

Who is affected by the new transport legislation?

The new legislation, which came into force in January 2007, brings in new rules covering the movement of livestock. If you move animals as part of farm business activities, then you will be affected.

Under the new rules, everyone transporting animals commercially must comply with:

Journey times (there are no changes to existing journey times):

- Journey times must be kept to a minimum
- Journey time is from first animal loaded to last animal unloaded
- Journey time spent on RO-RO vessels counts towards journey time
- Time spent in pens on vessels or on aircraft do not count towards journey times

	Vehicles used on short journeys (>65km and up to 8 hours)	Vehicles used on long journeys (>8 hours)*		
		Travel	Rest	Travel
Sheep	8	14	1	14
Un-weaned lambs	8	9	1	9

*For long journeys during rest stops animals must be offered liquid, and feed if necessary

Fitness to travel:

All animals must be fit for the intended journey. Animals are considered unfit if they:

- cannot move or walk unassisted
- have a severe open wound or prolapse
- are ewes in the last 10% of pregnancy (approx 15 days)
- are ewes that have given birth in the last week
- are new born lambs in which the naval has not completely healed.

For journeys under 50km (approx 30 miles), heavily pregnant ewes or those that have just given birth (as defined above) can only be moved for the purposes of improving conditions of birth. Such journeys should not cause unnecessary suffering.

In addition:

- Lambs less than 1 week old can only travel for a maximum of 100km (approx 62 miles).
- Lambs less than 20kg need suitable bedding for thermal comfort.

- When ewes “in milk” are transported without their young they must be milked at intervals of no longer than 12 hours

You must be able to recognise signs of good and ill health, as well as signs of stress in sheep and lambs for which you have responsibility.

Vehicle and loading facility

Vehicles and loading facilities must be well designed, constructed and maintained. They must be roadworthy and have no sharp protrusions or be defective in any other way which could cause injury and suffering. The vehicle should have:

- sufficient ventilation for all of the animals
- floor, roof and sides that are weatherproof and prevent escape
- access to inspect the animals and fixed or portable lighting
- sufficient floor area and height appropriate to the size of animals and the intended journey
- partitions strong enough to withstand the weight of animals
- non-slip ramp or lift platform.

Separation

Sheep that must be handled and transported separately are:

- Animals of significantly different sizes or ages*
- Sexually mature males and females
- Animals of different species*
- Animals with horns from animals without horns*
- Animals hostile to each other
- Tied animals from untied animals.

* does not apply where animals have been raised in compatible groups or if separation will cause distress, or where females are accompanied by dependent young.

Prohibited methods of handling

The following methods of handling are not allowed:

- striking or kicking animals
- applying pressure to sensitive parts of the body that causes pain or suffering
- suspending by mechanical means
- lifting or dragging by head, ears, horns, legs, tail or fleece
- using prods or implements with pointed ends
- unnecessarily obstructing animals, which are being led or driven.

Additionally, for short journeys (over 65km, approx 40 miles, and up to 8 hours):

Animal Transporter Authorisation

Farmers (or the farm/ haulage business) must hold a 'Type 1' transporter authorisation. This is issued by Animal Health (previously the State Veterinary Service) and lasts for 5 years. To apply for an authorisation call Animal Health on 0845 603 8395 or visit the Defra website. To successfully obtain one you must be able to demonstrate that you have no record of serious infringements of animal welfare legislation in the last 3 years.

Certification of Competence

From 5 January 2008, transporters or attendants using road vehicles to transport sheep, in connection with an economic activity, on short journeys (over 65km and up to 8 hours) will need to hold Certificate of Competence for short journeys. For further details, contact NPTC on 024 7685 7300 or information@nptc.org.uk.

Animal Transport Certificate (ATC)

As is the case now, an ATC must be completed for every journey (except for export journeys over 8 hours which require a Journey Log instead). It must detail:

- Details of animal ownership and transporter
- Date and time first animal loaded and last animal unloaded
- Date and time of departure
- Estimated duration of journey
- Health status of animals

There is no prescribed format for the information required to be presented. Any other document containing the required information - such as an Animal Movement Licence - may be used, if preferred.

The ATC must be retained by the transporter for 6 months following the journey.

For further information and advice, please contact:

Defra (www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare)

NFU (www.nfuonline.com)

NPTC (www.nptc.org.uk)