

Notes to the Final Concept Plans for the Preferred Designs of Ramp Designs endorsed by Livestock Saleyards Association of Victoria and Livestock Transporters Association of Victoria

Review, construction, commissioning and operation of the ramps should not be undertaken without first reading these notes.

General principles:

The basic criteria that drove the designs are as follows:

1. operator safety,
2. safety for the greater public,
3. animal welfare, protection and flow paths.

These three factors led to the following:

1. Safety of the greater public – this mostly revolves around ensuring the rear door of the truck is closed and the pin inserted. The best solution is to build the ramp so that the driver has no alternative entry/exit paths other than those that bring that driver within half an arm's length (unobstructed) of the back door pin.
2. Animal welfare, protection and flow paths – the following has been agreed on: A non slip floor surface, slopes of no greater than 20%, solid sounding floors (light timber not acceptable), smooth pen sides, pens fully clad top to bottom smooth and rounded corners, quick and certain closing gates, clear sight lines and flow paths with minimal opportunity for distraction.
3. For all cattle and larger animals operator safety equates to separation of operator and animals particularly when animals are under pressure (and in fact may be going somewhere where they do not wish to go). The provision of easily accessible exit and entry pathways, self latching gates (except for operator entry and exit gates), remote operating gates and removal of most opportunities to put arms through rails to goad cattle. There exist some **NO GO** zones for operators.

The following design criteria was agreed on before drawings commenced and should be borne in mind when building new ramps or modifying old.

Height:

Where truck and ramps meet given a surface with less than 1% slope for 30m in front of ramp: 1100mm

It is recognised that the previous universal figure was 1200mm. The new height allows for the modern two deck trailers which better suit 1000mm and some older pig and dog trailers and tray trucks which are nearer 1200/1300 mm in height.

Operator walkway:

The walkway is in compliance with various Australian Standards safety codes; it is 600mm wide. The hand rails are 900mm above the foot tread, the kick rail is 100mm high and there is an intermediate rail approximately 450mm above the kick rail.

The walkway slopes down in the last 3300mm to be 400mm above race floor level for the last 675mm of the ramp floor length. At the commencement of the walkway there is a level, readily available safety zone for the operator, the entry gate is spring loaded for opening and closing; **it does not latch**.

Orientation

All loading and unloading ramps should face north or south where possible, and loading should be at the SOUTH. This is so animals do not face the sun when looking up the ramp.

All Cattle and Larger Animals**Area of forcing pens:**

The nominal area of these pens is 17m². This matches the floor area of larger Tray trucks and dog trailers or one long pen on the same trailer or the “A” trailer of a B-double.

Ramp/Pen cladding and height:

All wall and gate heights to top of rail are 1700mm, the walls are fully clad; this removes sighting interference and distraction to animals. A variety of cladding materials could be used. The requirement is that a smooth durable surface be provided. The full cladding removes any risk of animals catching legs should they come under pressure and attempt an escape by jumping.

NO GO zone:

The designing committee is most adamant that the force pen and loading race are a **NO GO ZONE** for operators when animals are present; there is little chance of escape should an animal attack an operator within one of these areas. Signage (2) should be erected on these force areas indicating:

**Slam shut gate:**

The three cattle restraining gates shown are fully clad and fitted with a “slam shut” latch. The two internal gates must swing from the same side as the operator walkway and are to be fitted with a device which allows opening and closing to be activated from the operator walkway.