

4 Pre-transport selection of livestock

Objective

Livestock prepared and selected for transport are fit for the intended journey.

Standards

Fit-to-load requirements for each species are detailed in Part B.

- | | |
|-------|--|
| SA4.1 | Livestock must be assessed as fit for the intended journey at every loading. An animal is fit for a journey if it is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) able to walk on its own by bearing weight on all legsii) not visibly dehydratediii) not showing visible signs of severe injury or distressiv) free from conditions that are likely to cause increased pain or distress during transportv) not blind in both eyesvi) not known to be, or visually assessed not to be, within 2 weeks of parturition, unless the water deprivation time and journey is less than 4 hours duration to another property. |
| SA4.2 | Any livestock judged as not fit for the intended journey must only be transported under veterinary advice. |
| SA4.3 | The consignor must only supply livestock that are assessed as fit for the intended journey. |
| SA4.4 | Where livestock are assessed to be not fit for the intended journey before loading, the person in charge must make effective arrangements for the care, appropriate treatment or humane destruction of weak, ill or injured livestock at the first opportunity. |

Note

Livestock being 'fit for the intended journey' is an important issue for livestock welfare. Many factors may affect livestock's fitness for the intended journey at different stages of a journey. The species requirements are further set out in Part B. Selection of fit livestock is a responsibility shared between the consignor and the driver. Loading includes vehicle-to-vehicle transfers.

Guidelines

Selection of livestock for transport

- GA4.1 Before loading livestock, the consignor should notify the driver of any concerns about fitness of livestock to be transported. Any special requirements for a livestock consignment should be agreed between the consignor of the livestock and the driver.

- GA4.2 For journeys involving changeovers, livestock should be inspected for their continued fitness for the intended journey at each driver or vehicle changeover point during the journey.
- GA4.3 Records should be maintained of any livestock that are transported under special circumstances.
- GA4.4 Effective management of livestock considered not fit for the intended journey should include, but is not restricted to:
- effective containment in a suitable holding area
 - rest
 - provision of shelter, feed and water
 - veterinary treatment
 - humane destruction.
- GA4.5 Livestock with broken limb bones should be humanely destroyed unless veterinary advice recommends alternative measures.

Feed, water and rest considerations

- GA4.6 Access to water should be provided by the livestock consignor before loading if the total permitted time off water is reasonably expected to be reached during the intended journey and if this is an option to address the provision of water in the transport process.

Note

Water curfews can be an important part of livestock management for transport, depending on the species and pasture conditions. Issues include faecal and urine contamination of livestock, vehicles and roads, and slipping and falling of livestock in wet livestock crates. Water curfews must be managed in the context of the total permitted time off water.

- GA4.7 Where water is provided, it should be easily accessible to all livestock and livestock should be able to drink with normal posture.

- GA4.8 livestock should be monitored to determine whether they are drinking as expected and if they are not drinking, action should be taken to encourage water intake.

Actions may include ensuring livestock can access the water facilities (stocking density, trough size and space), checking observable water quality (flushing water lines, keeping troughs clean), adding electrolyte or molasses, providing water on the ground or providing feed. Where there is a general problem with livestock from many sources not drinking, water chemistry should be examined.

- GA4.9 Where food is provided, it should be of adequate quality and amount for the species. Where food offered during the transport process is different from normal rations, food intake should be encouraged during a period of familiarity training.

Note

Providing water is a key determinant of livestock welfare during transport. Water provision times and spell periods are defined for each species in Part B.

Time off water is calculated as the total time that livestock are not provided with water, further specified in the Glossary, Chapter 5 and in Part B. The elements of this calculation may include:

- mustering (away from water)
- assembly in holding areas and yards (where water is not provided)
- curfews
- time on the vehicle, either moving or stationary (where water is not provided)
- time for unloading into new holding areas at the destination until water is provided.

A pre-transport spell period is recommended for the best welfare of the livestock and may be required to ensure periods for water provision are not exceeded. A minimum acceptable spell period is defined as four hours of access to water with space to lie down and rest. Food and shelter should also be considered. Further details are provided in Part B.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT