

Preparing livestock for transport across Bass Strait

local and interstate.

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If stock are well prepared for transport they travel better, arrive in better condition and effluent spill is reduced.

People involved in the transport of animals have a responsibility for their welfare and must ensure that the animals are fit to undertake the journey.

Spilling effluent onto roads or into the ocean is an offence. All people involved in livestock transport have a responsibility to ensure this does not occur.

On the property

- Take livestock off forage crops and green feed for at least 12 hours before leaving the property. For animals on dry feed, this time may be less.
- Hold stock in a small paddock or yard with access to clean fresh water (as appropriate for the type of livestock) but no green feed. Dry feed e.g. hay, oaten hay or reasonable quality straw may be fed to animals off green feed.
- Ensure that all animals have NLIS devices (if required for that species). Fill in all details of the National Vendor Declaration form and any other forms required.
- Commercial products can be given to the animals to calm them for long journeys. Any products given must be administered according to manufacturer's or veterinary directions. If the product has a withholding period, this must be observed if the animal is going for slaughter.

Maximum time cattle and sheep can be without access to drinking water

Cattle	Hours
Cattle over 6 months old	48
Calves 30 days to 6 months old	24
Lactating cows with calves at foot	24
Calves 5 to 30 days old	18
Cattle known to be pregnant, excluding the last 4 weeks	24
Sheep	Hours
Sheep over 4 months old	48
Lambs under 4 months old	28
Ewes known to be pregnant, excluding the last 2 weeks	24

- If you are not sure about preparation for transport then seek advice from the transporter, livestock agent or DPIPW's Animal Health and Welfare Branch.

Loading facilities

- Loading ramp access and loading facilities must be suitable for the type of vehicle being loaded.
- The loading ramp and yards must be in good working order and safe for the people using them and for the stock being loaded.

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Is the animal fit to travel?

- Consider the condition of each animal including:
 - general health
 - whether it's fit to load (see below)
 - body fat score – over fat and over thin animals do not travel well
 - susceptibility to heat or cold (eg. newly shorn sheep)
 - pregnancy status
- Also take into account:
 - the weather conditions forecast for the entire journey
 - the distance of the trip
 - the way the livestock being transported prefer to travel (eg. standing, lying)
 - whether the animals are travelling the sea leg in a road livestock trailer or in pens on an open deck boat (open boat decks are more exposed).
- Animals injured during yarding and loading must receive appropriate treatment or be euthanased as soon as possible. Injured animals must not be loaded unless fit to load.
- Signs that an animal is unfit to load include:
 - inability to bear weight on one or more legs
 - severe emaciation or weakness
 - signs of severe injury or distress
 - inability to see out of both eyes
 - suffering from a condition that may cause more pain and suffering during transport (eg. an eye cancer).
- Animals are not to be shipped in the last trimester of pregnancy except in exceptional circumstances and under the advice of a veterinarian or DPIPWE Animal Health and Welfare Branch.

- Calves must be over 30 days of age to be transported across Bass Strait.

Loading

- Cows and calves must be separated at loading. Any animals loaded in the same pen must be similar in size.
- The transporter is also legally responsible for the welfare of the livestock after loading so the driver has the final say on which animals are fit to travel and at what loading density.
- Have a contingency plan for if the shipment cannot be loaded at the wharf for any reason.

To ensure you meet all requirements and relevant paperwork, refer also to the relevant Biosecurity Fact Sheet available from the DPIPWE website:

- [Importing livestock and bovine reproductive material into Tasmania \(from interstate\)](#)
- [Moving livestock between the Bass Strait Islands and Mainland Tasmania](#)

Further Information

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