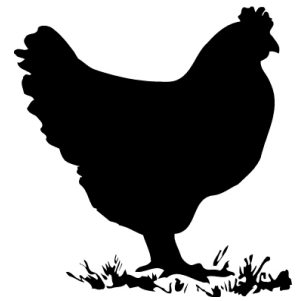


LAND TRANSPORT OF POULTRY

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

*Derived from The Australian Standards and Guidelines for the Welfare of
Animals – Livestock Transport version 1.1 26/09/2011*



Contents

Introduction	2
Principles relating to the transport of poultry.....	3
Objectives	4
Standards.....	4
Guidelines.....	4
2 Poultry handling competency	8
Objective	8
Standard	8
Guidelines	8
3 Transport vehicles and facilities for poultry	9
Objective	9
Standard	9
Guidelines	9
4 Pre-transport selection of poultry.....	11
Objective	11
Standards.....	11
Guidelines.....	11
5 Loading, transporting and unloading poultry.....	13
Objective	13
Standards.....	13
Guidelines.....	14
6 Humane destruction	19
Objective	19
Standards.....	19
Guidelines.....	19

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe standards and guidelines that ensure the welfare of poultry during land transport. The standards provide the basis for developing and implementing consistent legislation and enforcement across Australia, and guidance for all those responsible for poultry during land transport. They reflect available scientific knowledge, current practice and community expectations. The standards and guidelines may be reflected in the industry-based quality-assurance programs that include welfare provisions.

Scope

These standards and guidelines cover the transport of poultry by road, and by livestock transport vehicle aboard a ship. The standards apply to all those responsible for the care and management of poultry that are transported, including drivers, transport companies, owners, agents and livestock handlers at farming enterprises, depots, saleyards, feedlots and livestock-processing plants. The chain of responsibility for poultry welfare in transport begins with the owner or their agent, and extends to the final receiver of the poultry. These standards and guidelines should be considered in conjunction with other requirements for transporting poultry, and related Commonwealth, state and territory legislation, including:

- for transport — the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock¹, livestock health and biosecurity requirements, and regulated livestock loading schemes and driver regulations
- for other enterprises — model codes of practice or standards and guidelines for livestock species, saleyards, livestock processing (slaughter) establishments and the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock.

Where legislation requires a higher standard than these standards, the higher standard will apply. Where there is a conflict with another standard in meeting the welfare standards, the welfare of poultry must be the first consideration unless there is an occupational health and safety requirement.

Interpretation

This document has been derived from the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines Land Transport of Livestock. The general standards and guidelines that apply to all livestock and the specific standards and guidelines that relate to poultry are included. There is also a glossary containing definitions and other relevant information relevant to poultry and their transportation. Each chapter contains the following information:

- Heading
- Objective — the intended outcome(s) for each section of the standards and guidelines.
- Standards — the acceptable animal welfare requirements designated in this document. The requirements that must be met under law for poultry welfare purposes. The standards are intended to be clear, essential and verifiable statements; however, not all issues are able to be well defined by scientific research or are able to be quantified. Standards use the word 'must'.
- Guidelines — the recommended practices to achieve desirable animal welfare outcomes. The guidelines complement the standards. They should be used as guidance. Guidelines use the word 'should'. Non-compliance with one or more guidelines will not in itself constitute an offence under law.
- Notes — Explanations of the context of the standards and guidelines (the notes are advisory statements for selected background information).

¹ <http://www.daffa.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/export-trade/v2-1>

Principles relating to the transport of poultry

Transport can be stressful to poultry; it is therefore essential that effective management practices are in place to minimise any risks to their welfare. Poultry can be transported more effectively and with lower risk to their welfare if:

- the preparation of the poultry before transport is adequate for the intended journey
- competent selection of poultry is done before loading
- poultry are handled correctly at all times using well-designed and maintained facilities
- poultry are managed and handled by competent stock handlers
- road transport facilities and vehicles are designed and maintained for safe transport of poultry
- the journey is planned to ensure prompt delivery of the poultry, and undertaken to ensure appropriate timing of arrival with consideration of situations that may affect their welfare
- consideration is given to feed and water requirements, provision of adequate shelter, and protection from, or treatment of, injury and disease.

The risk of adverse animal welfare outcomes is related to:

- competency of personnel involved in any phase of poultry transport
- selection and preparation of the poultry for the journey
- journey duration
- food and water-deprivation time
- timing of water, feed and rest before transport and at unloading
- class of the poultry being transported
- road conditions and terrain
- weather conditions
- vehicle and facility design and maintenance
- space allowance on the vehicle
- ability to observe the poultry en route and take action to remedy any problem.

These risk factors can be cumulative and they apply across all stages of land transport as defined in the standards, from assembly before the journey to unloading at the destination. From an animal welfare perspective, land transport of poultry is a process that begins before the physical journey and only ends some time after this physical journey is complete.

Managing these risk factors is a shared responsibility between all the people involved, including owners, managers, handlers, agents and drivers. The risk factors for poultry welfare during land transport also need to be managed within and across state and territory borders. At the start of the journey, the owner or agent should communicate to the driver accurate information on water provision, to ensure appropriate water management throughout the journey. The pre-transport phase has an important impact on the successful management of poultry during transport.

The provision of water is a key requirement for poultry welfare; the transport process means that poultry are often deprived of water. The transport process includes activities from the time that poultry are first deprived of water before loading, until the time that they have access to water at the end of the journey.

From a welfare perspective, the stages in the transport process and the responsibilities of persons can be described clearly, as follows:

- mustering, assembling, handling and preparation of poultry, including selection as 'fit for the intended journey', feed and water provision, and holding periods (consignor)
- loading, transport and unloading, including assessing poultry during the loading process that they are 'fit for the intended journey' and additional inspections of livestock and spelling periods (transporter / driver)
- after unloading (receiver).

When poultry are transported on land, a competently operated and suitably designed vehicle should be used. At all times, poultry must be handled to prevent injury and minimises stress. These principles apply to all journeys involving poultry.

1 Responsibilities and planning

Objectives

People responsible for the care and management of the poultry at all stages of the transport process are identified, are aware of and are accountable for their responsibilities.

Standards

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

The responsibility for poultry welfare in the transport process is:

- i) the consignor for the:
 - a) assembling the poultry; 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 consignor of commercial poultry is responsible for final inspection of poultry during loading as 'fit for the intended journey', loading density and journey details
- 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 poultry last had access to water; and
- ii) the date and time of poultry inspections and any welfare concerns and actions taken; and
- iii) emergency contacts.

A person in charge who is transferring responsibility for poultry 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.

Guidelines

Responsibilities of all people involved in poultry transport

GA1.1 All people involved in planning a journey and assembling, handling, selecting, loading and transporting livestock have a responsibility for poultry welfare. They should communicate effectively to support those with key responsibilities, and should ensure that management systems are in place to minimise risks to poultry welfare.

Note: Many people and many tasks are involved in successfully transporting poultry.

Responsibilities of poultry consignors (suppliers)

GA1.2 The poultry consignor is responsible for the poultry until they are to be loaded onto the transport vehicle. This responsibility should include but is not restricted to:

- selecting poultry to make sure that they are fit for the intended journey
- providing feed, water and rest before curfew or loading, as appropriate
- providing suitable holding and loading facilities that do not predispose poultry to injury
- handling poultry according to these standards and guidelines
- communicating feed, water provision times and other relevant information

- completing required documentation accurately for each poultry consignment, including transferring the responsibility for their welfare
- making sure that any poultry that are unsuitable for loading following preloading inspection at the assembly point are appropriately managed, treated or humanely destroyed.

Note: Poultry consignors may include owners, drivers and transport companies, pick-up crews and personnel from properties and poultry processing plants who handle poultry to be transported. There is a 'chain of responsibility' for those managing poultry welfare. In some parts, the responsibility for welfare is clearly shared; for example, during loading between the consignor and the driver. Responsibility exists but is less clear when the impact of earlier decisions affects the welfare of poultry at a later time.

Responsibilities of drivers and transporting companies

GA1.3 The driver or transporting company is responsible for the poultry from the point of loading to the point of unloading and notifying the receiver of the poultry at the destination. This responsibility should include but is not restricted to:

- being competent in their tasks and key activities to meet the provisions of these standards and guidelines
- taking action to determine the time that poultry were deprived of water from the previous owner or person responsible, including time without water during assembly, holding, loading or previous transport
- making sure that the management, care or humane destruction of any poultry that are judged as weak, ill or injured during the journey is appropriate
- informing the consignor and receiver of any problem encountered during the journey in relation to the welfare of the poultry, including where poultry may not have met the specified fitness requirements for loading
- completing required documentation accurately for each consignment transported, including journey plans, as specified in these standards
- making sure that the plan for the journey takes into consideration the condition, species and class of poultry, nature of the journey, weather conditions and the provisions in these standards, such as water-deprivation time, spelling and loading density
- driving in a manner that minimises impact on the welfare of the poultry, including appropriate driving techniques for the road conditions, managing poultry during weather that may predispose birds to heat or cold stress, and considering rest-stops and the nature of the journey
- recording and communicating to the person(s) responsible when there are inappropriate holding, loading or unloading facilities at the property of origin or destination, so that corrective action can be taken
- having the contact details of owners or agents and customers at the source and destination for assistance as required
- notifying and transferring the responsibility for the poultry to the responsible person at the destination on unloading, including after-hours arrangements for receiving poultry.

Note: If the time poultry were deprived of water is unknown at the time of loading, or if it differs across the consignment, this should be noted on the documentation. Transporting companies are mentioned because they may provide general or specific policy direction to their employed drivers in these areas; hence they bear a responsibility for poultry welfare.

Responsibilities of receivers (persons and companies at destination)

GA1.4 The person at the destination is responsible for the poultry from the point of unloading and notification of poultry being received. This responsibility should include but is not restricted to:

- providing drivers, transport companies, pick-up crews and carriers with contact details of relevant personnel at the destination, including personnel to be available out of hours, should a problem arise during the transport journey or assistance be needed on arrival

- communicating with the transport company or driver and providing effective instructions on the practices and arrangements for unloading and managing poultry if arriving out of hours
- handling and managing poultry in accordance with the provisions specified in these standards and guidelines
- providing water, feed and other requirements during holding as required
- providing suitable unloading or loading and holding facilities that do not predispose poultry to injury
- informing the transport company, driver and poultry consignor of any adverse impacts on welfare from the journey that are first observed after arrival
- making sure that any poultry that are weak, ill or injured at unloading are identified, managed, treated or humanely destroyed at the first opportunity
- removing dead poultry from the vehicle.

Note: Persons at destination are responsible for receiving the poultry; they may include owners, operators and staff of properties and poultry -processing plants. There is also a responsibility for poultry welfare that extends to company management at the destination.

Responsibilities of people who plan journeys

GA1.6 People responsible for planning journeys should:

- take into consideration
 - the nature of the intended journey
 - the class and condition of poultry
 - the weather and road conditions anticipated during the journey
 - the time that poultry are deprived of feed and water
 - planned rest stops and spells
- make sure that a sufficient number of personnel are available for each stage of the journey and at the planned time
- make sure, when planning the transport of poultry as a salvage operation, that the journey enables quick and direct transport.

GA1.7 Planning should ensure that poultry are transported to their destination as quickly as possible and via the most suitable route within legal limits.

GA1.8 Where information is not provided on water and feed provision for poultry being transported, the transport company, driver or agent should take action to obtain these times. This will allow determination of the total time off feed and water, including pick up

GA1.9 If interstate crossing points have fixed times of operation, the journey should be planned to accommodate these times, but should also meet the other requirements for welfare of the poultry.

Note: People responsible for planning the transport of poultry may include owners, agents, transport companies and drivers, and poultry -processing plant personnel.

Contingency arrangements

GA1.13 As part of the planning for each journey, arrangements to manage any delay, breakdown or other emergency should be established to minimise risks to poultry welfare during all transport. Contingency arrangements may involve written arrangements, journey plans, and details on consignment sheets or arrangements that are in place for rest stops, particularly for long-distance journeys.

GA1.14 Contingency arrangements should include, but are not restricted to, actions, contacts and other written procedures relating to the following situations:

- breakdown or mechanical failure
- delays and lengthened journeys, where this will affect arrangements for feeding and watering

- adverse weather — specifically, climatic conditions that predispose poultry to heat or cold stress
- poor road conditions
- illness or injury
- other issues specific to the journey or poultry being transported.

GA1.15 For all journeys, the transport company and driver should have the relevant contact details of owners or agents and customers at the origin and destination.

GA1.16 The transport company or driver should ensure that there are contingency arrangements in place for humane destruction. Such arrangements may include one or more of the following:

- people competent in humane destruction are available
- equipment for humane destruction is maintained and operational
- instructions on the recommended procedures for humane destruction are in the vehicle for reference
- contact details of competent persons that may assist in humane destruction are available
- contingency arrangements are in place at locations along the journey or at the destination for assistance with humane destruction.

GA1.17 If unexpected delays occur, such as vehicle breakdown, the driver should make every reasonable effort to minimise the delay and ensure that water is provided within the times specified in the standards.

GA1.18 Essential mechanical maintenance during the journey of a routine nature should be possible to prevent undue delays and minimise the risk to the welfare of livestock (e.g. tyre changes).

GA1.19 A maintenance logbook or record of servicing should be kept for the vehicle.

2 Poultry handling competency

Objective

Persons responsible for handling, managing or transporting poultry are competent.

Standard

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

Guidelines

GA2.1 Elements of competency for each phase of the poultry transport process should include:

- understanding responsibilities for poultry welfare
- planning journeys that satisfy the welfare standards and address contingencies that may arise, with consideration of extremes of weather, nature of the journey, class and condition of poultry, and time off feed and water
- contingency procedures and the ability to carry out the activities required to maintain the welfare of poultry during delay, breakdown or other emergencies
- maintaining records and taking action to determine the time poultry were deprived of water and food and calculating total time off for water and food
- poultry handling and using handling equipment appropriately
- inspecting and assessing poultry for their fitness for the intended journey, and determining whether poultry meet the specified requirements
- identifying weak, injured or ill poultry and other behavioural signs of distress, that are relevant for assessment as being fit for the intended journey and taking the appropriate remedial action as relevant
- humane destruction by the choice of appropriate methods or the actions that need to be taken to contact or advise people who are competent
- vehicle operation and basic maintenance.

GA2.2 Supporting evidence of competency should include any of the following:

- records of on-the-job training
- relevant experience
- recognised training and staff training registers
- induction training
- supervisor sign-off for specific tasks.

Note: Further details relevant to elements of poultry -handling competency are covered in other chapters.

3 Transport vehicles and facilities for poultry

Objective

Poultry transport vehicles and facilities for holding, loading and unloading are constructed, maintained and operated to minimise risks to welfare.

Standard

- SA3.1 A person in charge must ensure that the vehicles and poultry handling facilities are constructed, maintained and operated in a way that minimises risk to the welfare of poultry.
- Vehicles and facilities must:
- i) be appropriate to contain the species; and
 - ii) have effective airflow; and
 - iii) have flooring that minimises the likelihood of injury or of poultry slipping or falling; and
 - iv) be free from internal protrusions and other objects that could cause injury; and
 - v) have sufficient vertical clearance for poultry to minimise the risk of injury.

Guidelines

GA3.1 Facilities, vehicles and containers should provide a suitable environment to minimise the risk to the welfare of poultry from extremes of temperature, weather and humidity

GA3.2 Materials used in the construction of vehicles and containers should be able to be cleaned effectively. There should be a cleaning program for containers between journeys.

GA3.4 Vehicle gates and facilities should be sufficiently wide to ensure easy movement of poultry and to minimise injuries.

GA3.5 Vehicle exhaust gases should not significantly pollute the poultry containers, to avoid respiratory distress

GA3.8 Flooring and surfaces should be designed to maximise grip and minimise slipping and falling.

GA3.12 Transport vehicles should have either fully enclosed fronts or the ability for the vehicle front, roof or canopy to be covered to prevent wind chill and cold stress.

GA3.16 Avoidable visual or noise distractions to poultry should be removed or reduced.

Vehicles

GB10.21 Airflow in fully enclosed vehicles should be monitored and adjusted as necessary.

GB10.22 Containers and boxes for chicks should be stacked in a way that facilitates airflow during transport.

GB10.23 Birds should be carried in properly designed containers to prevent toe and foot damage when they are moved or stacked, and the containers should be strong enough to prevent the possibility of collapse when stacked.

GB10.24 Container doors should be as large as practical, and openings for meat chickens are recommended to be 20 cm wide and 22 cm high or greater. The following transport container heights are recommended:

Class	Minimum height (cm)
Chicks, turkey poults, ducklings	12
Squabs	15
Meat chickens	23
Pullets, ducks, end-of-lay hens, meat and layer breeder birds	25
Turkeys	32

GB10.25 Turkey containers should be appropriately designed to minimise injury if birds are allowed to stand.

4 Pre-transport selection of poultry

Objective

Poultry prepared and selected for transport, are fit for the intended journey.

Standards

SA4.1	Poultry must be assessed as fit for the intended journey at every loading by a person in charge. An bird is not fit for a journey if it is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) unable to walk on its own by bearing weight on both legs; orii) severely emaciated; oriii) visibly dehydrated; oriv) showing visible signs of severe injury or distress; orv) suffering from conditions that are likely to cause increased pain or distress during transport; orvi) blind in both eyes; or
SA4.2	Any bird assessed to be not fit for the intended journey must only be transported under veterinary advice.
SA4.3	The consignor must only supply poultry that are fit for the intended journey.
SA4.4	A person in charge must not load, nor permit to be loaded, poultry that are not fit for the intended journey except under veterinary advice.
SA4.5	If an bird is assessed to be not fit for the intended journey before loading, a person in charge must make appropriate arrangements for the care, treatment or humane destruction of the bird at the first reasonable opportunity.

Note: Poultry being 'fit for the intended journey' is an important issue for their welfare. Many factors may affect poultry's fitness for the intended journey at different stages of a journey. Selection of fit poultry is a responsibility shared between the consignor and the driver. Loading includes vehicle-to-vehicle transfers.

Guidelines

Fitness and Selection of poultry for transport

GB10.1 A decision to transport poultry should be made after considering the welfare of the animal concerned and the treatment and management options.

GB10.2 Stops during transport journeys should be avoided when transporting poultry. Birds should be inspected as far as practical during any stop that has to be made.

GB10.3 All parties involved in chick transport should have the relevant consignment details, including the numbers of chicks, the date and time of dispatch, anticipated time of arrival and contact details for the relevant person(s).

GB10.4 Numbers of birds found dead on arrival should be recorded and the information communicated to the consignor and transporter.

Note: Selection of poultry occurs in the weeks before transport as part of the on-farm culling practices by the grower. Effective culling procedures should be in place to ensure that any birds found unsuitable or unthrifty for transport are managed on farm or humanely destroyed before the day of pick-up.

GA4.1 Before loading poultry, the consignor should notify the driver of any concerns about fitness of poultry to be transported. Any special requirements for a consignment should be agreed between the consignor of the livestock and the driver.

GA4.2 Records should be maintained of any poultry that are transported under special circumstances.

GA4.3 Effective management options for poultry considered not fit for the intended journey should include, but is not restricted to:

- effective containment in a suitable holding area
- rest
- provision of shelter, feed and water
- veterinary treatment
- humane destruction.

GA4.4 Poultry with broken limb bones should be humanely destroyed unless veterinary advice recommends alternative measures.

Food and water

GB10.5 Additional considerations for bird welfare should be made for long-duration travel:

- for breeder birds, pullets and layer hens after 20 hours off water
- or broilers after 15 hours off water
- for chicks after 36 hours from take off.

These considerations should include:

- that the birds are fit for the remainder of the intended journey
- that adverse hot or cold weather conditions are not prevailing or predicted
- a longer spell time at the end of the journey
- the recent management of the birds before first loading.

GB10.6 Poultry, excluding chicks, should have access to food within the 12 hours before assembly for transport, and within 12 hours of removal from their transport containers.

GB10.7 Birds held in containers in holding for slaughter should be slaughtered as soon as possible.

GB10.8 Where poultry are sold at auctions, markets or saleyards, they should be unloaded without delay. Poultry should be placed in pens or containers at appropriate densities and provided with food and water as required.

5 Loading, transporting and unloading poultry

Objective

Poultry are handled, loaded, transported and unloaded in a manner that minimises risks to their welfare.

Standards

SB10.1 A person in charge must ensure time off water does not exceed the time periods given below for each class of poultry:

Class	Maximum time off water (hours)
--------------	---------------------------------------

Poultry other than chicks	24 60a following take off b
---------------------------	--------------------------------

Chicks

a Normal allowable time off water is 72 hours, allowing 12 hours for hatching time before removal (take off) from the hatchery.

b Water-deprivation time allowed can be up to 72 hours following take-off if provided with hydrating material in the transport container.

SB10.2 A consignor must ensure poultry over four days old have reasonable access to food within the 12 hours before assembly for transport.

SA5.2 The person in charge must manage time off water to minimise risk to the welfare of the poultry according to:

- i) the increased risk to poultry welfare of longer journeys close to the permitted maximum time off water; and
- ii) the assessment of whether the poultry are fit for the remainder of the intended journey; and
- iii) the predicted climatic conditions, especially heat or cold; and
- iv) the class of poultry; and
- v) the nature of the intended journey.

SB10.3 A person in charge must ensure that poultry over four days old are not held in containers for more than 24 hours, unless provided with reasonable access to feed, water and shelter.

SA5.3 If no records are provided indicating the last time the poultry had access to water, livestock 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.

SA5.7 A person who handles poultry in the transport process must do so in a manner that is appropriate to the species and class, and minimises pain or injury. Specifically:

- i) poultry must not be thrown or dropped; or
- ii) poultry must not be struck in an unreasonable manner, punched or kicked; or
- iii) birds which are unable to stand must not be dragged, except in an emergency to allow safe handling, lifting, treatment or humane destruction.

SA5.9 A person in charge must ensure that a dog is under control at all times during loading, transporting and unloading poultry.

SB10.6 A person must not lift or carry poultry by the head, neck, wings, feathers or tail feathers unless otherwise supported by the breast. Exceptions are permitted for:

- i) chicken breeder birds and adult geese, which may be lifted and carried by the base of both wings

- ii) turkeys, which may be lifted by the tail feathers and neck or by a leg and a wing
- iii) ducks, which may be lifted and carried by their necks or by the base of both wings.

SB10.7 A person must not tie the legs of poultry together during the transport process.

SB10.4 A person transporting poultry in containers must ensure that the containers are:

- i) lifted and placed with care; and
- ii) positioned on the vehicle in an upright position without excessive tilting; and
- iii) not dropped or thrown; and
- iv) securely attached to the vehicle; and
- v) suitable for the purpose of transporting poultry.

SB10.5 The consignor must ensure poultry with broken legs or poultry that are unable to walk are not transported.

SA5.11 A person in charge must ensure that a dog that habitually bites poultry is muzzled while working.

SA5.15 Upon identifying a distressed or injured bird at an inspection, a person in charge must provide or seek assistance at the first reasonable opportunity. Weak, ill or injured poultry must be identified to the person receiving the livestock.

SA5.16 A person in charge must take reasonable steps to minimise the impact of extreme weather conditions on the welfare of poultry during the transport process.

SB10.8 The transporter must take reasonable action to minimise the risk to the welfare of poultry chicks up to four days old from chilling.

SB10.9 The transporter must take reasonable action to minimise the risk to the welfare of poultry chicks up to four days old from overheating.

SA5.17 The receiver of poultry must make arrangements at the first reasonable opportunity for separating weak, ill or injured birds for rest and recovery, appropriate treatment, or humane destruction and disposal of dead birds.

SB10.10 The receiver must place poultry chicks up to four days old in a suitable brooding environment after arrival and within 72 hours of removal from the incubator.

Guidelines

Handling, catching and loading (pick-up)

GB10.26 Care should be taken when carrying meat chickens to reduce the risk of injury and to keep birds calm. For meat chickens weighing less than 1.7 kg loaded by hand, the maximum carried should be 11 birds, with 5–6 chickens in each hand.

GB10.27 For meat chickens weighing more than 1.7–2 kg, the maximum number of birds carried should be four to five birds at a time in each hand, depending on their live weight.

GB10.28 Layer or breeder hens may be carried in a manner that allows up to four or five birds to be carried at a time in each hand, depending on their live weight.

GB10.29 When removed from cages, end-of-lay hens should be held either firmly around the body or by both legs, not by a single leg, which could cause injuries. A breast support slide should be used for end-of-lay hens.

GB10.30 During assembly and pick-up of caged end-of-lay hens, transport containers should be placed as close as possible to the cages to minimise handling and carrying birds, subject to biosecurity arrangements.

GB10.31 When loose housed birds are assembled, actions should be taken to ensure birds are calm and smothering is prevented. This may include adjusting light intensity, or the use of corrals or partitions.

GB10.32 Conveyors should not be on steep angles or operated at speeds that cause birds to smother.

GB10.33 Where possible, food troughs, drinkers and moveable perches should be removed from the catching area before catching begins.

Note: Particular care needs to be taken with end-of-lay hens and meat chickens to reduce the risk of injury and to keep birds calm.

Loading poultry

GA5.1 Before loading, the driver should inspect the condition of the livestock crate and ensure it is correctly set up and fully operational. If inspecting the vehicle at night or where light is insufficient, a portable source of lighting should be available.

GA5.2 Containers of poultry should be loaded and unloaded from the transport vehicle in a calm and quiet manner to ensure that stress and injuries are minimised.

Loading density

GB10.9 Bird live weight, available floor space per container, weather conditions and journey conditions should be taken into account when determining the number of birds per container.

GB10.10 During hot and cold weather, depending on the humidity and air flow, the number of birds per container should be adjusted to keep load temperatures and humidity within an acceptable range.

GB10.11 All birds should be able to sit on the floor at the same time.

GB10.12 The following space allowances should be provided:

Class	Floor space
Day-old chicks	455 chicks per m ² (≥22 cm ² floor space)
Poultry up to 1.6 kg	40 birds per m ²
Poultry 1.6–2.2 kg	36 birds per m ²
Poultry 2.2–3.0 kg	28 birds per m ²
Poultry 3.0–5.0 kg	20 birds per m ²
Turkeys 3.0–5.0 kg	25 birds per m ²
Poultry more than 5.0 kg	100 cm ² per kg
Adult pigeons	450 cm ² /bird
Squabs	200 cm ² /bird

a Chicks in hot weather should have the density reduced and in cold weather this density may be increased to 472 chicks/m² (21 cm² per chick). Heavier meat chicks (≥50 g) should have more area.

GA5.4 Where the area available on the vehicle or in the livestock container is small and the effective space available to the poultry is reduced by irregularly shaped boundaries, loading density should be reduced.

Poultry handling

GA5.6 Poultry should be handled in a manner that minimises stress. Poultry with no room to move should not be forced, prodded, pushed or excessively handled. Where excessive handling effort occurs, facility design should be examined. Excessive yelling, noise making and sudden movements should be avoided.

GA5.7 Poultry handlers should ensure that bystanders or items that may cause poultry to balk do not impede the smooth loading and unloading of poultry. Avoidable distractions should be minimised.

GA5.8 Poultry should be lifted with care, either manually or mechanically, and placed in transport containers.

Note: Most poultry have a strong following instinct and all poultry have a 'flight zone' that must be understood and used for efficient handling.

Handling aids

GA5.10 Handling aids should be used that are suitable for the species and class of poultry being handled. Handling aids should be used with care. Aids for moving poultry may include flappers, backing boards, rattlers; hand, arm or body of the poultry handler; and dogs.

Dogs

GA5.14 Dogs should be appropriately trained to move poultry and be responsive to commands. Dogs should be provided with water and rest after working.

Special classes of poultry

GA5.15 Transport arrangements should be appropriate for the class and condition of the poultry. In all circumstances, transport of chicks and weak poultry should be carefully managed to minimise risk to their welfare:

GA5.16 Young, and weak poultry should be handled carefully and transported directly to their destination.

Weak, ill or injured poultry

GA5.18 Weak, ill or injured poultry should be managed to minimise risks to their welfare. Management may include protecting from extreme weather and not mixing with stronger poultry.

GA5.19 Weak, ill or injured poultry that are able to walk, do not have broken limbs and are not in pain should be assessed individually.

GA5.20 Weak, ill or injured poultry that are able to walk, do not have broken limbs and are not in pain but have a higher risk of poor welfare should be transported only if necessary for the better management of the bird.

GA5.21 Where there is concern about the assessment of fitness for the intended journey, veterinary advice should be sought.

Driving management

GA5.24 Drivers should use smooth driving techniques, without sudden turns or stops, to minimise excessive movements of poultry and to prevent injuries, bruising, slipping and falling of poultry.

GA5.26 Airflow should be appropriate at all times, including when the vehicle is stopped.

GA5.27 Where there is any road accident involving the transport vehicle, all poultry should at the first opportunity be:

- assessed
- removed for treatment, or
- humanely destroyed at the accident site.

Weather conditions

GA5.28 Weather conditions should be taken into consideration when transporting poultry if there is a risk of heat or cold stress.

GA5.29 Weather conditions during a stop should be considered and action taken to ensure poultry are not subject to heat or cold stress.

GA5.30 In hot weather, the journey should be managed to minimise the risk of heat stress. This may include loading and transporting susceptible poultry during the cooler parts of the day, not stopping, and providing shade and other cooling strategies.

GA5.31 In extremely hot or humid weather, careful attention should be paid to the airflow of the transport unit; the speed of travel; the number, location and conditions of planned stops; loading density; and the condition of the poultry being carried.

GB10.13 Birds being transported in cold conditions may be affected by wind chill, particularly if they are wet. Birds, both at the front and the back of the vehicle, should be protected from the extremes of the weather while being transported, as the temperature between the top and bottom and front and back of the vehicle can differ significantly.

GB10.14 Suitable covers that enable sufficient natural airflow should be used to protect birds in containers from wind and rain, and from cold conditions. Careful consideration should be given to the use of side covers, as these can significantly reduce air flow through the load, and prevent adequate airflow.

GB10.15 The air temperature in a load of live poultry, other than day-old chicks should be maintained between 10–30 °C. For chicks, temperatures should be maintained between 25–35 °C.

GB10.16 If temperature exceeds 30 °C when transporting poultry (excluding chicks), or while waiting to unload at the processing plant, vehicles should not be left stationary, without shade, fans, misters, or other cooling being provided.

GB10.17 Delays in transport should be minimised for chicks.

GB10.18 Chicks that cannot be brooded within 72 hours of take-off should be humanely destroyed.

GB10.19 Where facilities are not available for protection from the weather, birds in transit or waiting unloading for slaughter should not be required to remain in a parked vehicle for more than two hours.

GB10.20 Arrangements made for the pick up, transport and slaughter should ensure that the time the birds remain in containers from pick-up to processing is minimised, particularly in hot weather.

Note: Stops during transport journeys are undesirable when transporting poultry. Routine inspections when transporting poultry are also not advised as stationary vehicles may not have optimal airflow and temperature levels for poultry being transported. Time spent in containers is calculated from the time of

placement into the container, not the time transport begins. Travel, including the time catching and unloading, must be completed within 24 hours for poultry, excluding chicks, unless feed and water is provided.

In-transit inspections

GA5.33 A source of lighting should be available to carry out inspections at night or in poor light.

GA5.34 Drivers should inspect poultry as soon as practical after any unusual or difficult road or weather conditions.

GA5.35 If a problem with the poultry is identified during transit, even when the problem is rectified, additional checks should be made as necessary to ensure the welfare of the consignment. Drivers should notify ahead for assistance if necessary.

Feed, water, rest, stops and spells during or after the journey

GA5.38 Drivers and transport companies should be flexible when determining timing and length of stops in transit, to achieve the best possible welfare outcomes.

Note: During a driver rest stop, poultry are generally not unloaded. Poultry are inspected on the vehicle. Weather conditions during any stop or spell can have an important impact on poultry welfare.

Unloading poultry

GA5.45 Before unloading, the driver should check the condition of the receival area and make sure appropriate pens and water supplies are available. When inspecting the yard at night or where light is insufficient, a portable source of lighting should be available.

GA5.46 At unloading, if the facility is unmanned or out-of-hours arrangements are to be followed, drivers should make sure that unloaded poultry have access to water.

GA5.47 Poultry in containers should be unloaded promptly on arrival at the destination.

GA5.49 At night, lighting should be positioned to give even illumination over ramps, races, yards and inside the transport vehicle, and should not shine into the eyes of poultry moving in the desired direction.

Note: Requirements relating to handling, loading facilities and inspections apply to the unloading of poultry.

Poultry that are not fit for the intended journey

GA5.50 In the case of an emergency, where an unexpected substantial delay has arisen during the journey, time off water may be extended, provided that:

- it is in the best welfare interests of poultry to be transported
- the reason, location, date, start and finish times of the delay is recorded.

GA5.51 Effective arrangements for poultry considered not fit to travel should include, but are not restricted to:

- effective containment in a suitable holding area
- rest
- provision of shelter, feed and water
- veterinary treatment
- humane destruction.

Identifying weak, ill or injured poultry on arrival

GA5.53 Following the journey, feedback on poultry welfare should be provided by the driver to the consignor of the livestock.

6 Humane destruction

Objective

Where it is necessary to destroy poultry, it is done promptly, safely and humanely.

Standards

- 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 a moribund bird is 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 a bird, 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 bird and a competent person is not immediately available, and the person considers they have the capability to destroy the bird.
- SA6.4 A person humanely destroying a bird must take reasonable action to confirm the bird is dead.

Guidelines

Humane destruction methods

GB10.34 The recommended methods for humane destruction of poultry include cervical dislocation of birds less than six kg or decapitation.

GB10.35 The recommended methods for humane destruction of birds over six kg include stunning by blunt trauma followed by decapitation or bleeding out.

GB10.36 Cervical dislocation should only be performed when competent operators can guarantee success at the first attempt.

Note: Cervical dislocation involves partial separation of the head or brain from the spinal cord. The resulting damage to the nervous system leads to cardiac and respiratory arrest and death. The method requires a high degree of skill to be humane.

GA6.1 Humane destruction should be done with the minimum number of people present, and other distractions should be minimised.

GA6.2 The bird should be handled carefully and be appropriately restrained so that it is not unnecessarily distressed or alarmed.

Observing poultry after humane destruction

GA6.4 Following use of a humane destruction method, poultry should be monitored for at least three minutes to ensure that death has occurred.

GA6.5 To determine whether humane destruction has caused death, two or more of the following signs should be observed (the first four signs are usually the most useful:

- loss of consciousness and deliberate movement (this sign alone is not sufficient, as the animal may just be stunned; involuntary movements may occur in a dead animal)

- absence of rhythmic respiratory movements (this sign alone is not sufficient, as there may be temporary respiratory failure)
- absence of corneal 'blink' reflex when the eyeball is touched
- maximum dilation of the pupil, non-responsive to light
- absence of response to painful stimuli (although the withdrawal reflex is not reliable)
- absence of intentional vocalisation (bird may gasp but this should not be in a consistent pattern)
- tongue becomes limp (in some species) and absence of jaw muscle tension (may be difficult to judge)
- absence of heartbeat (requires expertise to detect; heartbeat may persist for some minutes in an animal that is brain dead)
- absence of a pulse (requires expertise to detect, as for heartbeat)
- loss of colour in the mucous membranes, which become pale and mottled
- glazing of the eyes, where the cornea becomes opaque, dry and wrinkled (onset after some time, therefore not immediately useful)
- rigor mortis (onset after several hours, therefore not immediately useful).

GA6.6 Return of rhythmic breathing, corneal reflex, vocalisation or deliberate movement are the main signs that a bird is only stunned and requires the application of an approved method to ensure death.

GA6.7 If it is not certain that a bird is dead, then an approved method should be used immediately to ensure death in a rapid and humane manner. If necessary, bleeding-out or another technique should be used to ensure death in unconscious livestock.

Note: The confirmation of a bird's death following a humane destruction procedure can be a difficult task to judge, and requires training and experience of species differences in responses. It is important that a bird is monitored in the three minutes immediately following the humane destruction procedure.