

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE ROAD TRANSPORT OF ANIMALS

1. General Considerations

Only animals that are fit and healthy should be transported unless they are being transported to a place for veterinary treatment.

Animals should be rested, fed and watered prior to being transported. In practice it will often be necessary to gather animals the day prior to transport and to hold them in a convenient paddock overnight where they can be rested, watered and allowed to graze.

2. Vehicle Design

The vehicle to be used must be of sound construction and suitable for the purpose intended. Particular attention should be paid to the following:

- The floor, including the loading ramp, should be of solid construction and either non-slip or suitable bedding supplied to make it non slip.
- There must be suitable and sufficient ventilation in the animal carrying compartment which can be altered to suit the prevailing climatic conditions at the time of the journey.
- The livestock carrying compartment should be divided into pens of suitable size to prevent excessive bunching of the animals. This also helps to prevent animals being injured during sudden stopping or starting.
- The construction of the vehicle should be such that there are no sharp projections such as gate catches or hooks that are likely to injure the animals.

3. Loading

Loading should be carried out as quietly and calmly as is possible with the use of sticks and goads kept to a minimum.

Raised loading bays should be used whenever possible as animals will more readily enter a vehicle if they do not have to climb a steep ramp.

Animals must not be stocked too heavily. They must have room to move inside the vehicle. They should be penned in groups according to age, size and species. There must be sufficient headroom. Animals must be able to stand in a normal position without their heads touching the ceiling.

Horned cattle should not be penned with de-horned cattle.

4. During the Journey

The driver should drive at an appropriate speed and in such a manner that the risk of injury to the animals is minimised.

The stock should be inspected as frequently as is necessary during a journey to ensure that the animals are comfortable.

If a journey by road is to take longer than 15 hours then some provision for feeding, watering and resting the animals should be made.

5. On Arrival at the Destination

Unloading should be carried out as quietly and calmly as is possible with the use of sticks and goads kept to a minimum. Raised bays should be used whenever possible.

Animals should be offered water and food appropriate to the species soon after unloading unless the animals are to be slaughtered within 12 hours of arrival.