

Analysis of major deficiencies detected during the non-discriminatory inspections and action plan to address them as provided for in Article 27(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005

Member State: Ireland

Year: 2014

Abbreviations used in this document.

AFIT	Agricultural Field and Inspection Testing System (DAFM's inspection recording system)
AWD	Animal Welfare Division
CA	Competent authority
CCA	Central competent authority
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
RO	Regional (Veterinary) Office
MS	Member State
OV	Official Veterinarian
VPHIS	Veterinary Public Health Inspection System

Explanatory Notes:

- (i) *Category 1 inspections refer to official controls at slaughter plants, assembly centres and holdings.*
- (ii) *Category 2 inspections refer to official controls at livestock markets and the ports of Dublin, Rosslare and Waterford and the airport of Shannon*

- (iii) The results of the risk based documentary checks carried out on the returned journey logs is included in the report.*
- (iv) The results of the non-compliances identified as a result of information shared between the Irish CA and the French Authorities is also included.*
- (v) In this report, category 1 inspections include all transport inspections carried out at slaughter plants and those carried out at the place of departure which are typically inspections carried out at assembly centres (bovine and ovine animals) and holdings (pigs) on consignments before they are transported on a long journey (exported).*
- (vi) Category 2 inspections include inspections carried out at livestock markets, as well as inspections carried out on consignments of animals at Rosslare port and Waterford port just prior to animals being loading onto a vessel for export. Inspections at Dublin Port and Shannon Airport are also included*
- (vii) Ireland implements a system whereby approximately 25% of returned journey logs are selected for detailed checks after the completion of the journey. The selection of these journey logs is based on the risk of non compliance associated with the transporter responsible for the individual journeys. DAFM officials with responsibility for assessing these journey logs are instructed to deal with minor deficiencies at a local level and report any major deficiencies to the CCA for further action.*
- (viii) In addition to the journey log checks mentioned (iii) above, non-compliances detected on foot of the information provided to the Irish CA as part of the ongoing system of formal collaboration with the French Authorities that has been in place since 2011 are included under documentary checks (Watering and feeding, journey times and resting)*

1. ANALYSIS OF THE MAJOR DEFICIENCIES DETECTED DURING NON-DISCRIMINATORY INSPECTIONS 2014

For the purpose of this annual report, the following have been considered to be major deficiencies:

Any deficiency that had a direct negative impact on the welfare of the animals being transported or one which is likely to have a direct negative effect on the animals at some point during the planned journey. The decision to define a deficiency as “major” takes into account all relevant issues relating to the journey such as the type of animals being transported (e.g. the effect of wet/insufficient bedding on young animals versus adult animals), the length of the intended journey (e.g. necessity for the provision of water and temperature control on long journeys), the current and expected weather conditions and so on. The definition also takes into account the action taken to address the non compliance and the timeframe in which the issue was rectified, that is, a non-compliance could be considered a major non-compliance in itself (e.g. water drinkers not working), but due to the fact that it was rectified on the spot on foot of a routine check by an OV or by the transporter prior to the commencement of the journey, it is not considered to be a major non-compliance.

Further detail and analysis of major deficiencies

1.1 Fitness for transport

As can be seen in part 2, table 2 of the attached report there were 88 inspections during 2013 where a fitness for transport issue was detected. 59 of these were detected during pre- export checks at an assembly centre or holding and involved a total of 53 bovine animals. Individual cases were deemed unfit for transport as result of issues such as lameness, conjunctivitis, ringworm and occasionally age. As stated in previous reports, in Ireland the loading of approximately 90-95% of consignments of animals for export is supervised by an OV. The fitness to transport assessment by the OV usually includes a check on the animals at various stages of the export process including during routine identification checks associated with health certification and during loading itself. Therefore animals that are unfit to transport by virtue of illness or age are routinely removed from the consignment by either the OV or the transporter/organiser at any stage of this process and the number detected does not necessarily reflect an attempt on behalf of the transporter/organiser to transport animals that are inherently unfit for the intended journey. Therefore although considered major deficiencies, in this context

they are routinely and regularly addressed before export and not considered to be a major issue.

Thirty fitness for transport non-compliances were detected, in 2014, during transport checks at slaughter plants or during routine ante mortem inspections. 25 of these related to bovine animals. They involved non-compliances such as transport of an animal with a fractured limb, significant lameness or other disease processes. All were followed up by cross reporting the incident via DAFM's formal cross reporting system to the relevant RO for follow up and in some cases a by issuing a legal notice to the keeper.

1.2 Transport practices/space allowance/height

The majority of the deficiencies recorded in this category of non-compliance were minor issues relating to inadequate hygiene or lack of disinfection which were rectified on the spot.

1.3 Means of transport

As has been the case in previous years the majority of non-compliances detected in this category were minor issues such as vehicles with loose fixtures and fittings, sharp projections, leaking water drinkers. Such non compliances usually arise as a result of ongoing wear and tear to vehicles with inadequate maintenance. In the majority of cases the problem was either rectified on the spot or where there was no imminent risk to the welfare of the animals, within an agreed timeframe. In one case a legal notice was issued to the operator instructing him/her to address various serious structural deficiencies within an agreed timeframe after which a re-inspection of the vehicle would take place.

1.4 Watering / feeding / journey times and rest periods

As mentioned above the system of formal collaboration between the Irish and French authorities is ongoing since 2011. Over 350 consignments of animals (mainly calves) originating in Ireland and Northern Ireland were checked in France by the French CA to verify that journey time and rest period requirements were adhered to. All of the alleged journey time and rest period infringements that were notified to the Irish CCA during 2014 were checked and investigated. . No major infringements were identified.

1.5 Documentation

19 of the 38 non-compliances that occurred during category 2 inspections were detected during documentary checks at Rosslare port and all related to minor omissions from journey logs, section 1.

2. ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS THE MAJOR DEFICIENCIES

As described above the majority of non-compliances detected during transport checks carried out in 2014 were minor issues.

2.1 Fitness for transport

Because of the potential impact on animal welfare it is imperative to continually monitor the level of non-compliance with fitness for transport requirements and analyse the reasons behind their occurrence. The *Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council (FAWAC)* was established in Ireland a number of years ago to provide a forum for discussion on animal welfare topics and encourage participation by all the stakeholders in addressing animal welfare issues. The Education Committee of FAWAC produces Animal Welfare Guidelines for various species and topics. This Committee produced a booklet entitled “Best Practice for the Welfare of Animals during Transport” in 2007. This booklet has been made available to transporters and keepers over the years and it contains a comprehensive outline of the conditions that would deem an animal unfit for transport. To expand on this initiative DAFM will also publish the document “*Practical Guidelines to Assess Fitness for Transport of Adult Bovines*” on the DAFM website. This document which was prepared by UECBV (European Livestock and Meat Trading Union) and various NGOs with experience in the area of animal welfare during transport is a very useful and user friendly guidance document that is geared particularly towards operators. It will hopefully provide operators with additional information to aid them when checking whether animals are fit for a journey and ensure that they take the appropriate action in marginal cases in particular. The document will also be circulated to all DAFM staff involved in carrying out transport checks for dissemination to operators.

2.2 Transport practices

Of the non-compliances identified and reported on in 2014, most were minor and rectified on the spot and accompanied with a verbal warning.

2.3 Means of transport

As above Ireland continues to operate an inspection system whereby approximately 90-95% of consignments of livestock are checked prior to being transported on a long journey (exported). This check includes a check of the animals, means of transport and accompanying documentation. As can be seen from the data, the number of inspections recorded at the place of departure (i.e. assembly centres/holdings) for 2014 was in excess of the 2013 figures. This is a result of a continuing effort during 2014 to ensure that all of these pre-export checks are fully documented and recorded on DAFM's inspection recording system. This ensures that a full picture of the results of these checks is available for analysis and follow up action where necessary. DAFM will continue to implement this very high inspection rate in relation to all long journeys during 2015, resources allowing.

DAFM's transport inspection forms have been revised and have been integrated into the AFIT system. The new inspection system includes a provision whereby in the event of a serious non-compliance being identified at an inspection the AFIT system will automatically generate the need for a re-inspection. This will ensure that any major non-compliance is followed up and closed out.

2.4 Watering / feeding / journey times and rest periods

The formal system of collaboration between France and Ireland mentioned above continues to be a valuable enforcement tool in that it allows both CAs to monitor compliance with journey time and rest period requirements by Irish transporters, particularly those transporting calves.

The lack of control post capacity for resting and feeding calves at Cherbourg has now been addressed and is less of a problem at peak export periods. The various delays with construction of the new control post during 2013 and 2014 as a result of planning and financial problems were overcome and it is now operational. It has the capacity to accommodate 5 trucks of un-weaned bovines (1500 animals) This development has

further enhanced the very significant progress that has been made in recent years in relation to compliance with journey time and rest period requirements for calves exported from Ireland to the continent.

2.5 Documentation

The documentary non-compliances detected during journey log checks (section 1) during transport (at Rosslare port) are very minor in nature (e.g. total space provided/estimated total weight of consignment not filled in), and the non compliance rate has fallen following a refresher instruction.

Other actions to address transport issues during 2015

Transport targets 2015

The CCA will continue to focus on equine transport inspections and particularly transport of lower value horses such as those being transported for slaughter or to fairs/markets to ensure that the welfare of these animals is protected.

Livestock Vessels

During 2014 seven voyages from Ireland to third countries took place involving the transport of 15,789 bovine animals.

4 non-compliances were identified, one of which was major. They involved insecure loading ramps, fans not working, absence of a humane killer, exposed wiring and faulty water lines. All were rectified and passed the re-inspection.

Under the provision set out in Article 1 (3) of Regulation 1 of 2005, Ireland implements stricter national measures on sea transport. This is because the geographical position of Ireland means that vessels have to traverse the Bay of Biscay which at times can be prone to poor and unpredictable sea conditions and therefore vessels have to meet very high standards to ensure that the welfare of the animals being transported is protected at all stages of the sea journey.

Training

Training has taken place and included a refresher course on all aspects of transport and included training on the operation of commonly used navigation systems, as provided for in article 16 of Regulation 1/2005. It is DAFM's intention to carry out a percentage of checks on navigation systems to compare returned journey logs with data recorded by the navigation systems to assess compliance with journey time and rest period requirements by transporters.

Cross divisional reporting system.

In 2014 DAFM continued the existing cross divisional reporting system to allow DAFM officials to report any welfare issue detected at a livestock market or assembly centre to the RVO in which the keeper/transporter's is located using a standard reporting format. The welfare/transport non-compliance can then be further investigated at regional level in addition to any action taken by the reporting official when the non-compliance is originally identified. It is envisaged that this system will further ensure that welfare/transport non compliances detected are followed up and closed out.
