



ANIMAL WELFARE PROBLEMS INHERENT IN LONG-DISTANCE TRANSPORTS

**Country of observation: Italy
(2006 – 2008)**



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I Introduction

Thousands of animals are transported every day across Europe. Mainly pigs, cattle, sheep and horses originating from one Member State are being transported over thousands of kilometres in order to be slaughtered or fattened in other Member States. After being fattened many animals are again being transported over long distances to again other Member States.

Even though Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 has introduced additional standards to protect animals during transport, the requirements regarding transport times have remained unchanged. In fact, as long as certain rest intervals are respected, legislation allows animals to be transported without any absolute time limit. Cattle and sheep are allowed to be transported for 28 hours, horses and pigs for 24 hours and unweaned animals for 18 hours. After this transport period a rest period off the vehicle for at least 24 hours is required. Subsequently the animals can again be transported for 28, 24 or 18 hours – depending on the category of animals. These cycles can be repeated for an indefinite number of times.

As the journey time increases, animal well-being deteriorates because the effects of thirst, heat stress, limited space, fighting, exhaustion and trampling become increasingly detrimental and serious.

Many animals do suffer during transport, even if transported within the currently allowed maximum journey times.

The present report lists and explains the welfare problems, which cannot to be adequately resolved by legislation, as they are inherent in the long-distance transport of animals.

The intention of this report is to provide the European Commission with details in favour of the reduction of transport times with regard to the forthcoming revision of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport.

Problems regarding the protection of animals during transports can be observed in every European Member State. Italy, however, plays an essential role concerning animal transportation, since the number of animals originating from other Member States transported to or across Italy is particularly high. Italian police forces and several veterinarians certainly carry out more checks on animal transports than in the past, which results in improved enforcement. However, certain factors compromising the animals' welfare – as described in the present report - cannot be eliminated by increased enforcement, but can only be reduced by limiting the currently allowed transport times.

II Compromised animal welfare is inherent in long-distance transports - Examples 2006, 2007, 2008

In the following examples of animal welfare problems are listed, which are inherent in the long-distance transport of animals, i.e. it is not realistic to assume that these problems can be resolved by increased enforcement.

All of these problems become more serious as the journey time increases, simply because the animals have to suffer for additional hours.

Animals' Angels has been frequently observing these problems – the listed cases are not exceptional cases.

The listed examples were observed in Italy. One example per year is given from 2006, 2007 and 2008.

1) Suffering due to insufficient water supply

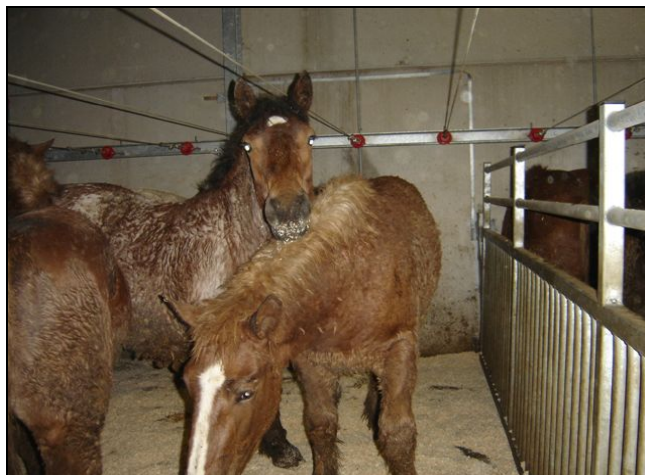
- It is required that pigs have continuous access to water, if the transport exceeds eight hours. In many cases this provision is ignored by the transporters.
- Cattle, sheep and goats must be watered after a maximum of 14 hours of transport. The driver is allowed to carry out this stop wherever he wants. It is impossible to verify, if the animals were in fact watered or not.
- Horses must be watered every 8 hours during the 24 hour transport period. The driver is allowed to carry out this stop wherever he wants. It is impossible to verify, if the animals were in fact watered or not.
- Drinking devices must be in good working order, appropriately designed and positioned for the categories of animals to be watered on board the vehicle. Often the drinking devices are not functional, out of reach for the animals or the animals are not used to the kind of water device installed on the truck.
- Legislation requires that unweaned animals are given adequate liquid in between two transport periods of 9 hours each. This concerns mainly unweaned calves as these animals are transported in large number over long distances. It is, however, impossible to feed unweaned calves adequately on board of the truck: these animals cannot use adequately the drinking devices (bite nipples) commonly installed on trucks; it is not possible to work the commonly used drinking systems with the liquid necessary for unweaned calves; heating up the liquid – as it would be necessary for this category of animals- is also not possible on regular road vehicles; in order to guarantee that each animal drinks and that each animal drinks the correct amount of liquid, it would be necessary to feed them by hand one by one – this is, however, not feasible on board of the truck. Consequently unweaned animals do regularly suffer from feed/liquid deprivation during long-distance transports.
- At low temperatures during winter the water in the truck's water systems often freezes, which makes it impossible to provide the animals with water.

The longer the journey is, the longer the animals suffer from the lack of water and food or from insufficient water and food supply.

Example 2006:

Date of observation:	26.02.2006
Species:	Horses
Route:	Spain – France - Italy
Total distance from place of departure to destination:	2.553 km ¹
Water supply:	according to the driver the horses were not watered during transport
Transport time until police control:	32,5 hours, during which the horses were not watered

Only because of the request of Animals' Angels the transport is controlled by Italian police. The police give order to unload the horses at the nearest control post to rest, water and feed the animals. A fine is issued. Several infringements are detected.



Horses after unloading at control post. During more than 30 hours of transport they were not watered and are eager to drink at the control post. .

Example 2007:

Date of observation:	30.03.2007
Species:	Lambs
Route:	Spain – France - Italy
Total distance from place of departure to destination:	2.123 km ¹
Water system:	not functional on 2nd and 3rd deck
Transport time until police control:	19, hours, during which the lambs loaded on the 2nd and 3rd deck did not receive water

Only after the intervention of Animals' Angels the transport is controlled by Italian police and veterinarian. The drivers are ordered to unload the lambs at a control post (distance: more than 500 km). Police issues fines for several infringements. On arrival at the control post **8 lambs are dead.**

¹ Acc. to "ADAC RoutenPlaner", edition 2005/2006

Example 2008:

Date of observation:: 02.08.2008
Species: Pigs
Route: Spain – France - Italy
Total distance from place of departure to destination: 1.492 km

Water system: **On the 2nd and 3rd level of the trailer the pigs cannot drink because the water nipples are out of reach for them:**

- On the 2nd floor one line of drinking nipples is parallel to the bottom of the 2nd deck and the other line is too high for the pigs to reach them.
- On the 3rd floor the drinking nipples are covered by metal bars so that the pigs also cannot reach them.

The pigs loaded on the first deck have access to the water nipples and eagerly drink, which proves the animals' need for water.

Transport time until place of observation:

approx. 12 hours, during which the pigs loaded on the 2nd and 3rd deck were not watered.

Remaining transport time to place of destination:

approx. 6-7 hours, during which the pigs loaded on the 2nd and 3rd deck could not be watered.



Second deck - Water nipples out of reach for the pigs – pigs remain without water for approx. 18 hours during summer.



On the first deck the pigs can reach the nipples. They eagerly drink, and eagerly drink, which proves the animals' need for water.

2) Suffering due to heat stress

Animals, especially pigs, do suffer from heat stress. As the journey time increases the effects of heat stress become increasingly serious. Especially when pigs that are raised in Northern European countries and are therefore used to lower temperatures, are transported to Southern Europe, where temperatures are considerably higher, the transport entails considerable suffering.

Even if the water system, as well as the ventilation system is turned on animals do suffer from high temperatures. Reducing the currently allowed high loading densities, would reduce the problem, but would not solve it.

The longer the journey is, the longer the animals suffer from high temperatures.

Example 2006:

Date of observation: 14.06.2006
Species: Pigs for breeding
Route: Denmark – Italy
Temperature: around 34°Celsius, i.e. within the currently allowed temperature range.

Condition of animals: **Several pigs show signs of heat stress: they are breathing heavily or gasping for air, several pigs have foam around their mouths (sign of nausea).**
There is one dead pig on board. The lower part of the body and the snout of the pig are dark violet and blue.

During the time of our observation the pigs have access to water, the loading density is lower than permitted by legislation and the ventilation system is turned on when the truck is stationary. But even though these important legal requirements are respected (these pigs are breeding pigs for whom transport conditions are usually more respected), the animals suffer from heat stress and one pig died.



Pig gasping for air due to the high temperatures, even though water is available, loading density is low and ventilation is turned on.



Dead pig

Example 2007:

Date of observation: 26.07.2007
Species: Pigs
Route: national transport in Italy
Temperature inside the animals' compartment: 34,4°C, i.e. within the permitted temperature range
Condition of animals: Some pigs are breathing heavily and some have foam around their mouths.

The water system is turned on, the ventilation is turned on. But even though these important legal requirements are respected, the pigs suffer from the heat.

The currently allowed high loading densities aggravate the suffering due to heat stress and should therefore be reduced.

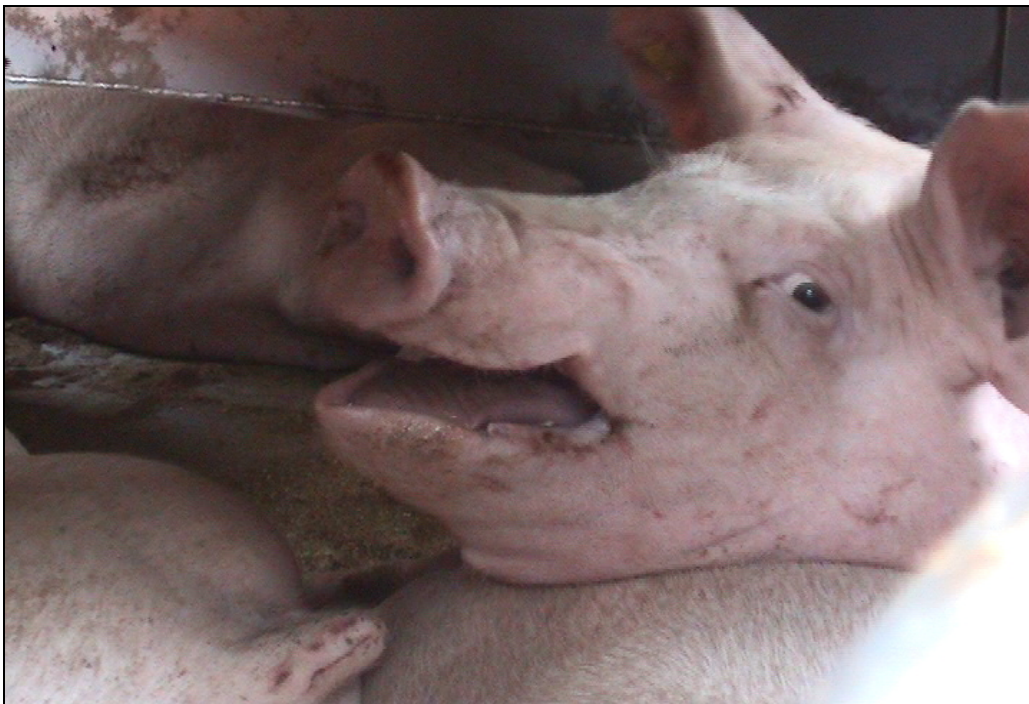


Panting pig – suffering due to high temperatures even though the water and ventilation systems are turned on.

Example 2008:

Date of observation: 07.08.2008
Species: Pigs
Route: Spain – France - Italy
Temperature inside the animals' compartment: 30,2°C
Transport time until place of observation: 12 hours
Remaining transport time to destination: approx. 8 hours (acc. to drivers)
Condition of animals: **Several pigs are hackling; several pigs have foam around their mouths; several pigs are breathing rapidly.**

The currently allowed high loading densities aggravate the suffering due to heat stress and should therefore be reduced.



Pig suffering from heat stress. Photo taken after 12 hours of transport and 8 hours still ahead.

3) Suffering due to insufficient ceiling height/head space

Especially in sheep trucks the animals often have too less or no head or even back space. This prevents them from standing in their natural position and to move naturally. Consequently when being transported for the permitted transport period, sheep have to remain in this unnatural position for 28 hours, causing them discomfort and even pain. Furthermore the air ventilation is compromised, which contributes as well to the animals' suffering, especially during summer.

The longer the journey is, the longer the animals suffer from being forced to stand in an unnatural position and from insufficient ventilation.

Example 2006:

Date of observation:	28.02.2006
Species:	Lambs
Route:	Spain – France - Italy
Total distance:	1.321 ² km
Transport time until time of police control:	20 hours, 45 min., during which the lambs could not stand or move naturally.
Remaining distance from place of police control to destination:	250 km, equalling to approx. 3,5 hours of transport, during which the lambs cannot stand or move naturally.

Head space: insufficient for numerous lambs on the first deck of the main body of the truck. They touch the ceiling with their heads. On the first deck of the main body of the truck there is one partition not put in place, but fixed on the ceiling, which further reduces head and back space. The lambs placed under this partition even touch it with their backs.

Only after the request of Animals' Angels the transport is controlled by Italian police and the official veterinarian during transport. According to our information no fine was issued.



No head space - more than 24 hours without the possibility to stand in a natural position.

² Acc. to „ADAC RoutenPlaner“, edition 2005/2006



No back space - more than 24 hours without the possibility to stand in a natural position.

Example 2007:

Date of observation:	28.03.2007
Species:	Lambs
Route:	Hungary – Slovenia - Italy
Head space:	Insufficient or no head space for many lambs on the first floor, even less head space on second deck.
Transport time until time of observation:	The exact time is not known, but at least 5 hours, during which the lambs cannot stand and move naturally.
Remaining distance to destination:	600 km, which equals to approx. 9 hours of transport, during which the lambs cannot stand and move naturally.



Example 2008:

Date of observation:	21.09.2008
Species:	Sheep
Route:	Spain – France – Italy - Greece
Head space:	Several sheep touch the ceiling with their heads and can therefore not stand in their natural position.
Transport time from Spain to Bari (Italy):	The animals were transported from Spain to a control post near Bari, unloaded and rested and then further transported to Greece by ferry. The exact transport time from Spain to Bari is not known, but can be estimated with approx. 30 hours, during which several animals could not stand in their natural position or move naturally.
Remaining transport time to destination:	Exact time is not known, but it is more than 14 hours (2 more hours of waiting time in the port, plus 12 hours of sea journey, plus x hours road transport to destination in Greece). During more than 14 additional hours several animals cannot stand in their natural position or move naturally.



No head space – no possibility to stand in a natural position or to move naturally during a transport from Spain via France and Italy to Greece.

4) Suffering due to injuries

Several animals get injured during transport or remain stuck with parts of their bodies under the dividers or between the floor of the decks and the ventilation openings. In many cases first aid can only be provided when the transport is completed and the animals are unloaded.

The longer the journey is, the longer the animals suffer from injuries.

Example 2006:

Date of observation:	08.05.2006
Species:	Bovines
Route:	France – Italy - Greece The animals were transported from France to a control post in Italy, where they were rested. Subsequently they were reloaded and transported to the port of Brindisi to be loaded on the ferry to Greece, followed by a road transport to the place of destination in Greece.
Place of observation:	Port of Brindisi, Italy
Injuries observed:	One bovine with a broken horn. The injury is fresh.
Remaining time to destination:	4 hours of waiting time in the port of Brindisi plus 15 hours of sea transport to Patras (Greece) plus approx. 280 km road transport to destination. During this time adequate health care is not possible.



Bovine with broken horn. Photo taken at the port of Brindisi, with more than 20 hours of transport still ahead.

Example 2007:

Date of observation: 25.07.2007
Species: horses
Route: Spain – France - Italy
Total distance from point of departure to destination: 2.142 km³
Time the transport effectively took: 34, 5 hours

Injuries observed: **One horse with an injury on right hind leg. One horse with a deep cut above left eye.**

On request of Animals' Angels the competent veterinarians reach the slaughterhouse of destination in Italy and perform a control of the transport. Fines are issued for numerous violations.



Injury on leg of horse – no treatment possible for many hours



Horse with deep cut above eye – for many hours no treatment possible.

³ According to ADAC Route planer edition 2005/2006

Example 2008:

Date of observation:	08.03.2008
Species:	horses
Route:	Romania – Hungary – Slovenia - Italy
Total distance from point of departure to destination:	1.200 km
Transport time until the time of observation:	14 hours
Remaining transport time to destination:	approx. 5 hours

Injuries observed:

Two horses are liming. One horse has an open injury near the proximal end of the right hind hoof.

On request of Animals' Angels the transporter is controlled by Italian police. Due to violations different from the transport of unfit animals the truck is sent to be unloaded at a nearby control post. Fines are issued for several violations.



Injury of horse near the proximal end of the right hind hoof. The horse is not putting any weight on this leg. Photos taken after unloading and emergency treatment at control post in Italy.

5) Suffering due to exhaustion

Many animals are exhausted and stressed due to the long transport times – even if the maximum transport times permitted by legislation are respected. The animals are exhausted and suffer due to high temperatures, lack of water, the effort to keep their balance in a moving vehicle, fighting, being trampled etc. These are all factors inherent in long-distance transports. These factors cannot be eliminated in practice.

The longer the journey is, the more the exhaustion increases and the longer the animals suffer.

Example 2006:

Date of observation:	27./28.07.2006
Species:	horses
Route:	France - Italy
Total distance from place of departure to destination:	2.226 km
Transport time until the time of observation:	20 hours
Remaining transport time:	10 hours

Injured/ill/dead animals:

One dead horse (“Davide”); all horses are visibly very exhausted, several are sweating, during time of observations several horses repeatedly collapse, several breath very fast and shallow; numerous horses with minor cuts and skin lesions; we observed that several horses are trampled on by the others.



Exhausted horses after 20 hours of transport



Injuries caused by other horses trampling on the lying horses are unavoidable



Horse "Davide" was found dead on board the truck after 20 hours of transport



Exhausted mare Loretta lying between the legs of another horse. after 20 hours of transport

Example 2007:

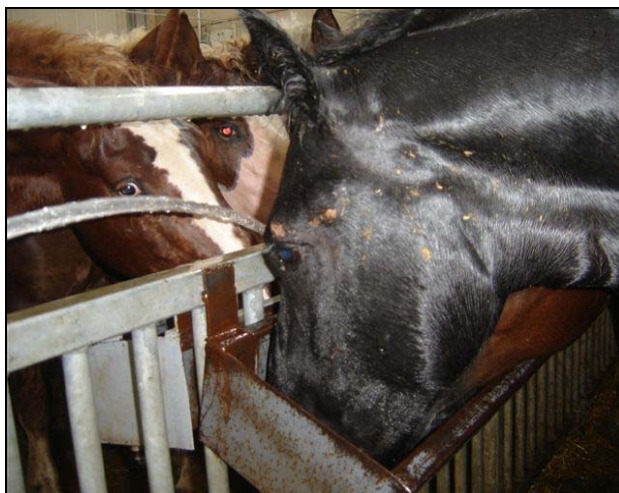
Date of observation: 27.07.2007
Species: horses
Route: Spain - France - Italy
Total distance from place of departure to destinations: 2.070 km
Place of first observation: near Firenze, Italy
Remaining distance to destinations: 730 km, equalling to approx. 10 hours of transport

Health condition of animals: The horses suffer from the high temperature, they are sweating intensely. They are nervous and some fight. They are desperate for water. We observe one horse lying down on the truck; this horse is trampled by others.

On request of Animals' Angels the transporter is controlled by Italian highway police. The exhausted horses are sent to be unloaded at a control post. Several sanctions are inflicted.



Exhausted horse lying in truck. The horses suffered from lack of water and high temperatures.



The horses are desperate for water after emergency unloading at a control post in Italy.

Example 2008:

Date of observation: 21.08.08
Species: donkeys
Route: Romania - Hungary – Slovenia - Italy
Transport time until the time of police control: 24 hours
Remaining transport time: Approx. 8 hours
Condition of animals: **One donkey is lying on the floor of the truck. She is lying on her side with the neck extended.**

Only due to the request of Animals' Angels the transport is controlled by the Italian police and the competent veterinarian during transport. Police gives order to have the donkeys unloaded at a nearby control post. Fines are issued for numerous violations.



Exhausted donkey after 24 hours of transport.

III Recent examples of transports with multiple infringements observed in Italy in August and September 2008⁴

1) Transport of sheep from Spain to Italy August 2008

Date of observation: 01./02.08.2008
Route: Spain – France - Italy
Place of departure: Mota de Cuervo, Cuenca, Castilla La Mancha, Spain
Place of destination: Acquapendente, Italy
Transport time until the time of first observation: 27 hours
Remaining transport time: 7,5 hours
Total transport time: 34,5 hours

Head/back space: The sheep are loaded on 3 decks. Several sheep touch the ceiling and can therefore not stand in their natural position or move naturally. Air circulation is hindered.

Injured/ill animals: On the right side of the second deck one sheep is lying down and has one front leg and one hind leg trapped between the bottom of the second deck and the ventilation openings. On the left side of the second deck there is another sheep trapped with one leg.

Violations:

1. Undue suffering caused to the animals
2. Exceeded journey times
3. Insufficient head/back space
4. Means of transport not constructed in a way to prevent the animals from injury and suffering



Exhausted sheep on floor of truck. after 27 hours of transport, i.e. within the permitted transport time

⁴ Detailed reports regarding each of the listed transports can be obtained from Animals' Angels.



Back of sheep touches the ceiling, 3rd floor - no possibility to stand naturally or to move unhindered for 34,5 hours.



Leg of sheep trapped between floor of deck and ventilation bars.



Head of sheep under a divider.

2) Transport of donkeys from Romania to Italy August 2008

Date of observation: 21.08.08
Route: Romania – Hungary – Slovenia - Italy
Place of departure: Ruseu, Buzau, Romania
Place of destination: Cuneo, Italy
Total distance: 2.003 km⁵
Place of control: Ferneti/Prosecco, Italy

On request of Animals' Angels the transport is controlled by the Italian police after 24 hours of transport. The place of destination is still approx. 600 km away and the transporter had not programmed the unloading even though it was clear from the start that the journey was not feasible within 24 hours. There is one donkey on board in an alarming health state.

Measures taken by Italian authorities:

- Drivers are ordered to unload the donkeys at a nearby control post
- Fines are issued

Violations:

1. Undue suffering caused
2. Transport of an unfit animal
3. Obligatory unloading at a control post after 24 hours of transport not programmed
4. Equines not transported in individual stalls
5. Overloading – 40 donkey were loaded, which was 9 donkeys more than allowed
6. Sexually mature males not separated from females
7. Watering intervals not respected
8. Missing certificate of competence for the driver
9. Means of transport not authorized for donkeys



Donkey Bella on board the truck



Bella was dehydrated. She was given water at the control post.

⁵ Acc. to "ViaMichelin maps"

3) Transport of horses from Bulgaria to Italy September 2008

Date of observation: 20./21.09.2008
 Route: Bulgaria – Greece - Italy
 Place of departure: Chernogorovo, Bulgaria
 Place of destination: Paternò, Italy
 Place of control: Port of Bari, Italy
 Transport time until
 the place of observation: 28 hours
 Remaining transport time
 to destination: 545 km⁶, equalling to approx. 8 hours

After road transport from Bulgaria to Greece, the horse truck embarked the ferry from Greece to Italy. On arrival at the port of Bari (Italy) the horses were on board the truck for already 28 hours, which is 4 hours more than permitted. According to the documents it was not programmed to unload the horses at an authorized control post. The destination on Sicily (Italy) was still 545 km away, equalling to approx. 8 hours of additional transport. The Animals' Angels team managed to have the horses unloaded at a nearby control post for rest. The horses were unloaded at the control post after almost 31 hours of transport.

Violations:

1. Exceeded transport time
2. Obligatory unloading at control post not programmed
3. Not all horses transported in individual stalls; most dividers not adequate as they consist only of rubber mats
4. No installed automatic water system
5. Ramp without lateral protection
6. Incomplete journey log



Metal dividers and inadequate rubber mats used as dividers in empty truck



Horses not transported in individual stalls.

⁶ According to ADAC Route planer edition 2005/2006

4) Transport of sheep from Spain via Italy to Greece September 2008

Date of observation: 19.09.08
Route: Spain – France – Italy - Greece
Place of departure: Iza, Spain
Place of destination: Aspropyrgos, Greece
Total distance: 2.095 km from the place of departure in Spain to the control post near Bari in Italy + approx. 12 hours of sea transport + 430 km road transport in Greece to the place of destination.⁷
Place of control: Port of Bari, Italy

The Italian police and the competent veterinarians carry out a control on the truck at the port of Bari. The control was carried out on the initiative of the authorities. According to the indications on the journey log the transport from Spain to the control post near Bari, where the animals were rested, took 20 hours and the animals remained at the control post for 24 hours before being reloaded for further transport to Greece. Police, however, finds out from the truck's tachograph discs that the transport from Spain to the Italian control post took 45,5 hours and that the animals were not rested for the full 24 hours at the control post. If the vehicle was equipped with an adequate satellite-based navigation system to record the exact time and position of the vehicle during the whole transport, falsifications would not have been possible.

Measures taken by Italian authorities:

- Drivers are ordered to unload the sheep again at a nearby control post
- Fines are issued
- Administrative sequestration of means of transport

Violations:

1. Undue suffering caused
2. Exceeded transport time
3. Animals not rested for 24 hours at control post
4. Insufficient head space
5. Insufficient water system
6. Section 2 of journey log not filled in
7. missing certificate of competence for driver/attendant
8. missing transporter authorisation
9. missing certificate of approval of truck



No head space.

⁷ According to ADAC Route planer edition 2005/2006

IV Conclusion

Certain animal welfare problems, like exhaustion and suffering due to high temperatures, injuries, lack of food and water, effort to keep the balance in a moving vehicle and being trampled are inherent in long-distance transports, and will exist as long as long-distance transports are permitted.

The animal welfare problems described in this report are not exceptional cases, but are being frequently observed by Animals' Angels. **Animals suffer during transport – also when transported within the currently allowed maximum journey times - and the longer the transport lasts, the longer they suffer.**

The situation regarding these problems has not changed during the last years as the above mentioned examples taken from the years 2006, 2007 and 2008 show.

Italian police forces and several Italian veterinarians certainly carry out more road checks on animal transports than in the past; there are, however, still many breaches, including failure to stop and rest at all, falsified documentation, exceeded loading density etc. The Italian inspection authorities intervened in most cases when called by Animals' Angels and **numerous sanctions were inflicted, but still animals do suffer during transport.** The number of control posts and emergency unloading places in Italy as well as in other Member States can never be sufficient in order to guarantee that animals are unloaded in a timely manner in emergency cases.

Even if enforcement of the legislation is further improved, it is impossible to eliminate the suffering of the animals, because the described problems are inherent in long-distance transports.

The consideranda of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 itself state that *„long journeys are likely to have more detrimental effects on the welfare of animals than short ones“*

and that

„for reasons of animal welfare the transport of animals over long journeys, including animals for slaughter, should be limited as far as possible.“

Animals' Angels is convinced that the only effective way to reduce the animals' suffering caused by high temperatures, thirst, injuries and exhaustion during transport is to drastically reduce journey times.

A rigorous reduction of transport times is the only way to effectively meet the purpose of a better protection of animals during transport, which has been the basis for the introduction of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 and reflects the intention of the majority of the European citizens.

Therefore Animals' Angels calls upon

- the EUROPEAN COMMISSION to lay down, in its proposal for a modification of Council Regulation No. 1/2005, that animal transport should be limited to a maximum of 8 hours.
- the COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION not to adopt any animal transport legislation unless it foresees a maximum journey time of 8 hours.
- the EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, the EUROPEAN ECONOMIC and SOCIAL COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS to reduce the maximum journey time for animal transport to 8 hours.