

Minutes

Meeting of the sub-group of the EU platform on Animal Welfare – Animal Transport 17 October 2018, Grange

This was the second meeting of the transport sub-group. Twenty members of the sub-group, six invited experts and one observer attended this meeting which was not public. The sub-group is dedicated to improve the enforcement of EU legislation on animal transport. The work of the sub-group focuses on extreme weather conditions, exports of cattle, and transport of unweaned animals.

Overall there was limited progress in delivering outputs. The group working on exports of cattle made most progress and the one on extreme temperatures the least. The group on unweaned animals did not plan to have any deliverables at this stage. Reasons for the lack of progress included:

- Overall more than half the members did not work on the issues between meetings and less than half of the participants had used the digital tool. Some had been unsuccessful in uploading documents and others indicated that the tool suffered from documentary overload, with no indication of the importance of the available documents.
- Members felt the objectives of the Animal Welfare Platform lacked clarity, some were not sure how the sub-group was supposed to work, and there was a perception that it was a talking shop;
- Senior management of some attendees did not see work for the sub-group as a priority as their limited resources were needed for other animal welfare tasks;
- Large EU level organisations need to consult widely to ensure involvement of their members and some issues are beyond the expertise of the organisation's named representative in the platform.
- Sub-group participants understood that it was only the named member of the sub-group (not the organisation) who could apply for access to the digital tool, and lack of access for others in their organisation limited contributions from their organisation;
- There was a lack of continuity from the first meeting due to changes in personnel in some organisations; four Member States and three organisations replaced their representative between the first and second meeting and colleagues provided no information in the handover;
- The three topics (extreme weather, exports, and unweaned animals) were known to be difficult to enforce, and this can't be solved with another flyer/factsheet, so there was low motivation to work on factsheets for these topics.
- By demanding compliance whilst acknowledging deficiencies in the law but refusing to change it, certain members believed the Commission had a confused approach to Regulation 1/2005.

The Chair (DG Health and Food Safety) indicated that it was disappointing that more progress had not been made, but consultation was important and even if progress was slow the approach adopted by the unweaned group, to do a detailed analysis over the four meetings and make conclusions by summer 2019 was valid. The main point was that participation was essential and that it was possible to step down from the sub-group if participants felt they could not contribute to this work. The group was asked to assist and advise the Commission on the three difficult topics and remaining passive was not an option. Enforcement of EU legislation was not only about sanctions and the Dutch "table of 11" provided a useful framework.

The extreme temperature group had the biggest issue with the lack of participation; two members of the group had worked on factsheets for each species in extreme temperatures and one member on a communication strategy. None of the other members of the group had provided feedback. [REDACTED] indicated that the work provides nothing new as it was based on the Animal Transport Guides but that this was a strong basis as guides approved by all stakeholders and validated by DG Health and Food Safety. He acknowledged the input from World Horse Welfare, a member of the platform but not the sub-group, which had provided helpful comments prior to the meeting.

There was a general consensus in the sub-group that only legal requirements carry any weight. Commission recommendations/staff working documents such as those produced on tail-docking of pigs were a next best. Network documents were a useful reference but not useful for taking enforcement action.

Several members pointed out the successes of the EU project on Animal Transport Guides where over three years 16 different stakeholders produced a series of guides, factsheets and videos;

- This engaged 2,500 people and guides were available in EN, FR, DE, ES, IT, EL, PL, RO.
- OIE helped translate the guides into Russian, and NL did this them for themselves. HR also translating these themselves. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] indicated that such guides were useful if incorporated throughout the entire production chain.
- [REDACTED] said 1400 COGECA members had been involved.
- [REDACTED] indicated that a goal of the sub-group should be to build on this work by ensuring the dissemination of the guides, e.g. incorporating these into driver training.
- [REDACTED] indicated that the final report of the Animal Transport Guides project would be useful for members of the sub-group, so that they could build on this work.
- [REDACTED] said IE interested in developing the Animal Transport Guides for use at stands at agricultural fairs or at roadshows.

The extreme temperature group addressed the problem with lack of participation and all members committed to work on identified tasks. The group also committed to work on ways of disseminating outputs, which is a cross cutting issue for the entire sub-group.

The export group continued work on "organisation of journeys to Non EU countries".

The aim of the unweaned group was to define prolonged hunger for unweaned calves. Invited expert [REDACTED] presented research on feeding of unweaned calves, their need for milk as an energy source, that water must also be available, and that it was essential for calves to be familiar with the feeding/drinking equipment. Eurogroup for animals raised the issue of enforcement, and I. Baumgartner presented cases of non-compliance. Invited experts [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from a company specialising in veal production said they did not recognise their company's trade in the presented non-compliances. They presented the system used in the Netherlands to provide water for calves during transport. The group could not conclude whether this was a good practice or not and did not reach a conclusion on a definition of prolonged hunger for unweaned calves.

The following actions were agreed.

ACTIONS

1. Exports of cattle

- Finalise document on the organisation of journeys to Non EU countries before 19th November (next meeting of the Platform). UECBV to act as co-ordinator for comments and to upload a final version to the digital tool. The entire sub-group then to be asked for comments and to agree on this version ("EU survey" tool could be used to allow members to vote on the document).
- On completion of the first task, the second document, "Securing compliance with 1/2005" will be circulated and once finalised uploaded to the digital tool.
- The group will then discuss the document on transport by sea and broader issues.
- A conference call with all members is planned prior to the next meeting.

2. Extreme Temperatures

- Input required from all members on the draft factsheets on extreme temperatures.
- Responsibilities and deadlines to be circulated.
- Produce a template for scenario/solution documents.
- Work on a communication/dissemination strategy, not before December.
- Research gaps will be elaborated and circulated for consultation.

3. Unweaned Animals

- Define prolonged hunger before next meeting.
- Third (next) meeting on thermal comfort.
- Fourth meeting on health & fitness.
- Consider what constitutes "undue suffering" (Article 3 of Regulation 1/2005) in the context of long distance transport and in relation to the above factors for calf welfare.

4. Sub-group

- Coordinators send [REDACTED] a powerpoint slide with a progress update before 19th November.
- [REDACTED] (extreme temperature group) to send update slide by 9th November. T. Cassidy to forward this as a template for the other two co-ordinators to complete.
- To consider further how weight can be given to any outputs from the sub-group, and to provide recommendations on this to DG Health and Food Safety.

5. DG Health and Food Safety

- Clarify which Member States have produced a review of Regulation 1/2005, and if possible make these available via the digital tool.
- The EU reference centre for Animal Welfare plan to do a roadmap of Regulation 1/2005, this too should be made available via the digital tool.

Following the meeting the Commission services clarified several issues raised at the meeting:

1. Staff in the same organisation as the person named as a member of the sub-group can have access to the digital tool. The member of the sub-group should send a request to SANTE-ANIMAL-WELFARE-PLATFORM@ec.europa.eu giving the name and e-mail address of the colleague for whom access should be given. All members of the sub-group are reminded to obtain access to the [Digital Tool](#) of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare. Documents can be uploaded there following the instructions published in [news](#). Any questions on the functionality of the tool should be sent by email to the mail box above (SANTE-ANIMAL-WELFARE-PLATFORM@ec.europa.eu).

2. The documents from the sub-group will not be officially validated by the Commission and will not have the Commission logo.
3. The final report on the Animal Transport Guides project will be validated by the Commission services, colleagues in G2 DG Health and Food Safety sent their comments on a draft version of this on 17/10/2018 and these need to be addressed before the report is validated. The report should then be available to the transport sub-group.
4. It is not necessary to invite the three coordinators of the transport sub-group to the Platform meeting of 19th November, as the work of the transport sub-group is one point on the agenda, which [REDACTED] has been asked to cover, and there is no need for experts from the sub-group to be present on this occasion. It will be possible to follow the meeting via web-streaming.

Next Meeting

The third meeting of the transport sub-group is scheduled for Wednesday 21st March 2018.

List of Participants

European Commission: DG Health and Food Safety: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED].

Member States: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Ireland and Spain.

International Organisations: OIE.

Business and Professional Organisations: Association of Poultry Processors and Poultry Trade in the EU (a.v.e.c.), Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE), International Society for Applied Ethology (ISAE), European Livestock and Meat Trading Union (U.E.C.B.V.).

Civil Society Organisations: Animals' Angels, Compassion in World Farming, Eurogroup for Animals, VIER PFOTEN International (VIER PFOTEN).

Independent Experts: [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

Invited Experts: [REDACTED], Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Food Safety, [REDACTED], Federal Research Institute for Animal Health, Germany, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], Pali Group, the Netherlands, [REDACTED] (Animal Welfare Foundation), [REDACTED] (Arhus University).

Observer: European Agri-Cooperatives (COGECA).