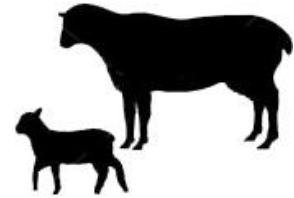


# LAND TRANSPORT OF SHEEP IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY



*Derived from The Australian Standards and Guidelines for the Welfare of Animals – Livestock Transport Edition One December 2008*

## Part A General Standards

### 1. Responsibilities and Planning

SA1.1 A person in charge must exercise a duty of care to ensure the welfare of livestock under their control and compliance with the livestock transport standards.

The responsibility for livestock welfare in the transport process is:

- i. the consignor for the:
  - a. mustering and assembling of sheep; and
  - b. handling; and
  - c. preparation, including inspection and selection as 'fit for the intended journey'; and
  - d. feed and water provision; and
  - e. holding periods before loading; and
- ii. the transporter (except for rail) is responsible for:
  - a. the loading including final inspection during loading as 'fit for the intended journey'; and
  - b. the loading density; and
  - c. additional inspections of the sheep; and
  - d. spelling periods during the journey; and
  - e. unloading
- iii. the rail authority is responsible for the sheep during the rail journey
- iv. the master of the marine vessel is responsible for the sheep on roll-on/roll-off livestock transport vehicles during a sea journey
- v. the receiver after unloading.

SA1.2 If a person in charge reasonably expects the journey time to exceed 24 hours, the transporter must possess a record which is accessible at the road side and that specifies:

- i. the date and time that the sheep last had access to water; and
- ii. the date and time of inspections and any welfare concerns and actions taken; and
- iii. emergency contacts.

A person in charge who is transferring responsibility for sheep to be further transported for a total journey time of longer than 24 hours must provide a record with this information to the next person in charge.

### 2. Stock Handling Competency

SA2.1 A person involved in any part of the sheep transport process must be competent to perform their required task, or must be supervised by a competent person.

### 3. Transport vehicles and facilities for sheep

SA3.1 A person in charge must ensure that the vehicles and livestock handling facilities are constructed, maintained and operated in a way that minimises risk to the welfare of sheep. Vehicles and facilities must:

- i. be appropriate to contain sheep; and
- ii. have effective airflow; and
- iii. have flooring that minimises the likelihood of injury or of sheep slipping or falling; and
- iv. be free from internal protrusions and other objects that could cause injury; and
- v. have sufficient vertical clearance for sheep to minimise the risk of injury.

#### 4. Pre-transport selection of sheep

- SA4.1 Sheep must be assessed as fit for the intended journey at every loading by a person in charge. An animal is not fit for a journey if it is:
- i. unable to walk on its own by bearing weight on all legs; or
  - ii. severely emaciated; or
  - iii. visibly dehydrated; or
  - iv. showing visible signs of severe injury or distress; or
  - v. suffering from conditions that are likely to cause increased pain or distress during transport; or
  - vi. blind in both eyes
- SA4.2 Any animal assessed to be not fit for the intended journey must only be transported under veterinary advice.

SA4.3 The consignor must only supply sheep that are fit for the intended journey.

SA4.4 A person in charge must not load, nor permit to be loaded, sheep that are not fit for the intended journey except under veterinary advice. If sheep are assessed to be not fit for the intended journey before loading, a person in charge must make appropriate arrangements for their care, treatment or humane destruction at the first reasonable opportunity.

#### 5. Loading, transporting and unloading of sheep

SA5.1 If the maximum permitted time off water is reached, the person in charge must provide the sheep with a spell (water, food, space to lie down and rest) according to the table below before continuing the current journey or before starting another journey.

- SA5.2 The person in charge must manage time off water to minimise risk to the welfare of the sheep according to:
- i. the increased risk to welfare of longer journeys close to the permitted maximum time off water; and
  - ii. the assessment of whether the sheep are fit for the remainder of the intended journey; and
  - iii. the predicted climatic conditions, especially heat or cold; and
  - iv. the class of sheep, especially if weak, pregnant, recently having given birth, lactating or immature; and
  - v. the nature of the intended journey.

SA5.3 If no records are provided indicating the last time the sheep had access to water, sheep at a livestock handling facility (saleyard, spelling facility or staging point) must be provided with reasonable access to water by the person in charge within 24 hours at the facility, or within the maximum time off water relevant to the class of sheep if this is less than 24 hours.

SA5.4 The driver (except train drivers) must assess the loading density for each pen or division in the livestock crate or each container. The assessment is based on average live weight of the intended sheep loading, and must be managed to minimise risk to the welfare of the sheep.

Determination of loading density must consider all of the following factors:

- i. class
- ii. size and body condition
- iii. horn status
- iv. predicted climatic conditions
- v. nature of the intended journey
- vi. design and capacity of the vehicle.

SA5.5 The driver must have the final decision on the loading density.

SA5.6	The driver must segregate sheep by sufficient internal partitions to minimise risk to the welfare of other sheep. Determination of segregation must consider all the following factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. class and size</li> <li>ii. general health of the sheep</li> <li>iii. level of aggression</li> <li>iv. nature of the intended journey.</li> </ul>
SA5.7	A person who handles sheep in the transport process must do so in a manner that is appropriate to the class, and minimises pain or injury. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. sheep must not be lifted by only the head, ears, horns, neck, wool or tail; or</li> <li>ii. sheep must not be lifted off the ground by a single leg; unless they are less than 15kg</li> <li>iii. mechanical lifting of sheep must ensure that they are supported or secured as necessary; or</li> <li>iv. sheep must not be thrown or dropped; or</li> <li>v. sheep must not be struck in an unreasonable manner, punched or kicked; or</li> <li>vi. sheep which are unable to stand must not be dragged, except in an emergency to allow safe handling, lifting, treatment or humane destruction.</li> </ul>
SA5.8	A person who handles sheep in the transport process must not use an electric prodder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. on genital, anal or facial areas; or</li> <li>ii. on sheep under three months old; or</li> <li>iii. on sheep that are unable to move away; or</li> <li>iv. excessively on an animal.</li> </ul>
SA5.9	A person in charge must ensure that a dog is under control at all times during loading, transporting and unloading sheep. A transporter must ensure that a dog is not transported in the same pen as sheep, with the exception of bonded guardian dogs. Dogs that habitually bite must be muzzled.
SA5.10	A transporter must ensure that the ramp and the vehicle are properly aligned, and that any gap between the ramp and the vehicle is sufficiently narrow to minimise the likelihood of injury to sheep during loading and unloading.
SA5.11	The transporter must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. inspect the livestock crate immediately before departure, to ensure that doors are closed and secured; and</li> <li>ii. inspect the receival yard immediately before unloading, to ensure that there is free access and sufficient space for the sheep intended to be unloaded; and</li> <li>iii. take reasonable steps to notify a receiver of the arrival of the sheep at the destination.</li> </ul>
SA5.12	The transporter must inspect sheep: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. on the vehicle before departure; and</li> <li>ii. except when sheep travel on roll-on/roll-off livestock transport vehicles during a sea journey, within the first hour of the journey and then at least every three hours or at each driver rest stop, whichever comes first; and</li> <li>iii. at unloading; and</li> <li>iv. at each driver or vehicle change over stop.</li> </ul>
SA5.13	Upon identifying a distressed or injured animal at an inspection, a person in charge must provide or seek assistance at the first reasonable opportunity. Weak, ill or injured sheep must be identified to the person receiving them.
SA5.14	The receiver of sheep must make arrangements at the first reasonable opportunity for separating weak, ill or injured sheep for rest and recovery, appropriate treatment, or humane destruction and disposal of dead stock.
SA5.15	A person in charge must take reasonable steps to minimise the impact of extreme weather conditions on the welfare of sheep during the transport process.

## 6. Humane Destruction

- SA6.1 A person in charge must ensure that humane destruction methods result in rapid loss of consciousness followed by death while unconscious.
- SA6.2 A person in charge must ensure moribund sheep are humanely destroyed by a competent person or under the direct supervision of a competent person at the first reasonable opportunity.
- SA6.3 If a competent person is not immediately available to humanely destroy sheep, the person in charge must arrange for a competent person to carry out the procedure at the first reasonable opportunity; unless it is in the welfare interest of the animal and a competent person is not immediately available, and the person considers they have the capability to destroy it.
- SA6.4 A person humanely destroying sheep must take reasonable action to confirm they are dead.
- SA6.5 Firearm use must be carried out in the frontal or poll positions
- SA6.6 Captive bolt must be in the frontal or poll positions, accompanied by appropriate restraint and applied in contact with the skull
- SA6.7 A person must not use blunt trauma to the forehead to destroy sheep, unless the sheep is less than 24 hours old.
- SA6.8 Sheep must not be destroyed by bleeding-out by neck cut unless there is no firearm or captive bolt available, and must be done only by a competent operator or under direct supervision of a competent operator.

## Part B Sheep Specific Standards

- SB11.1 A person in charge must ensure time off water does not exceed the time periods given below for each class of sheep:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Maximum time off water (hours)</b>	<b>Minimum Spell duration (hours)</b>
Sheep over 4 months old	48	36
Lambs under 4 months old	28	12
Sheep known to be more than 14 weeks pregnant, excluding the last 2 weeks	24	12

SB11.2 If sheep over 4 months old have been off water for 48 hours, the person in charge must ensure the sheep have a spell for 36 hours before starting another journey. If lambs under 4 months have been off water for 28 hours, the person in charge must ensure the lambs have a spell for 12 hours before starting another journey. If ewes known to be more than 14 weeks pregnant excluding the last two weeks have been off water for 24 hours, the person in charge must ensure the sheep have a spell for 12 hours before starting another journey.

\* Standards highlighted will be regulated under the *NT Livestock Regulations*

## Compliance and enforcement relating to the Land Transport Standards

The compliance and enforcement approach adopted by the Animal Biosecurity Branch is outlined in the Factsheet - Enforcement of Animal Biosecurity Legislation for the Livestock Industries available at [www.nt.gov.au/d/animalhealth](http://www.nt.gov.au/d/animalhealth) and for increasing severity of non-compliance is:

- verbal warning
- written warning
- issue an infringement notice
- order by an inspector or chief inspector
- prosecution

Under the Northern Territory *Livestock Regulations*, penalties for non-compliance with a relevant standard outlined in the Land Transport Standards can be in the form of an infringement notice or prosecution. Current penalties are provided in Table 1.

**Table 1. Penalties**

Standard	Infringement Notice (Penalty units)	Prosecution (Maximum penalty)
SA1.2, SA5.11, SA5.12, SA5.13, SA6.2, SA6.4, SA6.7, SA6.8	5	50
SA3.1, SA4.3, SA4.4, SA5.1, SA5.3, SA5.6, SA5.7, SA5.8, SA5.9, SA5.14, SA5.15, SB11.1, SB11.2,	10	100

\*At 1 July 2012, one (1) penalty unit is equivalent to \$141.00.

### More Information

- Northern Territory Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries website [www.nt.gov.au/d/livestockstandards](http://www.nt.gov.au/d/livestockstandards)
- Land Transport Standards website [www.livestockwelfarestandards.net.au/](http://www.livestockwelfarestandards.net.au/)
- Fit to Load Guide on MLA website [www.mla.com.au/Publications-tools-and-events/](http://www.mla.com.au/Publications-tools-and-events/)

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