

AUSTRALIAN CODE OF PRACTICE for THE SELLING OF LIVESTOCK

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Compiled by: Saleyard Operators Australia

Specific activities for transport of livestock

- 3.26 Where possible, transport companies should operate to an industry supported land transport quality assurance program containing specific animal welfare provisions.
- 3.27 All transporters working dogs working in the saleyard must be muzzled and supervised. The number of dogs used should be strictly limited to that necessary to complete the task. Local rules banning dogs in the saleyards must be observed. Working dogs must not be transported in the same pen as the livestock.
- 3.28 Livestock transporters are responsible for the cleaning of their vehicles prior to the loading of any livestock.
- 3.29 If the livestock transporters, veterinarian or stock inspector considers that any livestock presented for transport are not likely to cope with the journey or are not fit for transport, loading of those animals must be refused.

Fitness of livestock to be transported

- 3.30 When determining whether livestock are fit for re-loading, livestock should be assessed to be “fit for the intended journey” in accordance with the following specified criteria:
- be able to walk on their own by bearing weight on all legs
 - not be visibly dehydrated;
 - not showing visible signs of severe injury or distress;
 - be of sufficient health and vigour;
 - not have a condition that is likely to cause further pain or suffering during the journey;
 - when concerned about whether livestock are fit to travel, advice from veterinarian or stock inspector should be sought.
- 3.31 Effective arrangements for livestock considered not fit to travel should be in place at the saleyard and the following actions may apply:
- effective containment in a suitable holding area
 - rest
 - provision of shelter, feed and water
 - veterinary treatment, or
 - humane destruction.

Unloading and loading procedures

- 3.32 Livestock arriving at the premises will be unloaded under the supervision of experienced stock handlers or livestock manager(s).
- 3.33 Before unloading, drivers and personnel at the unloading ramp should check the condition of the receival area and make sure arrangements are in place for penning of livestock and/or that appropriate pens are available.

- 3.34 During unloading and loading, the stock crate gate should be properly aligned with the loading ramp to ensure minimal injury and the smooth movement of animals. Filler boards and flaps will be used to cover any gap between the loading ramp and the floor of the stock crate.
- 3.35 Transport operators and agents should be aware of the procedural cut-off times of operation at the saleyards and manage delivery or dispatch to suit these requirements.
- 3.36 At unloading, if the facility is unmanned or the saleyard has closed for the day, out-of-hours arrangements are to be followed. Drivers should check to ensure that unloaded livestock have access to water.
- 3.37 In saleyards that permit operation at night, lighting should be positioned to give even illumination over ramps, races, yards and inside the transport vehicle, and should not shine into the eyes of livestock moving in the desired direction.

Weak, ill or injured livestock

- 3.38 Subject to each state and territories firearm legislation, there should be an operational rifle and/or captive bolt for the humane destruction of livestock as required, that is cleaned and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and stored in a secure place.
- 3.39 Consignments of livestock should be assessed upon arrival at the saleyard and any weak, ill or injured livestock should be identified. Livestock that are fatigued from transport or are identified to be weak should be managed to minimise risk to their welfare.
- 3.40 Appropriate arrangements need to be made when ill, weak or injured livestock are identified to:
- separate the animal(s) for rest and recovery,
 - treat the animal(s): or
 - carry out humane destruction as required.

Injured, diseased or moribund stock should be destroyed by nominated personnel at the saleyard. The nominated contact person for the saleyards shall be competent (by means of experience, on the job training or formal training) in humane destruction if required out of hours otherwise be able to contact a competent person. If the course of action is not obvious, veterinary advice should be sought.

- 3.41 The agent or stock receipt officer should be notified of any weak, ill or injured livestock to be able to take corrective action to separate the animal for rest or recovery, treat or humanely destroy as required. During this inspection of the condition of the livestock, records are made as required on *Livestock Receipt Forms* or other relevant documentation. Where required, veterinary advice should be sought.
- 3.42. A system must be in place for livestock received outside normal saleyard operating hours. Livestock should be inspected when the working day begins to identify any cases of illness, weakness or injury and the appropriate action must be taken.

- 3.43 Any problems or risks to animal welfare that may have been encountered during the transport journey should be communicated to the agent or stock receival officer and recorded upon arrival (eg. curfew related information if there is to be dry curfew or other arrangement, livestock identified to have had difficulties during the journey, mortalities or other issues).
- 3.44 Where livestock require humane destruction, the procedure must be carried out promptly and effectively and the animal is observed to ensure death has occurred or further action is taken accordingly.
- 3.45 If livestock are born at the saleyard, special arrangements should be made to protect the new born livestock. These arrangements may include; separate penning with the mother in holding areas, provision of feed, water and shelter or humane destruction of the newborn.
- 3.46 Where a “downer” animal is identified on a truck, the remaining livestock should where possible be unloaded from the vehicle first, provided that this will not cause any further injury to the “downed” animal. For “downer” livestock remaining on the truck, time may be given to see if the animal or animals may regain composure and footing, otherwise action for humane destruction should be carried out.

Loading and Unloading facilities

- 3.47 The vehicle should be properly aligned with the ramp to ensure there is no sizeable gap that that may cause injury to the livestock during loading or unloading.
- 3.48 After loading or unloading the transporters should ensure that the top and bottom race slide gates on the ramp are closed and where applicable the chains are removed from the truck.
- 3.49 The saleyard operators are to encourage all persons to report any problems encountered with facilities (including structural problems with gates, ramps, raceways) prior to leaving the saleyard to ensure repairs can be made as soon as possible.
- 3.50 Should repairs be unable to be made prior to the next scheduled loading, loading should cease at that particular site until repairs are complete. This is important to ensure safe workplace environment and animal welfare.