



Welfare of Animals During Transport

Advice for transporters of sheep

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Advice for transporters of sheep

A new EU Regulation for transporting animals applies from 5 January 2007.

If you transport animals you should make sure you know about the new rules and procedures that affect you. These rules are intended to improve the welfare of animals during transport. **The rules came into force on 5 January 2007** and apply to anyone transporting live vertebrate animals in connection with an economic activity.

There are a number of specific points that anyone transporting sheep needs to take account of. These are summarised in this leaflet. More detailed guidance can be found on the Defra website at: **www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare**

Are you affected by the new rules?

The Regulation sets out new rules for those who transport animals in connection with an economic activity. In the UK this is considered to be any transport of animals undertaken as part of a business or commercial activity, which aims at achieving financial gain, whether direct or indirect, for any person or company involved with the transport. The Regulation does not apply to:

- Transport of animals not in connection with an economic activity.
- Transport to or from veterinary practices or clinics under veterinary advice.

Exemption

Farmers transporting their own animals, in their own transport, up to 50km (approximately 31 miles) from their holding have limited exemption from parts of the Regulation but must still meet its **general conditions for transport** (set out in the first box on the next page).

One of these conditions is that animals are fit to travel. Fitness to travel rules do not normally allow the transport of heavily pregnant animals (past 90% gestation), new born mammals in which the navel has not completely healed or animals that have given birth within the previous seven days. However, it is permitted for a farmer or a haulier if appointed to transport these animals short distances under 50km (e.g. between or within farm premises) **if the journey is for the purposes of improving conditions of birth**. Such journeys must not cause unnecessary pain or suffering.

Further information on fitness to travel can be found on the Defra website at: www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare

The Regulation requires anyone transporting animals on any journey to ensure that:

- No one shall transport animals, or cause them to be transported, in a way likely to cause them injury or undue suffering.
- Journey times are kept to a minimum.
- The animals are fit to travel.
- Those handling animals have been trained and are competent.
- The vehicle and its loading and unloading facilities are designed, constructed and maintained to avoid injury and suffering and to ensure the safety of the animals.
- Water, feed and opportunity to rest are made available to the animals as appropriate, and sufficient floor space and height is available in the transport.
- For non-export journeys, documentation is provided which shows the following: origin and ownership of animals; place of departure and destination; date and time of departure and expected duration of journey (usually referred to as an Animal Transport Certificate).

The Regulation sets out additional requirements if you transport sheep on 'short' journeys over 65km (approximately 40 miles) and up to eight hours. Transporters must:

- Hold a Type 1 transporter authorisation.
- Ensure that drivers and attendants are in possession of a certificate of competence.
- Demonstrate that they have appropriate staff and equipment to transport animals in a proper way, and to have no record of serious infringements of animal welfare legislation in the preceding three years.

There are, in addition, a number of other requirements for ‘long’ journeys of over eight hours. Transporters of sheep must:

- Hold a Type 2 transporter authorisation.
- Have any vehicle used for transporting sheep inspected and approved.
- Have contingency plans in place in case of emergencies.
- Complete a Journey Log where sheep are being exported.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Journey times

Journey times and rest periods remain unchanged from the previous rules.

Maximum journey times (hours)

	Basic standard vehicle	Higher standard vehicle		
		Travel	Rest	Travel
Sheep	8	14	1	14
Unweaned lambs	8	9	1	9

- Journey time is from first animal loaded to last animal unloaded.
- Time spent on Roll-on/Roll-off (RO-RO) vessels counts towards the journey time.
- Time spent by animals in pens on specialist livestock vessels does not count towards total journey time, provided certain conditions are met.
- Time whilst on the aircraft during air transport does not count towards total journey time.

General points

- Sheep in the last 10% of pregnancy (approximately 15 days), or that have given birth in the last week, are not fit for transport, and are also unfit for presentation at a market.
- When ewes “in milk” are transported without their suckling young, they must be milked at intervals of no longer than 12 hours.

Ramp angles for loading and unloading

The Regulation stipulates a new maximum ramp angle of:

- 26°34' for sheep (50% slope, equivalent to a rise of four over distance of eight).

Vehicles and trailers built and in use before 5 January 2007, which comply with ramp angle requirements set out in the previous legislation, may continue to be used **within the UK** until 4 January 2012, if it is impractical or uneconomic to convert or alter to comply with the new rules.

Separation

Sheep must be handled and transported separately from other species*. The following separations must also be applied:

- Sheep of significantly different sizes or ages*.
- Sexually mature males from females.
- Animals with horns from animals without horns*.
- Animals hostile to each other.
- Tied animals from untied animals.

* This need not apply where animals have been raised in compatible groups, are accustomed to each other and where separation would cause distress or where animals are accompanied by dependent young.

Space allowances

Space allowances for road transport remain unchanged from the previous rules.

Category	Approximate weight (kg)	Area (m ² /animal)
Shorn sheep and lambs of 26kg or over	<55	0.20 – 0.30
	>55	>0.30
Unshorn sheep	<55	0.30 – 0.40
	>55	>0.40
Heavily pregnant ewes	<55	0.40 – 0.50
	>55	>0.50

Temperature within vehicle

- The temperature within the vehicle must not fall below 0°C during a journey of more than eight hours.

Transport of lambs

- Lambs of less than one week of age may only travel for a maximum of 100km (approximately 62 miles).
- Lambs less than 20kg must travel on suitable bedding for thermal comfort.
- A lamb with a navel which is not completely healed is considered unfit for transport.

Vehicle partitions

The Regulation does not define dimensions for partitions but they must:

- Be strong enough to withstand the weight of animals.
- Have fittings designed for quick and easy operation.

On vehicles used for journeys of over eight hours, partitions must be:

- Fitted so that separate compartments may be formed.
- Adjustable to suit the specific needs of the animals being transported.

Vehicle pen sizes

The Regulation does not specify maximum or minimum dimensions for pens, but guidance to best practice continues to be:

- A suggested maximum pen length of 3.1m for sheep.

FURTHER ADVICE

This leaflet provides a brief overview of the main requirements of the Regulation with regards to sheep. Other leaflets are available covering requirements for cattle, goats, pigs, horses and poultry. A general leaflet has also been produced.

Detailed guidance, forms and further advice can be found on the Defra website at: www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare

Or by contacting the relevant administration below.

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