

27th November 2019

Outgoing European Commission rejects live transport complaint two days after live transport disaster

Two days after a live transport tragedy where over 14,000 sheep perished, Compassion in World Farming has received a response to a complaint, sent in August this year. The letter of complaint to the European Commission was regarding an Irish livestock vessel, the Express 1.

At the time of the complaint, the vessel did not have a valid certificate of approval – this is legally required by Article 7.2 of Council Regulation 1/2005. In addition, the average mortality rates were much higher than usual, with 23 animals dying on the three journeys. The letter of complaint included details stating that the Express 1 had been used as a livestock vessel three times between 7th March and 9th May 2018 – whilst it had an expired certificate of approval. The animals on board were being transported from Ireland to Turkey.

Despite this clear breach of legislation, the letter of response from the Outgoing Commission that Compassion received stated: *“the allegations as presented in your complaint do not appear to show indications of a general practice, a problem of compliance of national legislation with EU law or a systemic failure of the Irish authorities to correctly comply with provisions of the EU legislation in relation to the implementation of the protection of animals during transport.”*

Peter Stevenson, Compassion’s Chief Policy Advisor, says: *“The letter from the outgoing Commission is extraordinary in its crass insensitivity – it comes just two days after thousands of sheep died in a disaster at sea and appears to imply that using a livestock vessel without a certificate of approval is not a matter of any real importance.”*

The disaster at sea referred to is the incident in which over 14,000 sheep died on 24th November, when the Queen Hind overturned after leaving the port of Midia, off the coast of

Romania. Despite the best efforts of rescuers on site, it has been reported that only 32 sheep were saved.

Philip Lymbery, CEO of Compassion in World Farming says, *“This is clear evidence that the outgoing Commission failed in its duty of care for animal welfare; that the Commission tore up its own words about animal welfare being a ‘priority’. The time for duplicity is over. The new Commission needs to deliver on the aspirations of EU citizens and put an end to the cruel and senseless long distance trade in live animals for slaughter or fattening.”*

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For more information please email media.team@ciwf.org or call 01483 521 886

Notes to Editors

1. Compassion in World Farming was founded in 1967 by a British dairy farmer who became horrified at the development of intensive factory farming. Today Compassion is the leading farm animal welfare organisation dedicated to ending factory farming and achieving humane and sustainable food. With headquarters in the UK, we have offices across Europe, in the US, China and South Africa.
2. To find out more about Compassion in World Farming visit: www.ciwf.org