

Independent Observer summary report on *MV Gudali Express*

Cattle exported to Indonesia in August 2018

Report 15, January 2019

Voyage summary

The *Gudali Express* is an enclosed livestock vessel with five decks.

The voyage carried two consignments for two different exporters. The voyage commenced loading in the afternoon of 19 August 2018, with a total of 3 661 cattle loaded. The vessel departed late that night and completed discharge in Belawan, Indonesia in the early morning of 29 August 2018, making this an 11-day voyage.

The voyage loaded at a single port—Broome, Western Australia—and the Independent Observer (IO) joined the vessel there. Cattle were discharged at two ports in Indonesia; Panjang and Belawan.

The overall mortality rate for the voyage was 0.08 per cent (3 mortalities). This does not exceed the reportable mortality rate of one per cent for cattle on a voyage of more than 10 days as stated in the [Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock \(Version 2.3\) 2011](#) (ASEL). The causes of the mortalities were not considered to be linked to any systemic failure on behalf of the exporter.

The following comments represent a summary of key observations from the IO from loading in Broome until discharge in Belawan, Indonesia. The summary has been approved by the IO who accompanied this voyage.

Implementation of procedures to ensure health and welfare of livestock

Exporter documentation

Consignment Specific Export Plans (CSEPs) were available addressing procedures relating to provision of fodder, water, bedding, medication, humane destruction, livestock officer instructions from loading through to discharge and contingency plans. The instructions included in the CSEPs were observed to be implemented during the voyage and to be compliant with ASEL requirements.

Loading

One animal welfare issue was observed during the loading process with a steer down on the loading ramp and being walked over by other animals. The Department Veterinary Officer (DVO) supervising loading identified the issue and immediately required loading to cease, allowing the animal to regain footing and walk onto the vessel.

Adjustments were made to pen densities following departure from Broome. Within 36 hours, all pens were stocked in accordance with the load plan. Allocated space was sufficient for the size of cattle and at least half of the cattle were observed able to lie down at any point in time. Animals were further spread into emptied pens following unloading of cattle at the first port of discharge.

Personnel

A LiveCorp Accredited Stockperson (stockperson) accompanied the cattle on this voyage to maintain the health and welfare of the livestock throughout the voyage. The stockperson had several years of experience working on livestock vessels, as well as working in the Australian and international livestock industry.

A minimum of 14 vessel crew were assigned to livestock duties feeding and watering, inspecting and cleaning troughs, maintaining alleyways and monitoring the amount of fodder remaining on board. The Chief Officer (CO) or Third Officer were responsible for determining daily water consumption of the cattle, and the levels at the reverse osmosis station and storage tanks.

Daily routine

The stockperson held daily meetings with the CO, Bosun and occasionally the Master. The IO was occasionally not made aware of the meeting time and therefore was not present for all of the meetings.

The stockperson performed at least three full inspection rounds each day, checking every pen on each deck ensuring all animals could stand, checking the feed and water troughs, and checking that the ventilation systems were working.

The Master (of the vessel) and/or CO performed rounds each morning checking the cattle and upkeep of feeding, watering and trough cleaning. The CO was observed inspecting decks throughout the day and consulting with the stockperson. The Bosun performed individual pen checks daily ensuring all cattle were able to stand, and the crew are trained to report any issues (e.g. lameness) to their supervisor who would then notify the stockperson.

Trained crew performed the daily temperature and humidity readings, recording both dry and wet bulb readings on each deck, along with the ambient temperature reading from on deck. Daily readings were provided to the IO.

One night watchperson was present on deck from 6pm through to 6am on a rotating four hour roster. They were responsible for monitoring water, cleaning troughs where necessary, keeping watch on cattle health and behaviour, and to ensure the ventilation system was working. If problems did arise, they were to contact either the CO or stockperson.

Lights were left on at all times on deck with no period of darkness.

Feed and water

The CO provided the stockperson with the amount of fodder remaining on board and from that he would calculate a feeding schedule for the CO and Bosun to implement. Daily water consumption for the cattle was reviewed to ensure the cattle were receiving enough water.

Fresh drinking water was made on the vessel through a reverse osmosis system, converting sea water to fresh water. Water was stored in two tanks and in ballast. Water coming out of hoses and nose troughs was always clean and cool.

Water was supplied to each pen by two nose troughs and at least one long (manually filled) trough providing easy access to water for all cattle in the pen. All water troughs were regularly checked, and cleaned as required. Feed bins were monitored on a continuous basis, with faeces and contaminated fodder emptied into pens.

The cattle did not hesitate to feed strongly once settled nearing the end of first day. Fodder was stored in three waterproof silos which was gravity fed to the lower decks.

Ventilation

Ventilation is provided by an Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) approved generator, and the *Gudali Express* has three auxiliary generators as a backup to the ventilation system. The system provided a strong flow of fresh air to all pens in all holds.

Pen conditions

Deck wash down was not performed during this voyage. The stockperson felt pad conditions were adequate and wash down was not required. Lane way cleaning was performed manually every two days, with any faeces and spilt fodder placed into pens to assist with pad maintenance. As the faeces and fodder were mostly drier than the pads, it seemed to help dry the pads out a little.

Pad conditions were wet and sloppy for the first two days with a very slight smell of ammonia present. After two days, faeces had built up and with leftover or contaminated fodder being emptied into the pens, a slight covering was observed and no ammonia smell was present. As the voyage progressed all pads had started to build-up, however hooves could easily penetrate the pad to the flooring. Prior to the first port of discharge, pens had built-up much more. Pens on decks which were emptied at Panjang were allowed to dry out a little before cattle remaining on board were spread out into them, and they held up quite well. Pens on lower decks, especially towards the front of vessel, were the thickest and wettest, with hooves still being able to penetrate the floor up to discharge at Belawan.

Health and welfare

Not all cattle which received treatments were moved to hospital pens. This was assessed based on the nature of the issue and treatment required, and the ease of moving the animal to hospital pens. Treatment of minor issues was performed in the pen, with every effort made to move more serious cases to hospital pens once treatments were effective. Records of all treatments given were kept by the stockperson. Most, but not all, hospital pens were prepared by spreading wood shavings of 5 to 10cm in depth before any cattle were placed into them.

Three mortalities were recorded for the voyage, one of natural causes and two euthanasia cases—both of which were performed using a captive bolt.

Discharge

Discharge in Panjang was largely carried out by importer-employed stockpersons with the LiveCorp accredited stockperson and crew opening and closing gates on board, getting passages ready for the upcoming cattle and then following them to ensure they kept moving.

Other

All crew had good skills when it came to feeding, watering and cleaning. They all took direction well from their shift supervisor, the CO and stockperson. Language barriers presented some difficulties, however all crew had a basic understanding of English and higher ranking crew were required to possess a higher standard of English. The livestock crew's cattle handling skills seemed acceptable from the little that they performed. The Bosun was gentle with the cattle when getting them to stand up during his daily inspections.

Conclusion

The IO determined that the relevant procedures relating to the management of livestock exported by sea were consistent with ASEL.

Representative photographs of the voyage

Day 3 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 3 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 5 Empty pen post discharge—no issues identified



Day 6 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 8 Cattle in pen—no issues identified



Day 8 Cattle in pen—no issues identified

