

“Out of Africa: Sourcing, Transporting and Insuring of Wildlife”

Brian Courtenay, Wildlife Broking Services

Firstly, I would like to thank the Executive Committee of AATA for the part sponsorship of my trip from Durban, South Africa to Canada – your gesture is much appreciated.

Secondly, it is an honour for me to address this international delegation of role players in the animal transportation industry and I thank you for the opportunity to do so.

In the time allocated to me I will give you an overview of the African scenario under the title “Out of Africa – sourcing, transporting and insuring of wildlife/exotics”. I must however, clearly define the words “wildlife and exotics” so that there are no misunderstandings. We in Africa, especially South Africa, are blessed with the most amazing diversity of wild animal species – from reptiles to mammals we have an indigenous population of species too large to detail in this report. As indigenous species and free roaming animals we refer to them as “Wildlife” – animals roaming free which are not captive bred or trained animals. Trained/captive bred animals and non-indigenous species to Africa we will refer to as “Exotics” by virtue of the fact that transportation of trained captive bred animals, is very similar to the transportation of livestock/bloodstock, where human control makes the entire operation much easier. My discussion centres around the sourcing of wild animals for zoological gardens, theme parks, safari parks and private collectors.

Similar to a few years ago where South Africa was awarded the contract for Disneyland’s new safari theme park – this Noah’s Ark project, consisting of hundreds of varied species of animals, were primarily supplied by The Kruger National Park and certain private game ranches.

As the leading supplier of animals to all international destinations, South Africa has a very regulated and controlled supply system in place. South Africa supplies in excess of 90% of all wildlife out of Africa as most of our neighbours do not have the infrastructure and private game ranch base to supply the international demand. Also many of the animals in other African countries are owned by the State through National Parks.

South Africa has allocated about $\pm 17\%$ of its total land mass to protected areas, which are the nucleus of our wildlife industry. Within these protected areas we have in excess of 850 private game ranches who actively breed with various species of wildlife. These game ranches are also one of the biggest suppliers of wildlife for translocation. The attached graph will demonstrate the total animals sold on auction over the past few years which demonstrates the size of our industry. These statistics exclude any private sales of animals which we estimate to be as lucrative as the auction business – so ladies and gentlemen, this gives you an idea of demand for wildlife both locally and internationally.

From this growing industry, the major role players have, recently, formed the “Wildlife Translocation Association (WTA) to formalize and regulate the industry and to enforce protocol for the supply and wellbeing of animals for translocation. WTA are the official mouth-piece to the capture and suppliers of the wildlife industry and have approx 75 member companies. These

members source and capture animals on order for local and international translocation and as professionals in the industry, we strongly recommend they be used for any wildlife enquiry. The WTA members in turn work very closely with the South African Veterinary Association, who provide the veterinary back up and support for local and international translocations. WTA members are well equipped for the capture and transport of any species of wildlife from the hefty rhinos and elephants to the dainty Impalas and other antelope species. The following slides will demonstrate the specialist equipment required.

Also of importance, WTA members work closely with all animal welfare organizations – South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) have published the protocol for humane capture and transporting of animals, to which WTA and their members subscribe so as not to fall foul of these associations and attract unnecessary media attention. This is extremely important for the welfare of the animals and to avoid bad press if things are not done correctly. Movement and welfare of animals is high on the agenda of international animal rights groups, which I am sure you are all fully aware of so I do not need to elaborate on this issue.

The most important issue in the transportation of the animals, is preparation – remember, these are wild animals that are not accustomed to human interference and handling and are often confined to very restricted areas for air transport, so many issues regarding their wellbeing need to be considered.

Firstly, once the consignment of species has been selected for the translocation, your agent/broker must enquire about the appropriate import and veterinary requirements at final destination. All consignments have to be quarantined prior (in most instances) to departure and this can be arranged by the seller or your WTA contractor – most WTA members have government approval and veterinary approved quarantine temporary holding facilities. During quarantine it may be a pre-requisite for exportation, to have blood samples taken for disease control and again, the SAVA veterinarians, in conjunction with WTA, will oblige. All preparation of animals, including crating and other issues, will be handled by your appointed WTA contractor. All crates (for air transport) will be to IATA specification. Blood samples will be processed at Onderstepoort, a world renowned veterinary medical facility.

Through your freight agent special attention must be given to CITES permits for those species requiring permits, importation and veterinary documentation. The choice of airfreight carrier will be important – this will obviously depend on the size of the consignment but special attention needs to be given to this issue. Wild animals cannot stand in the back of a vehicle indefinitely awaiting arrival of the transport aircraft, so planning an easy operation is essential. Also, most airports (locally and internationally), are not equipped to hold a load of moody rhinos or long necked giraffes! So noise and outside movement and interference must be avoided.

Coordinating the flight is extremely important. For preparation of animals for the flight by the veterinarians, they will need the routing and total time for the journey, to calculate the dosage of the long acting tranquilizing drugs, most common being “Acuphase”, for the safety of the animals. When accompanying the consignment, the Vet needs to know what dosage of drugs they will require until release at final destination. They must also calculate the food and water requirements for the duration of the trip. Correct crate sizes, load area and climate control for

the duration of the trip needs to be arranged. Transport by road in appropriate vehicles to quarantine facility at final destination needs to be considered. So the choice freight or shipping agent working through our local contractors is important when one considers the logistics of exporting wildlife internationally. Also bear in mind that many wild animals do not travel well so it is in the interest of the welfare of the animals to ensure all issues are covered in advance to reduce any possible delays or discomfort which could have catastrophic results. I recently witnessed a consignment of animals on a private charter flight from South Africa to Europe – the charter company had not advised the agents of an “unscheduled” fuel stop during the trip – this refueling was done to buy “cheap fuel” but was not scheduled. Needless to say on landing for the refuel, the authorities, impounded the aircraft for veterinary reasons on hearing that the flight being carried was wildlife, which caused a delay in excess of 24 hours in extreme temperatures, resulting in dehydration, and starvation which resulted in mortalities in excess of 80% of the entire consignment. The local authorities refused additional feed and water during this period as the charter company had not followed protocol with import/export permits for the scheduled fuel stop! Also a classic example of agents not being informed of the correct routing of a flight!

Our company, WBS, are members of Wildlife Translocation Association and we have insured hundreds of local or international translocations of animals over the past 15 years. Having spent a lot of money on your consignment, taking into consideration the airfreight and other costs, the need for good insurance is essential. We at WBS only use +A security through Lloyd’s of London for this highly specified class of insurance.

Depending on the terms of trade of the consignment for export, insurance cover is based in hard currency agreed values, namely US Dollars, Euros or British Sterling and the consignment is usually based on value on a “cost, insurance, freight” basis, alternatively a “freight on board” basis. Insurance cover from time of capture including quarantine risks, the actual transshipment (air freight or by sea) offloading at final destination when insurance cover can cease or alternatively extended to include quarantine cover at final destination plus road transit risks to theme park or zoological gardens - all by arrangement at source of the consignment. Insurers prefer the insurance coverage to be arranged at source as local conditions apply which are not always known when arranging insurance cover in a foreign country. We have had facilities for the past 15 years with certain underwriters at Lloyd’s and prepare all the documentation, etc, ourselves. It is important to clearly confirm the total number of species for the translocation, their individual values, the routing to final destination as well as the charter or courier for the consignment. All this information must be disclosed to ensure correct underwriting procedures – if extended insurance cover is required, such as quarantine and road transit at final destination, this must be requested from the outset as it will be difficult to get an insurer to provide such insurance cover after consignment has arrived at final destination.

Insurance cover provided is all risks of mortality, that is mortality following any cause, be it disease/illness, accidental death or humane slaughter of animals following broken limbs. So as you can understand, most foreign insurers/risk carriers would not be aware of these additional risks. The insurance contract also covers the “beserk clause” – animals that become uncontrollable whilst in flight and pose a danger to the handlers/staff on board as well as the other animals and therefore, at the discretion of the pilot in charge, animals may be destroyed for

this reason. By special arrangement, consideration could be given to extend insurance cover for “nationalization and confiscation risks” whilst on a scheduled stop over for refuelling etc.

I must emphasize to you, that one of the highest risks for wildlife translocations is the potential mortality of animals following “stress” – this is by far the highest risk, other than the loss of the entire consignment due to an accident and as our experience confirms, stress related mortalities, otherwise known as white muscle disease or capture myopathy. Stress related deaths can only materialize in some cases between 7 to 10 days after capture or after undue stress whilst in flight. So, with an expensive consignment it is really important to insure the potential risks by sourcing a specialist underwriter with experience in this field, as it is important to ensure settlement of losses which may occur during the period of insurance. Your shipping agent/broker will be aware of this and should attend accordingly. Remember, these are wild animals and therefore transporting these species can be risky – so pass this risk of financial loss to the professional risk carriers.

So Ladies and Gentlemen, I believe I have covered most issues for sourcing, transporting and insuring of wildlife – Out of Africa. Please do not hesitate to ask questions. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to address you all.