



Land transport of livestock

Standards and guidelines for the welfare of animals

Land transport standards

Under the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*, those who own or have custody or control of animals have a **duty of care** to ensure the welfare of those animals.

The *Australian standards and guidelines for the welfare of animals—land transport of livestock* includes:

- **standards**—the requirements that must be met under the Act for livestock welfare purposes
- **guidelines**—the recommended practices to achieve desirable animal welfare outcomes.

The purpose of the land transport standards is to provide:

- standards for the welfare of livestock during land transport
- a basis for nationally consistent legislation and enforcement
- criteria for industry-based quality assurance programs.

Duty of care

The duty of care requirement under the Act applies to everyone responsible for transporting livestock, including:

- transport companies
- drivers
- owners
- agents
- livestock handlers at farming enterprises
- depots
- saleyards
- feedlots
- livestock processing plants.

Responsibilities

The welfare of animals during land transport is shared by all persons in charge of animals, including the owner and the:

- i) consignor for
 - mustering and assembling of livestock
 - handling
 - preparation, including selection as 'fit for the intended journey'
 - feed and water provision
 - holding periods before loading

- ii) transporter for
 - loading
 - loading density (excluding poultry)
 - final inspection as ‘fit for the intended journey’ during loading
 - the journey
 - additional inspections of livestock during the journey
 - spelling periods during the journey
 - unloading
- iii) receiver after unloading.

Maximum time off water

The time off water is a critical factor that affects the welfare of animals during transport.

There are maximum times off water for each class of stock, but stock under high stress may require shorter times off water.

The maximum times off water below include the time spent without water in yards prior to and after transport.

Species/class	Time off water
Cattle	
Cattle over 6 months of age	48 hours
Cows more than 6 months pregnant	24 hours
Lactating cows with calves at foot	24 hours
Calves 30 days to 6 months of age	24 hours
Calves 5–30 days old travelling without mothers*	18 hours
Sheep	
Sheep over 4 months of age	48 hours
Lambs under 4 months of age	28 hours
Ewes more than 14 weeks pregnant	24 hours
Pigs	
Adults	24 hours
Lactating sows and piglets	12 hours
Weaners	12 hours
Horses	
Horses over 6 months of age	24 hours
Horses under 6 months of age	12 hours
Lactating mares	12 hours
Mares more than 7½ months pregnant	12 hours

* Calves 5–30 days old travelling without mothers must be fed milk or milk replacer within 6 hours before transport and must not spend more than 12 hours on transport.

Note: If there is a mixed load of animals (including various age groups or species), the maximum time off water is determined by the animal that must have access to water in the shortest time. If the final destination can not be completed within the maximum time off water, spelling arrangements must be made.

Is the animal fit to load?

The animal must be fit to be loaded for the intended journey.
If in doubt, leave it out.

Avoid other factors that may affect the welfare of animals in transport (e.g. periods of extreme temperatures).

High-risk activities should also be avoided immediately prior to transport (e.g. mustering).

Reduce stress for better transport outcomes.

planning + preparation
=
maximum production

Ensure the chain of responsibility is clear. Who is making decisions, and how will those decisions affect the welfare of transported stock?

Make sure that stock welfare will be protected for the duration of the journey, including during driver rest periods.

More information

Information provided in this publication is a guide only and persons involved in the transport of livestock should understand the full requirements for the transport of livestock.

For more information about the Act, the land transport standards or other animal welfare information, call Biosecurity Queensland on **13 25 23** or visit www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au

