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EU reviews Regulation on Animal Welfare during transportation

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Report Highlights:

In November 2011, the European Commission published a report reviewing Commission Regulation No (EC) 1/2005 on the animal welfare for animals during transport. This report draws conclusions from an EFSA report on the implementation of the regulation in EU member states. The report identifies shortcomings in the implementation of the regulation, as well as discrepancies in implementation between member states, which mainly result from differences in interpretation of the regulation and lack of enforcement. Hence, the Commission is considering a number of possible actions to improve the implementation of the regulation. The Commission can be expected to follow through by proposing an amendment to the regulation in the coming months. This should have little or no impact on U.S. animal exports.

General Information:

On November 10, 2011, the European Commission published a report on the impact of [the Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1/2005 on the protection of all vertebrate animals during transportation](#) [1] .

Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 was published in December 2004 and entered into force in January 2007. It limited most animal transports to eight hours and imposed stricter criteria for transportation means and all people involved with the transportation of animals. It required strict transportation documentation as well as mandating that animal transportation vehicles be equipped with a GPS in order to be able to track transports in real time. It further made certification and training mandatory for drivers as well as for staff loading and unloading animals.

This report, mandated in the Council Regulation, reviews the functioning of regulation concerning farmed animals, such as cattle, pigs and horses. It is based on a [Scientific Opinion Concerning the Welfare of Animals during Transport](#) [2] from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in January 2011 and also on Member States' official reports on inspections. The report identifies the general tendencies and impacts that have occurred as a result of the application of the Regulation since 2007, more particularly in the following areas:

- (1) The impact on intra-Union trade in live animals;
- (2) The regional and socio-economic implications of the Regulation;
- (3) A comparison of the quality of animal welfare during transport before and after the application of the Regulation;
- (4) The assessment of the requirements of the Regulation taking into consideration the scientific opinion adopted by the EFSA in December 2010.
- (5) An analysis of the use of the navigation systems.
- (6) The level of compliance and enforcement.

Conclusions

The report concludes that enforcement of the Regulation remains a major challenge, partly because of differences in interpretation of the requirements and because of lack of adequate controls by the Member States. Reports from the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) and from the Member States show that the level of enforcement varies significantly between Member States and this correlates with information gathered by several non-governmental animal welfare organizations.

As a result of the observed shortcomings, the Commission will consider the following actions for improvement in the near future:

- a. Adopt implementing measures concerning navigation systems as provided by Article 6(9) of the Regulation, and establish a simplified version of the journey log. This should improve harmonization of the implementation of the Regulation and reduce the administrative burden for the transporters.
- b. Adopt implementing measures concerning the controls to be performed by the competent authorities of the Member States. An increase in the number of inspections, where needed, should lead to improved enforcement.

- c. Increase co-operation and communication with the competent authorities of the Member States and stakeholders. This will allow better collection and analysis of information on difficulties and share best-practice experiences.
- d. Disseminate Commission guidance on the interpretation of the Regulation and support the development of guides to good practice. This will cover some ambiguities and inefficiencies in the current AW legislation and will improve harmonization of the implementation of the rules.

Consequences

While it is likely that the EU will strengthen AW legislation for the transportation of animals as a consequence of the concerns with the implementation of the current regulation, this is unlikely to have major consequences for U.S. animal exports. If any, transshipments of animals through the EU territory would be the most likely to become affected.

^[1] http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/transport/docs/10112011_report_en.pdf

^[2] <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1966.htm>