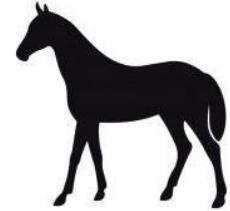


LAND TRANSPORT OF HORSES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY



*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 horses; 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 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 horses; and
 - d. spelling periods during the journey; and
 - e. unloading
- iii. 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 horses 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 horses 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 horse transport process must be competent to perform their required task, or must be supervised by a competent person.

3. Transport vehicles and facilities for horses

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 horses. Vehicles and facilities must:

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

4. Pre-transport selection of horses

- SA4.1 Horses 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 horses that are fit for the intended journey.

SA4.4 A person in charge must not load, nor permit to be loaded, horses that are not fit for the intended journey except under veterinary advice. If horses 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 horses

SA5.1 If the maximum permitted time off water is reached, the person in charge must provide the horse 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 horses 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 horse/s is/are fit for the remainder of the intended journey; and
- iii. the predicted climatic conditions, especially heat or cold; and
- iv. the class of horse, 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 horse had access to water, horses 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 horse if this is less than 24 hours.

SA5.4 The driver 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 horses loading, and must be managed to minimise risk to the welfare of the horses. 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 horses by sufficient internal partitions to minimise risk to the welfare of other horses. Determination of segregation must consider all the following factors:

- i. class and size
- ii. general health of the horse
- iii. level of aggression
- iv. nature of the intended journey.

SA5.7 A person who handles horse 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"> i. horse must not be lifted by only the head, ears, horns, neck or tail; or ii. horse must not be lifted off the ground by a single leg; or iii. mechanical lifting of horse must ensure that they are supported or secured as necessary; or iv. horse must not be thrown or dropped; or v. horse must not be struck in an unreasonable manner, punched or kicked; or vi. horse which are unable to stand must not be dragged, except in an emergency to allow safe handling, lifting, treatment or humane destruction.
SA5.8	A person who handles horse in the transport process must not use an electric prodder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. on genital, anal or facial areas; or ii. on horse under three months old; or iii. on horse that are unable to move away; or iv. excessively on an animal.
SA5.9	A person in charge must ensure that a dog is under control at all times during loading, transporting and unloading horse. A transporter must ensure that a dog is not transported in the same pen as horse, with the exception of bonded guardian dogs.
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 horse during loading and unloading.
SA5.11	The transporter must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. inspect the livestock crate immediately before departure, to ensure that doors are closed and secured; and ii. inspect the receival yard immediately before unloading, to ensure that there is free access and sufficient space for the horse intended to be unloaded; and iii. take reasonable steps to notify a receiver of the arrival of the horse at the destination.
SA5.12	The transporter must inspect horse: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. on the vehicle before departure; and ii. except when horse 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 iii. at unloading; and iv. at each driver or vehicle change over stop.
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 horse must be identified to the person receiving them.
SA5.14	The receiver of horse must make arrangements at the first reasonable opportunity for separating weak, ill or injured horse 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 horse during the transport process.
6.	Human 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 horses are humanely euthanized 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 euthanize the horse, 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 euthanize it.
SA6.4	A person humanely euthanizing a horse must take reasonable action to confirm they are dead.

SA6.7	A person must NOT use blunt trauma to the forehead to euthanize a horse.
SA6.8	A person must NOT use bleeding-out by neck cut to euthanize a horse.

Part B Horse Specific Standards

SB8.1 A person in charge must ensure time off water does not exceed the time periods given below for each class of horse:

Class	Maximum time off water (hours)	Minimum Spell duration (hours)
Cattle over 6 months old	24	12
Lactating mares	12	12
Foals less than 6 months	12	12
Mares known to be more than 7.5 months pregnant, excluding the last 4 weeks	12	12

SB8.2 Journey time may be extended to 36 hours only under the following conditions:

- i. horses must be fed and watered on the vehicle every 5 hours
- ii. horses are not exposed to the natural elements
- iii. there must be sufficient space to allow comfortable standing position
- iv. flooring must be suitable including drainage to remove urine
- v. regular assessments must be made that the horses are fit for the remainder of the intended journey
- vi. horses must have a mandatory spell for 24 hours before starting another journey.

SB8.3 If horses have been off water for 24 hours, they must have a mandatory spell for 12 hours before starting another journey.

If lactating mares known to be more than 7.5 months pregnant excluding the last 4 weeks of pregnancy have been off water for 12 hours, they must have a mandatory spell of 12 hours before starting another journey.

SB8.4 Mares known to be in the last 4 week of pregnancy must only be transported under veterinary advice unless the journey is less than 4 hours.

SB8.5 Horses kept in yards for more than 12 hours or that will be transported for more than 12 hours must be provided with feed and water and space to lie down before loading.

SB8.6 A person who transports a foal with its mother for a journey time of more than five hours must provide sufficient space on the vehicle for the foal to suckle and lie down.

SB8.7 A person must not transport a horse of equine lameness score four and five (see lameness score assessment table below) unless veterinary advice is obtained or before starting another journey.

Score	Equine Lameness assessment
0	Lameness not perceptible under any circumstances
1	Lameness difficult to observe, not consistently apparent regardless of circumstances (e.g. weight carrying, circling, inclines, hard surface)
2	Lameness difficult to observe at a walk to trot in a straight line (e.g. weight carrying, circling, inclines, hard surface)
3	Lameness consistently observable at a trot under all circumstances
4	Lameness obvious, marked nodding, hitching and/or shortened stride
5	Lameness obvious, minimal weight bearing in motion or rest, inability to move

Source: American Association of Equine Practitioners Scale of Lameness Grading (1984)

SB8.8 A person who uses a vehicle which has stalls and pens to transport horses must ensure that each horse stall or pen can be accessed easily for feeding, watering and visual inspection. All vehicles must contain nonslip flooring and walls of sufficient strength to withstand horse activity.

SB8.9 A person who uses a vehicle which is fully enclosed and environmentally controlled must ensure the vehicle has effective airflow with equipment providing at least 12 air changes per hour.

SB8.10 A person who uses a vehicle to transport horses must ensure there is a vertical clearance of at least 2.2 m between the livestock crate floor and overhead structures.

SB8.11 A person transporting an unbroken stallion must segregate it from other stallions and classes of horses.

SB8.12 A person must not use an electric prodder on a horse during the transport process.

SB8.13 A person must not use a dog to move a horse in livestock-handling facilities.

* 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 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, SA6.6, SB8.1, SB8.2, SB8.10, SB8.11, SB8.12, SB8.13	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
- Land Transport Standards website www.livestockwelfarestandards.net.au/
- Fit to Load Guide on MLA website www.mla.com.au/Publications-tools-and-events/

Darwin Region

Senior Field Veterinary Officer
Ph: 08 8999 2035 M: 0427 003 600

Regional Livestock Biosecurity Officer
Ph: 08 8999 2030 M: 0439 270 039

Tennant Creek Region

Regional Livestock Biosecurity Officer
Ph: 08 8962 4458 M: 0401 113 445

Livestock Biosecurity Officer
Ph: 08 8962 4492 M: 0457 517 347

Katherine Region

Field Veterinary Officer
Ph: 08 8973 9716 M: 0407 498 003

Regional Livestock Biosecurity Officer
Ph: 08 8973 9754 M: 0418 895 084

Alice Springs Region

Senior Field Veterinary Officer
Ph: 08 8951 8181 M: 0401 118 181

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