



June 2023

Australian Standards for Export of Livestock (ASEL) – Update 3.3

Penning requirements for horned cattle

Standard 1 relates to the sourcing and preparation of livestock for export by sea.

Standard 5 relates to the loading onto vessels and onboard management of livestock for export by sea.

The proposed amendments to the standard/s appear below in tracked changes. Text proposed to be deleted will appear struck out.

Cattle sourcing and export criteria

1.4.8 Cattle with horns must only be sourced for export or exported if the ~~(a)~~ solid non-vascular tip has been removed to a diameter of 3cm (or less if the horn vasculature does not allow) and horns have a blunt horn end; and

a) ~~(b)~~ horns are no longer than 12cm in length at the time of export, unless otherwise provided in a *long-horned livestock management plan* approved in writing by the department; or

b) horns are longer than 12cm in length at the time of export and are pointing downwards parallel to the face and do not show signs consistent with the rejection criteria specified in Table 1.

Cattle loading and management requirements

5.3.1 The minimum pen space allocations for cattle exported by sea are contained in Table 9, Table 10a, Table 10b, Table 11a, Table 11b, Table 12a and Table 12b. These penning criteria apply:

a) where a curfew of more than 12 hours will be undertaken at the registered establishment prior to transport to the port of embarkation, a curfew factor of an additional 5% must be applied when calculating liveweight (cumulative with other additional space requirements and must be calculated first); and

b) the weight of each animal in a pen must not vary from pen average weight by more than 50kg. The pen average weight is calculated by dividing the total weight of the cattle in the pen by the number of cattle in the pen; and

c) for pregnant cattle, a minimum additional 15% space must be provided; and

d) cattle without horns may be penned with cattle with:

i) horns up to 12cm in length and where the horns are tipped (blunt) and / or

ii) horns longer than 12cm in length and are pointing downwards parallel to the face and where the horns are tipped (blunt); and

e) cattle outside of the weights shown in Table 9, Table 10a, Table 10b, Table 11a, Table 11b, Table 12a and Table 12b must only be sourced for export or exported in accordance with a *light or heavy cattle management plan* where an exporter has approval under Standard 1.4.2.

Table 1 Rejection criteria for all species by sea

Head:

- Sharp horns
- Horns that would cause damage to the head or eyes of the animal or other animals
- Horns that would restrict access to feed or water
- Horns that would endanger the animal or other animals
- Bleeding or not fully healed horn stumps or broken antlers
- Horns longer than appropriate for export.

Rationale

The animal welfare risks associated with export of cattle with horns include:

- damage to the head or eyes of the animal or other animals during the export process,
- access to feed or water during the export process,
- endangering the animals or other animals during the export process.

The proposed changes to standards 1.4.8 and 5.3.1 manage animal welfare risks and clarify the horn specifications and penning arrangements for cattle.

Veterinary officers from Veterinary Export and Meat Branch (VEMB) have suggested that cattle with horns that point downwards parallel to the face (parallel horns) do not face or pose the same welfare risks as cattle with outward-projecting horns. They propose that cattle with parallel horns (even if longer than 12 cm) may be managed similarly to cattle without horns, based on a similar risk profile.

Internal discussions between Live Animal Export (LAE) Branch and Animal Welfare Branch (AWB) have identified a consensus with this principle. Whilst this is not strictly compliant with the current ASEL standards for horns, it does meet the intent of the current ASEL standards. Therefore the department proposes to introduce:

Standard 1.4.8 – a change to identify where cattle horn orientation may permit horn length to exceed 12cm, where the horns are tipped (blunt) and the horns do not show signs consistent with the rejection criteria specified in Table 1.

Standard 5.3.1(d) – a change to penning requirements to appropriately manage animal welfare risks associated with cattle with parallel horns. Cattle without horns may be penned with cattle with parallel horns longer than 12 cm, where the horns are tipped (blunt).

Exporters may need to update their approved arrangements with regards to the above changes, as well as submitting a long-horned livestock management plan for approval by the department.

The proposed changes to Table 1 Rejection criteria table for livestock exported by sea improves clarity by identifying additional categories of horned animals that must be rejected.

More information

Learn more about [Australian Standards for Export of Livestock - Update 3.3](#)

Web agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/export/controlled-goods/live-animals/animal-welfare/asel-updates

Have Your Say haveyoursay.agriculture.gov.au/australian-standards-for-the-export-of-livestock-asel-2023-update

Email aselreview@agriculture.gov.au

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

© Commonwealth of Australia 2023

Unless otherwise noted, copyright (and any other intellectual property rights) in this publication is owned by the Commonwealth of Australia (referred to as the Commonwealth).

All material in this publication is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) except content supplied by third parties, logos and the Commonwealth Coat of Arms.

The Australian Government acting through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has exercised due care and skill in preparing and compiling the information and data in this publication. Notwithstanding, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, its employees and advisers disclaim all liability, including liability for negligence and for any loss, damage, injury, expense or cost incurred by any person as a result of accessing, using or relying on any of the information or data in this publication to the maximum extent permitted by law.