattening pigs.

The farms visited in Košice region kept sows in groups and there was plenty of straw and saw dust in sow and weaner pens and no tail docking was performed. The OV during the check in March 2011 did not detect any deficiencies; however, the audit team noted that maintenance of the farm was poor and deficiencies, such as sharp protruding metal parts of the pen partitions and holes in the solid and slatted floor, which could cause injuries to animals, were present in some pens, contrary to point 9 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC. No actions were taken by the OV.

The CCA guidance on manipulable material states that pigs must have at all times access to materials, which they may manipulate, preferably of natural origin and that manipulable materials made from other than natural substances, must be declared for animal use by the producer. On the farm visited chains and plastic buckets were used as manipulable material in pens with fattening pigs. Such materials do not enable proper investigation and manipulation activities, contrary to Point 4 of Chapter 1 of Annex I to Directive 2008/120/EC, which requires that pigs have permanent access to a sufficient quantity of material to enable proper investigation and manipulation activities, such as straw, hay, wood, sawdust, mushroom compost, peat or a mixture of such, which does not compromise the health of the animals. In addition, such materials are not declared for animal use as required by national guidance.

Conclusions

The situation regarding the requirements of Directive 2008/120/EC which come into force in 2013 is favourable because most of the pig farms in Slovakia already fulfil the requirements regarding group housing of pregnant sows.

Although the guidance for inspections is appropriate, the OVs did not detect certain deficiencies, regarding the state of repair of the buildings and manipulable material.

5.3.3 Broiler farms

Legal requirements

Article 7(1) of Directive 2007/43/EC requires the CA has to carry out non-discriminatory inspections to verify compliance with the requirements of this Directive.

Article 3, paragraphs (2), (3), (4) and (5), requires that MS shall ensure that the maximum stocking density in a holding or a house of a holding does not at any time exceed 33 kg/m². By way of derogation, Member States may provide that chickens be kept at a higher stocking density, from 33 to 39 kg/m², provided that the owner or keeper complies with the requirements set out in Annex II, in addition to the requirements set out in Annex I. In addition, when the criteria set out in Annex V are fulfilled, Member States may allow the stocking density to be further increased to a maximum of 42 kg/m².

Article 4(1) of Directive 2007/43/EC requires that MS shall ensure that keepers who are natural persons have received sufficient training in their tasks and that appropriate training courses are available and requires staff to hold a certificate issued by the CA after completing a training course or having acquired equivalent experience.

Article 4(3) requires that MS shall ensure that a system is established for the control and approval

of training courses. The keeper of the chickens shall hold a certificate which is recognised by the competent authority of the MS concerned, attesting to the completion of such a training course or to having acquired experience equivalent to such training.

Article 4(4) requires that MS may recognise experience acquired before 30 June 2010 as being equivalent to participation in such training courses and shall issue certificates attesting to such equivalence.

Findings

Training courses required by Article 4 of Directive 2007/43/EC are available to broiler keepers and because national legislation does not provide for the possibility of recognising the previous experience of keepers, they are obligatory for all broiler keepers. These courses are provided by the institution approved by the CCA and from the documentation seen it appears that all requirements of Annex IV of Directive are included in the curriculum. Until now four courses with 72 participants had taken place. Keepers of both farms visited had participated in the course and had received a certificate.

The CCA provided the district CAs with instructions, including limits for assessment of adequate cumulative daily mortality rate (CDMR).

In both farm visited in Košice and in Žilina region the FBOs applied for increased stocking density (up to 42 kg/m²) and attached the documentation required by Directive 2007/43/EC. It was noted that:

- In Košice region the OV visited the farm twice, once in 2010 under the old national legislation, and more recently in June 2011 when he carried out a thorough inspection under new legislation, using a check list supplied by the CCA. The OV concluded in his report, that the farmer did not comply with the requirements foreseen by Annex V of Directive 2007/43/EC for the CDMR for the last seven batches, and therefore he was not allowed to exceed the stocking density of 39 kg/m². However, the audit team verified that for the last batch of birds the stocking density was 41 Kg/m² and the CDMR was 5.7% at 42 days, instead of maximum allowed 3.52%. The flock keeper explained that this had happened for commercial reasons (no thinning had occurred and slaughter had been carried out a few days later than expected). No actions were taken by the OV on the spot.
- In Žilina region the flock keeper, when applying for the increased stocking density did not present the information regarding the CDMR for seven consecutive flocks from each house, as required by Annex V.1(c) of Directive 2007/43/EC. Instead he presented the CDMR as a summary for the whole farm, which consisted of 15 flocks. This was not noted by the OV because, as he stated, he did not assess the CDMR after the notification had been received; the OV was satisfied that he performed a check on the farm one month before the notification had been received and at that time he did not detect any deficiencies. The audit team noted that flocks regularly exceed the CDMR set in Annex V.1(c) of Directive 2007/43/EC, but the FBO explained that this is the consequence of increased mortalities during the first two weeks after introducing day old chicks, because of the poor quality of the batch. No actions had been taken by the OV on the spot.
- Both farms received feedback from the slaughterhouses after slaughter of birds as required by Annex III, point 2 of Directive 2007/43/EC.
- Neither keeper had equipment to ensure the adequate control of environmental parameters, as required by point 3(a) of Annex II of Directive 2007/43/EC. In addition the OVs in both regions could not verify if CO₂ and NH₃ values were respected because the CA does not have equipment to carry out such checks.

Conclusions

The CCA has put in place a system for training which goes beyond EU requirements as it is obligatory for all flock keepers.

Insufficient involvement of the OV in the verification of compliance with Annex V of Directive 2007/43 led to the situation where broiler farms were operating at higher stocking densities without fulfilling all necessary conditions. However, this legislation only recently entered into force and the CA has put a system for controls in place, but this has not yet been sufficiently implemented by the district CAs.

5.4 TRANSPORT

5.4.1 Authorisation of transporters

Legal requirements

Article 11(1) (b)(iv) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires the applicant for authorisation for long journey transport to provide contingency plans in the event of emergencies.

Article 13(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires the competent authority to record authorisations in a manner enabling to identify transporters rapidly. Articles 13(4) and 18(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 require the competent authority to record authorisations for long journeys and certificates of approval of means of transport in an electronic database, and to make the transporters' name and authorisation number publicly available during the period of validity of the authorisation.

Findings

In response to the recommendation from report 2008/7769 to take measures to ensure that procedures for the authorisation of transporters undertaking long journeys include the provision of a contingency plan in the event of emergency, the CCA sent letters and reminders to transporters requesting them to produce a contingency plan; at the time 80 authorised transporters out of 105 did not have a contingency plan. To facilitate the transporters, the CCA prepared a template for a contingency plan and published it on the CCA website. To date five transporters have not delivered contingency plans and their authorisation has been cancelled.

A list of authorised transporters is made publicly available, as required by Article 13.4 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, on the CCA website.

In Košice region the file for the transporter visited contained a contingency plan; however, this was very basic and not in line with the recently adopted national procedure. The CCA stated that such contingency plans had been considered as satisfactory and no further action had been taken regarding this transporter. In Žilina region the files for transporters' authorisations included contingency plans which were in accordance with template provided by the CCA.

In Žilina the transporter visited was authorised for long distance transport, even though his truck did not have a satellite navigation system (SNS), contrary to Article 6.9 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. Two versions of the approval certificate for this truck indicated that the truck was equipped with a SNS, the copy provided at the opening meeting and the original certificate at the transporter's premises; however, the copy of the approval certificate given to the audit team in the district office in Žilina region was corrected to show that no SNS was present. The OV stated that he was aware that the truck did not have the SNS. No further actions were taken by the CA.

Conclusions

The CA took action to address the recommendation from the previous report regarding contingency plans. Transporters authorised for long journeys still do not always comply with EU requirements, as lack of a SNS has been considered acceptable by the local CA, which would have not been compliant after 1 January 2009.

5.4.2 Approval of means of transport

Legal requirements

Article 11(b) (ii) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires the applicant for long journeys transport authorisation to provide valid certificates of approval of the means of transport.

Article 18 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires the competent authority to grant a certificate of approval for means of transport by road used for long journeys, provided that the means of transport have been inspected and found in compliance with the requirements of Chapter II and VI of Annex I to this Regulation.

Article 7(1) lays down that no person shall transport animals by road for a long journey unless the means of transport has been inspected and approved under Article 18(1).

Findings

During the visit to the transporter's premises the OV, responsible for vehicle approval, was asked to explain and demonstrate the procedures for the approval of vehicles. During the demonstration, the OV did not know how to assess the adequateness of the ventilation (Annex I, Chapter VI, points 3.1. and 3.2 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005) nor the appropriateness of the location of temperature sensors (Annex I, Chapter VI, point 3.3 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005).

The audit team noted that the check list used for the approval was insufficient and did not include certain requirements, such as ventilation and check of SNS. In addition, the CCA guidance on the approval of vehicles did not provide procedures on how to assess certain legal requirements, such as how to properly assess the capacity of the ventilators and the appropriateness of the position of the temperature sensors (Annex I, Chapter VI, points 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005).

The OV approved a vehicle consisting of a truck and trailer although the drinking devices were not suitable for cattle, contrary to Annex I, Chapter IV, point 2.2 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. In addition, it was not possible to check the water level in the tank, contrary to Annex I, Chapter IV, point 2.3 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

The truck was equipped with a SNS, but the OV did not know how to properly assess if it allowed for the recording and providing of information equivalent to those mentioned in the journey log and information concerning opening and closing of the loading flaps, contrary to Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, Annex I, Chapter IV, point 4.1.

Conclusions

The CCA guidance on approval of vehicles does not provide sufficient procedures for adequate checks of all relevant requirements, such as ventilation and SNS, and as a consequence, means of transport are not fully equipped for long journeys, contrary to Chapter II and VI of the Annex 1 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

5.4.3 Checks at departure

Legal requirements

Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 requires that official controls are carried out in

accordance with documented procedures.

Article 15 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires the CA to carry out appropriate checks on a random or targeted basis at any stage of long distance transport to verify that declared journey times are realistic and that the journey complies with Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, in particular regarding travel times and rest periods. Article 15(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 states that records of the movement of the means of transport obtained from navigation system for carrying out such checks may be used where appropriate.

Article 15(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires that the checks on fitness for transport, as referred to in Chapter I of Annex I, are performed before loading.

Article 27.1 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires that inspections of animals, means of transport and accompanying documents are carried out on an adequate proportion of the animals transported each year. Article 15 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires the CA to carry out appropriate checks on a random or targeted basis at any stage of long distance transport to verify that declared journey times are realistic and that the journey complies with Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, in particular regarding travel times and rest periods.

Conditions for approval, operation and official supervision of assembly centres are detailed in Article 9 of Directive 64/432/EEC. They should meet structural requirements, and only admit animals properly identified, and accompanied by health documents or appropriate certificates and keep a register of movements.

Assembly centres may be considered as place of departure provided that the distance between the assembly centre and place of loading is less than 100 km or the animals have been accommodated with sufficient bedding and watered for at least six hours prior to the time of departure (Article 2(r) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005).

Article 9.2(a) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires that the animals are handled only by a personnel who have followed training courses on the relevant technical rules.

Findings

Organisation of checks

In response to a recommendation in report 2008/7769 to take measures to ensure that procedures for organising checks during transport as required by Article 27 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 are implemented, the checks are performed on the basis of guidance prepared by the CCA in 2008. The programme is prepared on the district level and should include 10% of animal welfare checks to be carried out at departure if the district has an assembly centre for intra-Union trade or export to third countries and 5% of consignments where the final destination is in Slovakia. In addition a quarterly check has to be performed of consignments arriving at slaughterhouses.

In accordance with the guidance, eight road side checks are to be performed by the district CA in co-operation with the Police, if they have a major road crossing their territory. In both regions the OV's mentioned that they agreed with the Police to carry out some checks in 2010; however, no reports were available, because there were no vehicles transporting animals at the time of those joint actions. No such checks were performed in 2011.

The CCA has put in place a software tool (CESKO), which is used by the OV's for recording and reporting checks and issued instruction No 1353/08-223 on how to use this system.

Journey logs

In response to a recommendation from report 2008/7769 that adequate checks on journey logs are submitted by the organisers before long journeys are performed, on 19 May 2011 the CCA prepared a guidance No 13/2011 to verify the accuracy and feasibility of the submitted journey logs and the

control of returned journey logs with a recording sheet. This was to be implemented by 2 June 2011; more than two years after the recommendation was made in report 2008/7769. On 25 May 2011 the CCA provided training for OV's on the new guidance.

The guidance included the obligation for the transporters to return tachographs after the completed journey and also included information on how to assess the tachographs (both analogue and digital). However, the guidance did not include any reference to checks of records from the SNS, as required by Article 6.9 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, neither did the training cover the assessment of SNS data. No data from the SNS has been taken into account by the OV's during the checks of the journeys already performed.

In Košice region the OV did ask the transporters to return tachographs, but despite the training, he was not able to read and understand the data from the tachograph. In Žilina region the OV had not yet requested any tachographs to be returned.

The audit team checked a selection of returned journey logs in both regions and noted:

- In Košice region some journey logs for the consignments of cattle to the Netherlands were not filled in properly and lacked important information, such as time of departure, weight of the animals and the surface available for the animals. This made it impossible to correctly assess travel times and stocking density of the consignments.
- The OV in Košice region did not detect that returned journey logs for the consignments to Croatia indicated that the journeys were planned with a stop of seven to eight hours at the Hungarian-Croatian border. The journeys were planned in a way that the consignments arrived at the BIP after approx. nine hours and then waited for seven to eight hours for the BIP to open, undergo the border checks and continue to the final destination. Even though the maximum journey time of 29 hours was not exceeded during these journeys, the procedure is not in accordance with Article 3(a) and 3(f) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 which requires that all necessary arrangements have been made in advance to minimise the length of the journey and that the transport is carried out without delay to the place of destination.
- In Žilina region the OV did not make any comments or take corrective measures for the consignments of calves to the Netherlands which had routinely exceeded the maximum allowed travelling time. Planned journey time on the journey logs was 18 hours, while from the returned journey logs it was clear that it was in most cases around 20 to 21 hours. As the OV did not request the records of tachographs and no data from SNS were available, it was impossible to establish the actual travelling time.
- The CAs in both regions stated that they do not ask the transporters for the records of the SNS to verify previous journeys and correctness of journey planning (Article 15(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005).

Fitness for transport and provision of water before a long journey

In response to a recommendation from report 2008/7769 that adequate checks are carried out at departure before long journeys, in particular regarding the requirements for the means of transport, the fitness of the animals and the watering and feeding intervals laid down in Chapters V, I and VI of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 respectively, the CCA organised several training sessions in 2009 where, amongst other issues, they addressed the issues from the recommendation.

In Košice region a vehicle (truck and trailer) usually used for long distance transport of cattle from an assembly centre did not have built in drinkers and the CA had accepted that two movable water pouches were adequate to water the animals on board the vehicle. The audit team considered this arrangement, which had been accepted for the transport of 84 bovine animals on two decks, was not

suitable for providing water instantly whenever it is necessary during the journey, so that each animal had access to the water, contrary to Annex I, Chapter IV, point 2.1 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

In Žilina region, from the documentation from previous consignments the audit team noted that unweaned calves of less than 14 days has been transported on long journeys to the Netherlands, contrary to point 1.9 of Annex I, Chapter VI to Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

In Žilina region the OV did not check before the journey if the provisions, including adequate equipment to supply milk substitutes or electrolytes, for providing liquids during transport were suitable for unweaned calves, contrary to point 2.2 of Annex I, Chapter VI to Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

Assembly centres

Findings

The assembly centres in both regions had suitable facilities. No animals were present at the time of visit. The operators had available records of animals entering and leaving the assembly centre.

In the assembly centre in Žilina region, which was used for unweaned calves, only five buckets with rubber teats were available to provide liquids to calves before departure. In addition, the OV did not perform any controls on the suitability of the devices to provide suitable liquids to calves during the one hour mid journey rest.

Staff at the assembly centre had received training as required by as required by Article 9.2(a) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

Conclusions on checks, journey logs, fitness and watering and assembly centres

The majority of the checks were done at departure and destination but roadside checks were also programmed on all the main road networks together with the Police; however, in most cases these were not successful in targeting vehicles during transport.

Despite a recommendation from report 2008/7769 and the new guidance and training provided many issues regarding journey planning, official controls on journey logs and fitness for transport and exceeded journey times still need to be addressed.

The CCA guidance on checks of returned journey logs was issued only recently and as a result the OVs were still not making full use of the information from tachographs. In addition, because the guidance has no reference to the SNS, the OVs were not aware of the obligation of the transporters to keep and provide the SNS data to the OV upon request.

Despite a recommendation from report 2008/7769, animals were still transported without suitable equipment for providing water/liquid and calves had been transported on long journeys although they were unfit for such journeys.

5.5 VERIFICATION OF CHECKS AND AUDITS

Legal requirements

Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 states that CAs must have procedures in place to verify the effectiveness of official controls, to ensure effectiveness of corrective action and to update documentation where needed.

Article 4.6 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 requires the competent authorities to carry out internal audits, or have external audits carried out.

Findings

In response to a recommendation from report 2008-8330 to put in place procedures to verify the effectiveness of official controls, the CCA stated that a systematic verification of effectiveness of checks is being developed and that it includes documentary checks and on the spot checks to verify the level of compliance. The current system set down in instruction 815/08-224 foresees joint visits by the regional and district OVs on farms at least once yearly. However the CCA stated that this arrangement is going to be changed from November 2011 with amendments to the Veterinary Act. There will only be audits carried out by the CCA's Audit and Control department, which was recently created (January 2011).

There were joint checks of regional and district OVs on farms in both regions visited.

Regarding the supervisory checks of animal welfare during transport, the regional CA stated that only documentary checks had been carried out. Despite these checks, in Košice region the regional OV did not detect deficiencies with journey planning (see point 5.4.3) and in Žilina region the regional OV did not detect that calves unfit for transport were sent on a long journeys and that journey times had been regularly exceeded.

There were two audits carried out on animal welfare in two districts in 2010 and one in 2011. No audits were carried out on animal welfare on farms and transport in the regions visited, but the CCA stated that there was an audit carried out in a pig slaughterhouse in Košice region which included animal welfare.

Conclusions

The system of supervisory checks currently in place for animal welfare during transport does not ensure that the controls performed by the district OVs are effective.

6 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Significant efforts have been made by the CAs and the industry to meet the deadline for phasing out unenriched cages. The pig sector is aware of the forthcoming deadline in 2013, and as stated by the CAs most of the pregnant sows and gilts are already kept in groups. As regards the compliance with the legislation on the welfare of broilers, the system of controls has been put in place but not evenly implemented between the regions.

Regarding animal welfare during transport, despite the recommendations made in a 2008 report and recent actions taken by the CCA, the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 remained poorly implemented and controlled in many areas, such as authorisation of transporters, approval of vehicles, fitness for transport, availability of the records from the navigation system and planning and controlling of long journeys.

Some steps have been taken to ensure adequate verification of the effectiveness of inspections but this was not sufficient to detect certain shortcomings and, in the absence of audits, contributed to the deficiencies in the performance of the district visited, particularly regarding the transport checks.

Four out of seven recommendations which were a subject to a follow up from previous mission had been satisfactorily addressed and minor further steps are needed to achieve full compliance. For three recommendations (two on checks on transport and one on the verification of effectiveness of official controls) insufficient actions had been taken so far to ensure that the requirements of the legislation are respected.

7 CLOSING MEETING

A closing meeting was held on 14 September 2011 with representatives of the CCA. At this meeting, the audit team presented the main findings and preliminary conclusions of the mission. The representatives of the CA acknowledged the findings and conclusions presented, and provided clarifications on some of the issues discussed.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The CAs are invited to provide details of the actions taken and planned, including deadlines for their completion ('action plan'), aimed at addressing the recommendations set out below.

It is recommended that the CA:

N°.	Recommendation
1.	Take measures to ensure that the register of establishments with laying hens is updated immediately when notification is received concerning changes in this data, as required by Article 1.4 of Directive 2002/4/EC.
2.	Take measures to ensure that the quality of inspections in holdings with laying hens is improved and that OV's perform adequate assessment of all the requirements for enriched cages which are laid down in Article 6 of Directive 1999/74/EC.
3.	Take measures to ensure that the quality of inspections in all holdings with pigs is improved and that all OV's perform adequate assessment of all the requirements of Directive 2008/120/EC, such as availability of appropriate manipulable material(Chapter I, point 4 of Annex I) and Directive 98/58/EC, such as adequate maintenance of the pens (Annex, point 9 of Directive 98/58/EC).
4.	Take measures to ensure that the quality of inspections in holdings with broilers is improved and that OV's perform adequate assessment of all the requirements of Directive 2007/43/EC, such as the assessment of cumulative daily mortality rate (Annex V.1(c) of Directive 2007/43/EC) and that both keepers and the CA have suitable equipment to ensure the adequate control of environmental parameters (point 3(a) of Annex II of Directive 2007/43/EC).
5.	Ensure that all requirements of Articles 10.1, 11.1 and 18.1 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 are taken into account when authorising transporters and approving means of transport for long journeys, in particular the requirements for satellite navigation, ventilation and drinking devices.
6.	Take measures to ensure that the quality of inspections of transport is improved and that OV's perform adequate assessment of requirements of Article 15(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 to ensure that declared journey times are realistic and that the journey complies with Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, in particular regarding travel times and rest periods and to consider the use of the records of the movement of the means of transport obtained from the navigation system for carrying out these checks (Article

N°.	Recommendation
	15(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005).
7.	Take measures to ensure that the quality of inspections of transport is improved and that OV's perform adequate assessment of requirements of Article 15(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 to ensure that animals are fit for the intended journey.
8.	To ensure that there is a system in place to verify the effectiveness of official controls and corrective action as required by Article 8(3) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.

The competent authority's response to the recommendations can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_inspection_ref=2011-6053

ANNEX 1 - LEGAL REFERENCES

Legal Reference	Official Journal	Title
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
Dir. 1999/74/EC	OJ L 203, 3.8.1999, p. 53-57	Council Directive 1999/74/EC of 19 July 1999 laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens
Dir. 98/58/EC	OJ L 221, 8.8.1998, p. 23-27	Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes
Dir. 2007/43/EC	OJ L 182, 12.7.2007, p. 19-28	Council Directive 2007/43/EC of 28 June 2007 laying down minimum rules for the protection of chickens kept for meat production
Dir. 2008/120/EC	OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5-13	Council Directive 2008/120/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs
Dir. 2002/4/EC	OJ L 30, 31.1.2002, p. 44-46	Commission Directive 2002/4/EC of 30 January 2002 on the registration of establishments keeping laying hens, covered by Council Directive 1999/74/EC