



Department of
**Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food**

An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta,
Iascaigh agus Bia**

Animal Welfare During Transport

**Guidelines for the welfare of non-farming
("other") species during commercial transport**

*NBAS Division (Transport)
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Administration Building
Backweston Campus
Celbridge
Co. Kildare*

Background

Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 lays down the requirements in relation to the protection of animals during transport and related operations.

The Regulation covers the transport of all live vertebrate animals within the EU that takes place in connection with an economic activity including all mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish. These guidelines set out the requirements in relation to the welfare of species other than bovine, ovine, caprine, porcine and equine species during commercial transport. Included under this general heading of "other species" are animals such as dogs, cats, small mammals, caged birds, reptiles etc. The guidelines set out to provide information mainly in relation to the transport of other species by road and sea (roll on roll off ferries). In relation to transport by air, while the guidelines do in general apply, further information should be sought from the [IATA website](#) (IATA Live Animals Regulations) and from the relevant air carrier.

General conditions for the transport of animals

Fitness for transport:

No animal of any species must be transported unless it is fit for the intended journey and all animals must be transported in conditions guaranteed not to cause them injury or unnecessary suffering. In relation to the transport of other species it is the responsibility of the transporter to ensure that these requirements are respected at all times. In addition the transporter must ensure that all necessary arrangements are made in advance to minimize the length of the journey and meet all of the animals' needs during the journey.

The following guidelines should be used when assessing an animal's fitness for transport:

- **Whether they are unable to move independently without pain or to walk unassisted.**
- **Whether they have a severe open wound**
- **Whether they are females where birth is imminent.**
- **Whether they are new born mammals in which the naval has not completely healed.**
- **Whether they are dogs or cats of less than eight weeks of age.** In such cases they must be transported only with their mother.

Means of transport

The general requirements for vehicles or containers used to transport all species require that they are designed, constructed, maintained and operated so as to:

- **Avoid injury and suffering and ensure the safety of the animals**
- **Have no sharp edges or projections**
- **Provide loading and unloading equipment that is adequately designed and constructed**
- **Be constructed of non-toxic material**
- **Prevent animals from escaping (e.g. the door must be constructed so that accidental opening is prevented)**
- **Withstand the stresses of movement during transport**
- **Provide a suitable non slip floor where applicable**
- **Protect the animals from inclement weather conditions and extremes of temperature**
- **Be easily cleaned and disinfected**
- **Be leak proof**
- **Ensure air quality and temperature is appropriate to the species and number of animals being transported e.g. containers should have ventilation apertures at least on 3 sides**

- **Prevent animals from putting their paws/feet/nose through any ventilation hole or door mesh**
- **Provide adequate lighting to allow for the care and inspection of the animals during the intended journey.**
- **Provide access to the animals for inspection purposes**
- **Provide access to the animals for the purpose of providing feed, water and care as necessary**

In addition the means of transports must provide **adequate space** so the animals can stand up in a natural position, turn around and lie down.

Suitable **bedding** must be supplied as appropriate. In particular young animals unaccompanied by their mother must be provided with adequate quantities of a bedding material appropriate to the species to ensure their thermal comfort and adequately absorb urine and faeces.

The animal accommodation (including containers) must be thoroughly cleansed and disinfected immediately after every transport of animals.

Where it is necessary to approve vehicles for journeys **over 8 hours** the vehicle must meet the requirements described in "Approval of transport vehicles" below.

Additional provisions for transport in containers

In order to ensure the welfare of the animals being transported containers must meet the general requirements for means of transport listed above in addition to the following:

- **Containers in which animals are transported shall be clearly marked indicating the presence of live animals and with a sign indicating the top of the container.**
- **During transport and handling containers shall be kept upright and secure so as to prevent displacement.**
- **In the case of containers over 50kgs that must have an adequate number of securing points to ensure they are not displaced during transport.**
- **They must be designed to allow the driver/attendant to provide water to the animals when necessary.**
- **Where containers are stacked on top of one another precautions must be taken to ensure urine and faeces do not leak on the animals underneath.**

Transport Practices

Loading, unloading and handling

Loading and unloading equipment must be adequately designed, constructed and maintained so as to avoid injury and suffering and ensure the safety of the animals.

Where loading or unloading lasts more than 4 hours appropriate facilities shall be available to keep, feed and water the animals outside the means of transport and the operation must be supervised by a veterinarian to ensure the welfare of the animals is maintained.

In the case of containers being loaded on top of one another the necessary precautions must be taken to ensure:

- Urine and faeces do not fall on the animals underneath
- They are stable
- Ventilation is not impeded.

Competence of personnel/drivers

The personnel loading, handling and transporting the animals must be competent regarding the health and welfare of the species being transported and carry out their tasks without using violence or any method likely to cause unnecessary fear, injury or suffering. Animals must be handled in such a way that ensures their welfare is respected at all times and without using any unnecessary force. **In particular it is prohibited to:**

- **Strike or kick an animal**
- **Apply pressure to any part of an animal's body in a way likely to cause undue pain or suffering**
- **Suspend an animal by mechanical means**
- **Lift or drag an animal by any part of their body**
- **Use prods, pointed implements or goads to move an animal.**

Separation of different species/types

In general animals should be transported in compatible groups. For example in general the following animals should be transported separately:

- **Animals of different species**
- **Animals of significantly different sizes or ages**
- **Animals known or likely to be hostile to one another.**
- **Sexually mature males from females.**

It should be noted that the above may not apply when animals have been raised in compatible groups.

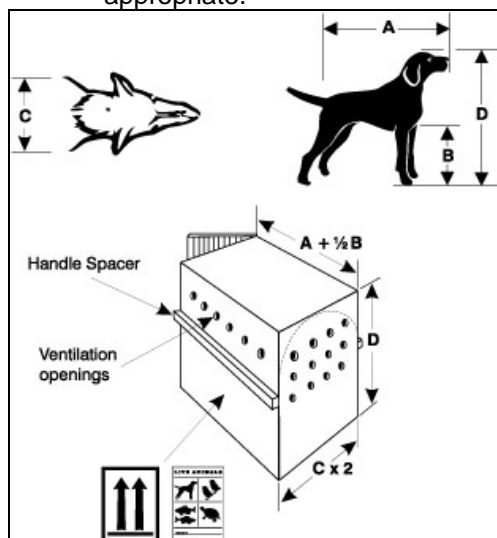
Space allowances

It is the responsibility of the driver/organiser to ensure that adequate floor area and height is provided in the vehicle/container for the animal or animals being transported. The space allowance per animal will depend on the following parameters;

- **The size and species of animal,**
- **The number of animals in the individual animal compartment,**
- **The length of the intended journey,**
- **The anticipated weather conditions for the duration of the journey e.g. more space should be provided for longer journeys and in hot weather conditions.**

In any event the space provided for each animal being transported must be sufficient so as to ensure that:

- The animals can stand up fully and hold their head in the natural position,
- They can each sit, lie down and rest at the same time,
- They can move around in the vehicle/container so as to access water and feed as appropriate.



← Calculating the size of the animals container/crate

Care of sick or injured animals

In the event that an animal becomes sick or injured during transport, it is the responsibility of the driver or attendant to provide it with immediate and appropriate care and attention. The action taken will depend on the condition of the animal, as well as other issues such as the distance from the port or final destination. However the contingency plans referred to below should contain all of the relevant information and guidelines on how to address potential problems during transport and the driver or attendant should be familiar with this information.

In the event that an animal is so ill or injured that the most humane option is euthanasia, the driver or attendant must have in his or her possession the contact details of registered veterinary surgeons at the port or place of destination or be in a position to readily access this information for example via a mobile phone internet service. The animal must be transported to the nearest registered veterinary surgeon as soon as possible in order to minimise any unnecessary suffering.

Water and feeding intervals, journey times and resting periods

All transport must be carried out without delay to the place of destination and the welfare of the animals must be regularly checked and appropriately maintained throughout the journey. It should be noted that for all journeys the journey starts when the first animal is loaded onto the means of transport and ends when the last animal is unloaded at the place of destination

The species, age and condition of the animals as well as the length and purpose of the intended journey will affect the feeding and watering regime. It may be advisable for example to modify the diet or withdraw food for a short period of time to reduce the possibility of discomfort, soiling of bedding/litter during the journey.

In the case of domestic birds and rabbits, suitable food and water must be available in adequate quantities save in the case of a journey lasting less than:

- **12 hours disregarding loading and unloading time or**
- **24 hours in the case of chicks provided it is completed within 72 hours after hatching.**

Dogs and cats being transported must be fed at intervals of not more than 24 hours and given water at intervals of not more than eight hours. There must be **clear written instructions** about feeding and watering.

All other species must be transported in accordance with appropriate written instructions about feeding and watering taking into account any special care required.

Vehicle and Transporter Requirements

Authorisation of transporters

Any person who transports live animals over 65km for commercial purposes must be authorised by DAFF to do so. There are two types of transporter authorisation:

Type 1 Authorisation: necessary for journeys over 65km but less than 8 hours in duration.

A person who applies for a type 1 authorisation must:

- Be established in Ireland
- Demonstrate that he/she has sufficient staff, equipment and operational procedures in place to comply with the legislative requirements including, where appropriate, good practice guidelines
- Not have been convicted of any serious welfare offence in the three years preceding the application.

Type 2 Authorisation: necessary for long journeys i.e. journeys in excess of 8 hours in duration (off the island if Ireland).

A person who applies for a type 2 authorisation must satisfy the conditions listed for type 1 above and in addition must submit:

- Must have their vehicles inspected and approved by the Department
- Details of the procedures in place enabling the transporter (i) to trace and record the movements of road vehicles under his/her responsibility and (ii) contact drivers at any time during the journey
- Contingency plans in the event of emergencies

Authorisations will be valid for a period of **5 years** unless otherwise stated.

Further information on authorisation of transporters including application forms is available on the DAFF website.

Approval of transport vehicles and trailers

All transport vehicles and trailers used for the transport of other species on journeys of more than 8 hours (off the island) must be approved by DAFF.

Owners of vehicles seeking such approval should contact the staff in DAFF's Transport Section in Backweston, Co Kildare (01 5058600) and an inspection of the vehicle will be arranged at a mutually convenient time.

Vehicle approval conditions

1. Identification:

- The vehicle must be identified with (i) a registration number if a rigid self propelled vehicle, or (ii) a unique, permanent, tamperproof, accessible and visible chassis number in the case of a trailer unit depending on a separate traction unit.
- The vehicle (including any moveable containers) must be clearly and visibly marked indicating the presence of live animals.
- In the case of containers a sign must be in place indicating the top of the container.

2. Design / Construction

- The vehicle/animal compartment(s) must be designed, constructed, maintained and operated so as to avoid injury and suffering and ensure the safety of the animals i.e.
 - Be free of sharp edges, projections and gaps that could cause injury to animals.
 - Have a secure and escape-proof animal compartment.
- The vehicle/animal compartment(s) must be designed, constructed, maintained and operated so as to protect the animals from inclement weather, extreme temperatures and adverse changes in climatic conditions.
- It must be possible to clean and disinfect all parts of the vehicle/animal compartment(s) (exposed hard woods e.g. oak, mahogany etc are acceptable for use in the construction/structure; exposed soft woods are not acceptable).
- Floors, sides, partitions, roof, and fittings must be of sufficient strength to contain the animals to be carried, and to withstand load/unload, transport and movement stresses, and handling stresses
- Floors/surfaces must be anti-slip and appropriate to the species being transported
- The construction of the vehicle/animal compartment(s) must ensure there is no leakage of effluent.
- Suitable loading and unloading equipment must be provided where necessary.
- Goods if transported in the same means of transport as the animals must be positioned so that they do not cause injury, suffering or distress to the animals.
- Where containers are loaded on top of one another precautions must be taken to ensure urine and faeces do not leak on the animals underneath.

3. Access

- On all vehicles there must be access to the animal compartment(s) when the vehicle is stationary to allow the driver/attendant to inspect and care for each animal as required.

- All vehicles must carry a suitable ladder where one is necessary to facilitate access to the animals.

4. Lighting

Appropriate lighting shall be provided to facilitate:

- Loading and unloading, and
- Inspection and care of the animals during transport e.g. a torch should be carried on the vehicle where necessary.

5. Ventilation /Temperature Control

Sufficient space must be provided inside the vehicle/animal compartment(s) to ensure that there is adequate ventilation above the animals when they are in a naturally standing position, without on any account hindering their natural movement. There must be a natural or artificial ventilation system in place in the animal compartment that ensures:

- There is sufficient air flow and air quality for the number and type of animals the vehicle is being approved to transport and
- The temperature is maintained, as a guideline, between 5°C and 30°C (+/- 5°C) i.e. a thermometer (max-min) must be installed in the animal accommodation as appropriate.
- Ventilation is not impeded where containers are loaded on top of one another.

In the case of containers, there should be ventilation apertures at least on three sides.

In the case of large vehicles involved in the transport of multiple containers of animals, it may be necessary to install an **alarm** on the temperature monitoring system that alerts the driver that the temperature has reached the maximum or minimum allowable, so that he or she can take the appropriate action to rectify the situation.

6. Securing of Vehicles/containers:

- During transport any containers must be kept upright and secure so as to prevent displacement.
- In the case of containers loaded on top of one another, they must be loaded in such a way that they are secure and will not mover around during transport.
- In the case of containers over 50kgs that must have an adequate number of securing points to ensure they are not displaced during.
- In the case of sea journeys, vehicles must have a sufficient number of adequately designed, positioned (adequately spaced) and maintained securing points (lashing points), where applicable, so that they can be securely fastened to the ferry.
- Where applicable the vehicle must be secured to the vessel before the start of the ferry journey to prevent it being displaced by the motion of the vessel.

7. Facilities for provision of feed and liquids on board vehicles

A system must be in place to ensure that the animals being carried are provided with water and feed at the appropriate intervals.

8. Roadworthiness of Vehicles

A Certificate of Roadworthiness shall accompany all vehicles presented for approval, unless such vehicles are new or less than 1 year old.

It should be noted that where animals are transported in moveable crates, cages or other types of containers within the vehicle being presented for approval, the vehicle should be presented for inspection in the manner in which it is routinely used to transport the animals i.e. the crates/cages used must be in situ. This is necessary so that the inspector has a realistic overview of the proposed transport conditions for the species concerned.

Contingency planning and Transport Documentation

Contingency planning

All persons transporting animals on long journeys must have contingency plans in place for every journey. These plans must outline the action to be taken in the event of emergencies such as:

- **A vehicle breakdown**
- **A road traffic accident or significant traffic delays**
- **Extreme weather conditions (see box below on the transport of animals in hot weather conditions)**
- **An animal or animals becoming sick or injured during transport**
- **Any other situation that might cause any significant delay in arriving at the final destination.**

Drivers must be familiar with the contingency plans and they must be in possession of the equipment necessary to implement them at all times.

Transport during hot weather conditions

High temperatures and high levels of humidity can adversely affect the welfare of animals during transport and increase the risk of unnecessary suffering. This is particularly relevant for animals being transported in containers. For that reason, when transporting animals in the summer months, in hot weather conditions, the journey must be planned carefully and contingencies put in place to ensure that temperature and humidity in the vehicle or container do not reach unacceptably high levels.

The following actions will reduce the risk of animals suffering during transport in hot and/or humid conditions:

- The animals should be inspected more frequently for signs of heat stress (see below for details of heat stress in dogs for example)
- Water should be offered more frequently
- The space allowed per animal should be increased (e.g. by 30%)
- The headroom above the animals should be increased
- The journey should take place at the coolest part of the day i.e. night time, early morning
- The vehicle should be parked in the shade where possible
- The roof should be light coloured to reduce solar gain.

Signs of heat stress in dogs:

- Severe panting,
- Dark red coloured gums and conjunctiva
- Dry mouth, sticky saliva
- Lying down, unwilling or unable to get up
- Disorientation, collapse and in severe cases death.

Treatment of heat stress in dogs:

- Cool the dog using cool wet towels or rags, concentrating on the head area and footpads
- Do not use very cold water as this can make the situation worse
- Offer the dog cool water (do not force this into the dog's mouth)
- Bring the dog to a veterinary surgeon for a full examination and further treatment as necessary.

Transport documentation

All persons transporting animals for commercial reasons must complete and carry the document below.

Transport Record

Name of Transporter (e.g. business/company heading)

Transporter and vehicle details:

Transporter Authorisation No: _____

Name of Driver: _____

Vehicle Approval Number: _____

Vehicle Reg/chassis No: _____

Purpose of Transport: _____

Date of Transport: _____

Animal details:

Owner name(s) (if different from the transporter): _____

Owner address(s) (if different from the transporter): _____

Species: _____

Number of animals in consignment : _____

Description of consignment: _____

Animal Care Instructions:

Journey Details:

Place of departure: _____

Time of departure: _____

Place of destination (full address): _____

Estimated journey time: _____

Details of proposed stops/rest periods (where applicable) _____

Inspection of animals: _____

Feeding instructions: _____

Watering instructions: _____

Other: _____

Notes/observations (to be completed during journey as appropriate):

Signed: _____ (Driver) Date: _____

Notes on completion of transport document:

Transporter and vehicle details:

Purpose of transport: e.g. Pedigree dogs being transported to commercial dog establishments in UK for sale.

Animal details:

The name and address of the premises of origin should be entered here. If the animals originate from more than one premises then the name of each one must be recorded here.

Description of consignment: e.g. 20 pups of mixed breeds, 10 to 14 weeks of age approximately.

Journey Details:

Place of departure will be the premises of origin in the ROI (not the port for example). Include details of any proposed stops for rest or for other purposes, including ferry details if applicable.

Animal Care Instructions:

Give details of frequency of inspection of animals during each part of the journey for example during the time spent on the ferry.

Include details of feeding and watering intervals for animals where applicable.

Notes/observations

Record any problems or significant issues in relation to the health and welfare of the animals being transported and report these as appropriate to the person receiving the animals at the end of the journey.

Use this information to put systems in place to prevent recurrence of any significant problems noted during any journey.