

Reports and Comments

Welfare of Animals During Transport, Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005

Council Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport came into force on 5 January 2007. Relevant 'Welfare of Animals (Transport) Orders' have been introduced for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to provide for enforcement and penalty provisions, and make derogations from certain provisions of the Regulation. The Regulation replaces EU Directives 91/628 and 95/29, and the 'Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 1997' (WATO), which implemented the Directives.

The Regulation covers the transport of all live vertebrate animals within the EU when this is in connection with an economic activity. The Regulation does not apply to the transport of non-vertebrates but the general requirements to protect them from injury or unnecessary suffering still apply. The Regulation does not apply where the transport of animals is not in connection with an economic activity; where the animal is being transported to or from a veterinary clinic under veterinary advice; where an individual animal is accompanied by its owner or another responsible person and the animal is fit to be transported; or where a pet animal is being transported by its owner. The UK regulatory authorities have taken a broad view as to what constitutes an economic activity. This covers "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 transport".

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland, have jointly issued Guidance Notes to aid consistency of understanding and enforcement of the Regulation and the Orders. The guidance is divided into two parts. The first provides general guidance, and the second technical advice on the specific requirements of the legislation.

The general guidance outlines the requirements of the Regulation applicable to all vertebrate species, and the detailed requirements for particular species. Information is provided on the documentation required for transporting animals by species, journey time and the method of transportation (ie road, sea or air, or a combination of these). Documentation requirements vary for journeys up to 65 km, for journeys over 65 km and under 8 hours, and for journeys over 8 hours. Permitted maximum journey times and minimum rest periods are given by species and age of the animals. The journey time is defined as the period from the loading of the first animal to the unloading of the last animal. When journey times exceed the permitted maximum for farm animals they must be unloaded, fed and watered and rested for 24 hours. This must be done at an approved control post. The guidance outlines the requirements for control posts and how approval for them can be obtained.

Anyone transporting animals on journeys over 65 km must hold a transporter authorisation. Journeys over 65 km lasting less than 8 hours require a short journey authorisation, and those over 8 hours require a long journey authorisation. The criteria for obtaining an authorisation are given.

Road vehicles used for transporting vertebrate animals on journeys in excess of 8 hours must be inspected and approved. Details are given as to how this should be carried out. The requirements for being able to track vehicles during journeys are also outlined. From 5 January 2008 drivers and attendants of road vehicles must hold a valid certificate of competence for transporting horses, farm animals or poultry over 65 kilometres, and the training and certification requirements are described.

On journeys of up to 12 hours within the UK the competent authorities have decided to grant certain derogations from the Regulation. The derogations are explained and include vehicle inspection and certification; roof insulation; ventilation, temperature monitoring and warning systems; and satellite navigation systems.

The technical annexes deal with the fitness of animals to travel, vehicle specifications by species and navigation system, transport of animals by air or sea, technical rules for control posts, training and competence requirements and journey logs.

The Guidance will be an important source of information for all those engaged in the transporting animals for an economic purpose within the UK and other member states.

Welfare of Animals During Transport, Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and the Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006, Guidance Notes. 2006. Defra. Available from Defra, Welfare in Transport Implementation Team, Animal Welfare Division, 1a Page Street, London, SW1P 4PQ, Tel: +44 (0) 7904 6576. www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare/; or Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department, Pentland House, 47 Robb's Loan, Edinburgh, EH14 1TY, Tel: +44 (0) 131 244 6482. www.scotland.gov.uk/; or National Assembly for Wales, Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ, Tel: +44 (0) 29 2982 3592. www.countryside.wales.gov.uk/; or Department for Agriculture and Rural Development in Northern Ireland, Room 728, Dundonald House, Upper Newtownlands Road, Belfast BT4 3SB, Tel: +44 (0) 28 9052 4950. www.dardni.gov.uk

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Consumer Attitudes to Animal Welfare: A Report for Freedom Food by IGD

Freedom Food, the RSPCA farm assurance and food labelling scheme, commissioned an independent report by the Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD) to investigate consumer buying behaviour in relation to animal welfare. This report has been published (see below) and covers: consumer attitudes to the importance of animal welfare in