

“Enforcement and Controlling of the Present EU Animal Transport Legislation in Carinthia, Austria”

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Objectives

Animal transport # official controls # statistics # animal welfare

Introduction

The compliance with the present EU-legislation (Council Directive 95/29/EC) is not up to the European authorities, but has to be fulfilled by the Member States. In Austria, the provinces of Salzburg, the Tyrol and Carinthia have installed Animal Transport Inspectors, who do non-discriminatory controls of animal movements on the road.

Methods

In the Austrian province of Carinthia, all official veterinarians are nominated as inspectors of animal transports. They do the pre-loading animal health examinations in long-distance transports and monitor the loading itself, as well as they are called in cases of traffic accidents where transporters are involved and in cases of reports.

Apart from this in Carinthia the author, a veterinary practitioner, is appointed as animal transport inspector (“official vet”), doing non-discriminatory controls. The inspections are carried out as a sample survey on streets of all categories once a per week.

All vehicles looking like animal transporters are checked, making no difference the local or international routes and in loaded or unloaded vehicles. In this way the “Tiertransportgesetz-Strasse” this is the Austrian law resulting from the Directive, and the Austrian law concerning epidemic diseases are enforced.

Results

Whereas the amount of complaints is up to 7,5% in 6 of 9 Austrian provinces, these provinces with spot-checks on the road and during journey have a quite higher percentage of shortcomings in animal transport. Within the period of four years, the author has done 551 controls of live animal transports.

Complaints had to be made in 64,25 % of all controls in Carinthia.

The complaints included 183 reports and/or 83 tickets and/or 149 cautions.

Within the period of the first two years of the author’s controls, 40 % concerned animals being on long-distance travels, 73 % of the animal transports were going to other European states and to the Middle East.

Details of shortcomings and controls as well as the amount of harm done to the animals are shown in the pp-presentation.

Conclusion

About 1/3 of all animal transports are full of complaints of relevance to animal welfare, regardless of the origin, of the length and duration of the preceding journey and regardless of the transported species.

Because of the many possible problems in land animal transports the stockperson should pay attention especially to the following and the veterinarian practitioner should try to gain competent influence and expertise in the loading.

The physical and mental state of the animals, the design of the driving courses and forcing pens within the stables as well as the way the animals are walking outside the buildings, the means they are propelled, the lighting as well as optic or physic barriers on the way, the quality of floors and the embedding, which often simplifies to overcome the ramps, the design and angle of the ramp itself, and finally the inside of the loading compartments.

Group size and group composition of animals being familiar to one another, stocking density and the design of partitions have to be considered.

In long distance transports even the plausibility of the route, the watering and ventilation systems and possible problems in facility management during the planned journey have to be examined prior to loading. Though situation might change during the transport the knowledge of the veterinary practitioner in the loading and his/her influence as well as the knowledge of the person in charge of the animals will help to improve the welfare of the animals during transport.

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