



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

A call for evidence on
controlling live exports for
slaughter and to improve
animal welfare during
transport after the UK leaves
the EU.

April 2018



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Introduction

Purpose

1. The purpose of this call for evidence is to seek views on controlling live exports of farm animals for slaughter once the United Kingdom (UK) has left the European Union (EU), in order to improve animal welfare. The UK Government also wishes to consider more broadly what improvements could be made to the way animals are transported once the UK has left the EU. Following this call for evidence a consultation may be issued in relation to proposed UK Government measures, which could include regulatory measures as well as prohibitions.
2. This call for evidence is issued on behalf of the UK Government and Devolved Administrations of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Scope

3. The current legislation which protects animals during transport and related operations is European Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, on the protection of animals during transport and related operations. Animal welfare is a devolved matter and this is administered and enforced through separate provisions which apply in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
4. The UK Government would like the welfare in transport regulatory regime to reflect fully the latest scientific and veterinary knowledge after the UK has left the EU. The UK Government wishes to improve the welfare of animals during transport by:
 - a. Reviewing the standards of welfare that currently apply, taking account of the most up-to-date veterinary and scientific knowledge e.g. on stricter journey times, and;
 - b. Proposing a series of improvements and reforms in due course. The UK Government will work with Devolved Administrations to try to ensure that any improvements are introduced consistently as far as possible and without disadvantaging agriculture in any part of the UK.
5. We are asking the Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC) to review existing standards and their application and to make recommendations for improvements. In parallel we are seeking views and evidence via this public call for evidence on both how well the current transport regulatory regime is working, and on how it might be improved after the UK has left the EU. The outcome of this call for evidence will inform FAWC's review.

6. In addition research has been commissioned by Defra and is being undertaken by The Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) and University of Edinburgh. This research will explore the welfare issues relating to farm animals during transport through a systematic literature review. This work will feed into and provide further information for FAWC's review.
7. In launching this call for evidence the UK Government is seeking particular views on the issue of controlling the export of live animals, to help inform implementation of the Government's manifesto commitment that 'as we leave the EU we can take early steps to control the export of live farm animals for slaughter'.
8. In so doing the UK Government acknowledges calls to ban live animal exports especially for slaughter. Recently, an e-petition to Parliament to "end the export of live farm animals after Brexit" received nearly 100,000 signatures and was debated in Westminster Hall in February 2018. A recent EU-wide petition called "Stop the trucks" which received over one million signatures across Europe¹ called upon the EU Commission to allow ports to refuse the trade in live animal exports. In 2017 Theresa Villiers MP introduced a Private Members' Bill titled the Live Animal Exports (Prohibition) Bill which seeks to ban the export of live farm animals that are kept or bred for the production of food, wool or skin. In 2016 Craig MacKinlay MP introduced a Private Members' Bill which sought to give a power to local authority-owned ports to prevent animals being exported.
9. The UK Government would prefer animals to be slaughtered close to the point of production, and considers that a trade in meat and meat products is more desirable than the long distance transport of animals specifically for slaughter. It is important to emphasise that any future proposed UK Government reforms should be grounded and justified in terms of delivering animal welfare objectives.
10. This call for evidence considers journeys involving England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Animal welfare is a devolved matter and we will discuss the evidence and any future proposals with the Devolved Administrations.

Audience

11. Anyone may respond to the call for evidence. Those who have an interest include:
 - Animal welfare organisations.
 - The veterinary profession.
 - Animal welfare enforcement bodies.
 - Trade bodies.

¹ Source: <http://www.eurogroupforanimals.org/tag/stop-the-trucks>

- Farm unions.
- Live animal haulage companies.
- Farmers.
- Pet couriers.
- Airlines.
- Ferry operators.
- Train haulage companies.
- Livestock/animal vehicle manufacturers.
- Animal markets.

Responding to the call for evidence

12. This call for evidence starts on 10 April 2018 and closes on 22 May 2018.

We would ask you to respond to the consultation questions using the online tool which can be found on Citizen Space at: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/animal-health-and-welfare/live-exports-and-improving-welfare-in-transport/>

13. Responses could also be sent to Defra by email or post. Please state:

- **Your name.**
- **Your email address.**
- **Your organisation.**

14. Enquiries and responses should be directed to:

E-mail: animalwelfare.consultations@defra.gsi.gov.uk

or

The Animal Welfare Team
 Area 5B, Nobel House
 17 Smith Square
 London SW1P 3JR

15. If you would like to receive hard copies of the call for evidence documents, you may contact the consultation hub.

After the call for evidence

16. Members of the public may ask for a copy of the responses under the Freedom of Information legislation. If you do not want your response – including your name, contact details and any other personal information – to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the call for evidence. Please note, if

your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer this will not count as a confidentiality request. Please explain why you need to keep the details confidential. We will take your responses into account if someone asks for this information under the Freedom of Information legislation. However, because of the law, we cannot promise that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

17. **Please note that the call for evidence will be open for a period of 6 weeks.** After the call for evidence a UK Government consultation may be launched relating to proposed UK Government reforms.

Call for Evidence

Background

18. Transport itself can be stressful for animals, for example as a result of loading, unloading and transportation in an unfamiliar environment. ²
19. All forms of transport (road, rail, sea and air) may have negative effects on the animal's welfare. There is evidence to show transport can compromise animal welfare in a number of ways through, for example, extreme temperature ranges, lack of food and water, insufficient ability to rest, noise and vibration. ²

Welfare in transport standards

20. The current legislation which protects animals during transport and related operations is European Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, on the protection of animals during transport and related operations (referred to hereafter as the 'EU Regulation'). This is administered and enforced through separate provisions applying in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Live farm animals can be transported for several purposes, including breeding, production, and slaughter. Breeding animals are generally higher value and are often transported in conditions where animal welfare is voluntarily set at a higher standard.
21. A report published in 2011 by the EU Commission found that overall the EU transport regulation had a positive effect on the animal's welfare but that serious welfare problems during transport may exist.³ We would like the welfare in transport regulatory

² EFSA Journal 2011; 9(1):1966. Scientific Opinion Concerning the Welfare of Animals during Transport

³ EU Commission, 10 November 2011. Report From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council On The Impact Of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 On The Protection Of Animals During Transport.

regime which applies after the UK has left the EU to reflect the latest knowledge of animal welfare ² and as such give the level of protection we would wish to see.

22. In view of this we have asked FAWC to undertake a review of the requirements to protect animal welfare during transport and to make recommendations. In parallel we are seeking views and evidence via this public call for evidence, the outcome of which will inform FAWC's review. In addition research has been commissioned by Defra and is being undertaken by Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) and The University of Edinburgh. This research will feed into and provide further information for FAWC's review.

Animal welfare concerns

23. This call for evidence seeks views and information on all aspects of animal welfare in transport, and on all possible reform options. The purpose is to understand and assess what UK Government reforms might be proposed in future, including in view of the manifesto commitment that 'as we leave the EU we can take early steps to control the export of live farm animals for slaughter'. Future proposed reforms in this area ought to be grounded and justified in terms of delivering animal welfare objectives.

24. A series of questions are set out below. These questions:

- Seek factual information about the transport of live animals which you may currently undertake, in order to improve the evidence base.
- Seek views and evidence on how well current welfare in transport requirements and standards protect animal welfare, including views on the main elements of welfare in transport.
- Seek views on possible future reform ideas, including the justification for them in animal welfare terms.

25. We are interested in views on the possible differences applying to different animal species. In relation to farm animals we are principally interested in cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, horses and poultry.

26. We are interested in views on the possible differences applying to different modes of transport, such as transport by road, by rail, by boat and by air, and on further differences applying within each mode.

27. We are interested in views on the possible differences applying to different journey purposes and associated final destinations, such as slaughter, production and breeding.

28. We are also interested in views on how animal welfare may be affected by combinations of the above. For example if there are greater welfare concerns about a particular species using a particular mode of transport for a particular purpose.

Q1: We would welcome factual information on animals you currently transport to help us develop a better understanding of current movements.

- a) What species of animal(s) do you transport? What volumes, how often and for what purpose i.e. slaughter, production or breeding?
- b) When transporting animals **within** the UK, what are your average journey durations?
- c) Do you buy or sell animals at market? If so, how long does it take to transport animals to or from the market? How long do animals on average spend in the market?
- d) When transporting animals **within** the UK, does the journey involve road, rail, air or sea? (Please select all that apply).
- e) Do you **export** animals **outside** the UK? If yes;
 - i. What species do you **export** and in what volumes and how often?
 - ii. Do you **export** animals for slaughter or production or breeding? (Please select all that apply).
 - iii. Please indicate which country(s) you export to.
- f) When transporting animals to other EU Member States, what are your average journey durations?
- g) When transporting animals to other EU Member States, does the journey involve road, rail, air or sea? (Please select all that apply)
- h) If transporting animals to **third countries**, what are your average journey durations?
- i) If transporting animals to third countries, does the journey involve road, rail, air or sea? (Please select all that apply)
- j) Do you **import** animals? If yes;
 - i. What species do you **import** and in what volume and how often?

- ii. Do you **import** animals for slaughter or production or breeding?
(Please select all that apply).
- iii. Please indicate which country you import from.

k) Are you based in Northern Ireland? If yes;

- i. Do you transport animals to and from The **Republic of Ireland**?
- ii. What species of animals do you transport and in what volume and how often?
- iii. Do you **transport** these animals for slaughter or production or breeding? (Please select all that apply).
- iv. What is the average journey duration of these movements?
- v. Do you transport animals to and from **GB**?
- vi. What species of animals do you transport and in what volume and how often?
- vii. Do you **transport** these animals for slaughter or production or breeding? (Please select all that apply).
- viii. What is the average journey duration of these movements?

Q2: We would welcome your views on how well current welfare in transport requirements and standards are currently working.

- a) What are the key current regulatory requirements that you think protect the welfare needs of animals during transport?
- b) What issues or deficiencies in the current regulations are you aware of?
- c) What do you consider are the most important considerations for improving animal welfare during the transport of animals or related operations? Please indicate if your priority areas are species specific.
- d) The current EU regulation requires transporters to reach a higher standard if they are transporting animals on long journeys i.e. more than 8 hours. How do you think we should define long journeys?
- e) What evidence do you have that journey length influences the welfare conditions for animals?
- f) On long journeys, the regulation currently requires rest stops to allow the animals to recover before continuing their journey. There is no limit on the number of rest stops required nor a maximum journey limit.
 - i. Do you believe there should be a maximum number of rest stops? Please indicate which species you are referring to.
 - ii. Do you believe that there should be a maximum journey limit? Please indicate which species you are referring to.
- g) What evidence do you have on how the different forms of transport (road, rail, sea, air) affect animal welfare? Please indicate which species you are referring to.
- h) Do you have any evidence on the transport of unweaned animals? What age related conditions do you think should apply? Please indicate which species you are referring to.
- i) What conditions do you think should apply to animals post transport? Please indicate which species you are referring to.
- j) How do you think “fitness to travel” should be defined? Please provide an explanation for your answer. Please indicate which species you are referring to.

Q3: We would welcome your views on possible future reform ideas.

- a) Does the journey end point i.e. slaughterhouse or production facility influence animal welfare? Please provide an explanation for your answer.
- b) Do you think that a ban on live animal exports, or imports, should apply? If so, for what purpose i.e. slaughter, production. Please give reasons for your response.
- c) Currently, under the Regulation, livestock vessels (which keep animals in pens) and lorries require specific pre-approval inspections, whereas roll-on, roll-off vessels or aircrafts do not. Do you think that all transporters should be inspected and approved? If so, why?
- d) What other factors should be considered and addressed to improve the welfare of animals during transport?
- e) Do you have any other proposed UK Government policy reforms?

Annex A: Volume of animal imports and exports

1. Live animals can be transported for several purposes, including breeding, production and slaughter.
2. The trade in animal exports and imports are monitored by Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) which records the number of animals exported and imported from around the EU.
3. Today, the number of animals exported from the UK to EU Member States is provided in **Table 1**.⁴ This shows the volume of trade in live exports for slaughter, production and breeding to the EU during 2016. This indicates the scale of the trade for the whole of the UK.

Table 1: The volume of trade in live exports for slaughter, fattening and production and breeding to the EU in 2016.

Purpose	Livestock species				
	Sheep	Cattle	Pigs	Poultry	Horses
Slaughter	385,099	10,464	8,916	n/a	0
Production	93,778	25,433	2	13,291,141	n/a
Breeding	4,978	6,453	1,695	3,689,957	468
Other	4	6	2	n/a	16,461
Total	483,859	42,356	10,615	16,981,098	16,929

a) Other: not known the purpose of export.

4. The number of animals imported from the EU Member States to the UK is provided in **Table 2**.⁵ This shows the volume of trade in live imports for slaughter, production and breeding from the EU during 2016. This indicates the scale of the trade for the whole for the whole of the UK.

⁴ Source: published data from TRACES, available at https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/traces/facts-figures_en 2016 report: https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/traces/facts-figures_en

⁵ Source: published data from TRACES, available at https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/traces/facts-figures_en 2016 report: https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/traces/facts-figures_en

Table 2: The volume of trade in live imports for slaughter, fattening and production and breeding from the EU in 2016.

Purpose	Livestock species				
	Sheep	Cattle	Pigs	Poultry	Horses
Slaughter	552	8,664	356,746	n/a	0
Production	1,749	10,367	99,192	n/a	n/a
Breeding	813	25,718	3,949	16,102,421	180
Other	0	9	0	3,878,975	7,644
Total	3,114	44,758	459,887	19,981,396	7,824

a) Other: not known the purpose of import.