



# Welfare of Animals During Transport

**Advice for transporters of horses,  
ponies and other domestic equines**

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# Welfare of Animals During Transport

## Advice for transporters of horses, ponies and other domestic equines

A new EU Regulation for transporting animals applies from 5 January 2007.

If you transport animals you should make sure you know about the new rules and procedures that affect you. These rules are intended to improve the welfare of horses and ponies during transport. **The rules came into force on 5 January 2007** and apply to anyone transporting live vertebrate animals in connection with an economic activity.

There are a number of specific points that anyone transporting horses and ponies needs to take account of. These are summarised in this leaflet. More detailed guidance can be found on the Defra website at:  
**[www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare](http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare)**

## **Are you affected by the new rules?**

The Regulation sets out new rules for those who transport animals in connection with an economic activity. In the UK this is considered to be any transport of animals undertaken as part of a business or commercial activity, which aims at achieving financial gain, whether direct or indirect, for any person or company involved with the transport. The Regulation does not apply to:

- Transport of animals not in connection with an economic activity.
- Transport to or from veterinary practices or clinics under veterinary advice.

## **The Regulation requires anyone transporting animals on any journey to ensure that:**

- No one shall transport animals, or cause them to be transported, in a way likely to cause them injury or undue suffering.
- Journey times are kept to a minimum.
- The animals are fit to travel.
- Those handling animals have been trained and are competent.
- The vehicle and its loading and unloading facilities are designed, constructed and maintained to avoid injury and suffering and to ensure the safety of the animals.
- Water, feed and opportunity to rest are made available to the animals as appropriate, and sufficient floor space and height is available in the transport.
- For non-export journeys, documentation is provided which shows the following: origin and ownership of animals; place of departure and destination; date and time of departure and expected duration of journey (usually referred to as an Animal Transport Certificate).

**The Regulation sets out additional requirements if you transport horses and ponies on 'short' journeys over 65km (approximately 40 miles) and up to eight hours. Transporters must:**

- Hold a Type 1 transporter authorisation.
- Ensure that drivers and attendants are in possession of a certificate of competence.
- Demonstrate that they have appropriate staff and equipment to transport animals in a proper way, and to have no record of serious infringements of animal welfare legislation in the preceding three years.

**There are, in addition to the above, a number of other requirements for 'long' journeys of over eight hours. Transporters of horses and ponies must:**

- Hold a Type 2 transporter authorisation.
- Have any vehicle used for transporting horses and ponies inspected and approved.
- Have contingency plans in place in case of emergencies.
- Complete a Journey Log where unregistered horses and ponies are being exported.

## SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

### Journey times

Journey times and rest periods remain unchanged from the previous rules. They do not apply to registered horses and ponies – see page 8.

Maximum journey times (hours)

	Basic standard vehicle	Higher standard vehicle
Horses and ponies	8	24 (given liquid, and fed if necessary, every 8 hours)

	Basic standard vehicle	Higher standard vehicle		
		Travel	Rest	Travel
Unweaned foals	8	9	1	9

- Journey time is from first animal loaded to last animal unloaded.
- Time spent on Roll-on/Roll-off (RO-RO) vessels counts towards the journey time.
- Time spent by animals in stalls or pens on specialist livestock vessels does not count towards total journey time, provided certain conditions are met.
- Time whilst on the aircraft during air transport does not count towards total journey time.

### General points

- Horses and ponies older than eight months must wear halters during transport – unless they are unbroken animals.
- If horses or ponies are transported on a multi-deck vehicle they must only be carried on the lowest deck, with no other animals above them. In this circumstance the compartment height must be at least 75cm higher than the height of the withers of the highest animal.

- Horses and ponies must be transported in individual stalls when the vehicle is on a RO-RO vessel, except that a mare may travel with her foal.
- Unbroken horses and ponies must not be transported in groups of more than four animals.

### **Long journeys (over eight hours)**

- Unregistered horses and ponies must be over four months old, except if accompanied by their dam.
- Unbroken horses and ponies must not be transported on long journeys.
- Horses and ponies must be transported in individual stalls, except that a mare may travel with her foal.

### **Ramp angles for loading and unloading**

The Regulation stipulates a new maximum ramp angle of:

- 20°00' for horses (36.4% slope, equivalent to a rise of four over distance of 11).
- Ramp side gates may not be needed if horses are halter led during loading/unloading.

Vehicles and trailers built and in use before 5 January 2007, which comply with ramp angle requirements set out in the previous legislation, may continue to be used **within the UK** until 4 January 2012, if it is impractical or uneconomic to convert or alter to comply with the new rules.

## Registered horses and ponies

A 'registered' horse or pony means one that is registered in studbooks or with international organizations managing competitions (as defined in Directives 90/426/EEC and 90/427/EEC) – this does not mean having a horse passport. Exemptions in the Regulation for registered horses and ponies, if accompanied throughout by a dedicated attendant and the journey is to improve their health and welfare, permit:

- Mares to be transported during the final 10% of their gestation period.
- Mares to be transported within one week of giving birth.
- Foals with an unhealed navel to be transported with their dam.

Exemptions in the Regulation for registered horses and ponies on a journey of more than eight hours (unless being transported to a market or slaughterhouse) permit:

- Transport without the requirement for a Journey Log.
- Transport without being restricted by water and feed intervals, journey times, and rest periods as set for unregistered horses and ponies.
- Transport of animals of four months or younger without being accompanied by their dam.

## Separation

Horses and ponies must be handled and transported separately from other species\*. The following separations must also be applied:

- Horses and ponies of significantly different sizes or ages\*.
- Adult breeding stallions from each other.
- Sexually mature males from females.
- Animals hostile to each other.
- Tied animals from untied animals.

\* This need not apply where animals have been raised in compatible groups, are accustomed to each other and where separation would cause distress or where animals are accompanied by dependent young.



## Space allowances

Space allowances for road transport remain unchanged from the previous rules.

Category	Area (m <sup>2</sup> /animal)
Adult horses	1.75 m <sup>2</sup>
Young horses (6-24 months old) for journeys of up to 48 hours	1.2 m <sup>2</sup>
Young horses (6-24 months old) for journeys over 48 hours	2.4 m <sup>2</sup>
Ponies (under 144cm)	1.0 m <sup>2</sup>
Foals (0-6 months)	1.4 m <sup>2</sup>

During long journeys, foals and young horses must be able to lie down. The Regulation also notes that more space may be needed to take account of actual circumstances.

## Temperature within vehicle

- The temperature within the vehicle must not fall below 0°C during a journey of more than eight hours.

## Vehicle partitions

The Regulation does not define dimensions for partitions but they must:

- Be strong enough to withstand the weight of animals.
- Have fittings designed for quick and easy operation.

On vehicles used for journeys of over eight hours, partitions must be:

- Fitted so that separate compartments may be formed.
- Adjustable to suit the specific needs of the animals being transported.

## **FURTHER ADVICE**

This leaflet provides a brief overview of the main requirements of the Regulation with regards to horses and ponies. Other leaflets are available covering requirements for cattle, goats, pigs, sheep and poultry. A general leaflet has also been produced.

Detailed guidance, forms and further advice can be found on the Defra website at: [www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare](http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare)

Or by contacting the relevant administration below.

### **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)**

Animal Welfare Team  
Transport and Markets  
Area 8B  
9 Millbank c/o Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3JR  
Tel: 020 7238 5907  
Web: [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)

### **National Assembly for Wales**

Office of the Chief Veterinary  
Officer (OCVO)  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ  
Tel: 029 2082 3059  
Web: [www.wales.gov.uk/  
environmentandcountryside](http://www.wales.gov.uk/environmentandcountryside)

### **Scottish Government Rural Directorate (SGRD)**

Pentland House  
47 Robb's Loan  
Edinburgh  
EH14 1TY  
Tel: 0131 244 6482  
Web: [www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

### **Department for Agriculture and Rural Development in Northern Ireland (DARD)**

Room 728, Dundonald House  
Upper Newtownlands Road  
Belfast  
BT4 3SB  
Tel: 028 9052 4950  
Web: [www.dardni.gov.uk](http://www.dardni.gov.uk)



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