



FEDERATION OF
VETERINARIANS
OF EUROPE



State
Veterinary
Officers

JOINT FVE–EASVO STATEMENT ON VETERINARY SUPERVISION OF ANIMAL LOADING

This is a statement of the **Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE)** and the **European Association of State Veterinary Officers (EASVO)** regarding Article 17 (2) of the Proposal of the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, laying down that loading of animals on means of transport shall be supervised by a veterinarian.

The veterinary lead is critical to **prevent the transport of unfit animals**, ensuring that only those animals deemed fit—and expected to remain so throughout the journey—are transported, and in a suitable manner. This importantly goes beyond the physical act of loading and ensures compliance with regulations, prevents animal suffering, and ensures a smooth journey. This is important because, if animals become ill or injured during transport it is very challenging to assist, often lacking immediate care options or suitable unloading facilities, leading to delays and increased animal suffering.

Having consideration to the many thousands of animal transports on a daily basis, FVE and EASVO firmly believe that **risk-based veterinary supervision of animal loading** is critical to achieve the desired outcomes. This strategy focuses resources on higher-risk scenarios, thereby safeguarding animal welfare and enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of [veterinary services](#).

CALL TO POLICYMAKERS

FVE and EASVO urge the European decision-makers and Member States to:

- Recognise that the veterinary lead is **critical to prevent the transport of unfit animals**
- To develop a decision tree for a **risk-based veterinary supervision** at loading, while allowing Member States flexibility to building upon existing systems or put in place more stringent rules
- **Empower the Commission to specify the operational conditions** for veterinary supervision of fitness for transport, including animal loading
- Prioritise **investment in the strengthening of the capacity of Veterinary Services** to monitor the implementation and enforcement of the transport Regulation.



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WHY RISK-BASED SUPERVISION?

We advocate for **targeted, risk-based veterinary supervision of animal loading**, in line with the [recommendations of the European Commission Platform for Animal Welfare](#), prioritising a decision tree scenario including, but not limited to :

- **Animal categories more vulnerable to transport stress**, including where unfavourable climatic conditions are forecasted
- **Long-distance transport**, especially cross-border movements
- **Exports to third countries**
- Transport following **previous/repeated non-compliance**

The established Dutch system of “**stalkeuring**” (stable/farm inspection prior to transport) may serve as a practical reference model, demonstrating how early-stage, risk-based veterinary supervision can be operationalised effectively.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS FOR SUPERVISION

To enhance clarity and consistency across the EU, FVE and EASVO recommends the European Commission to be empowered to adopt an **implementing act** in accordance with Article 17.2 to **define minimum criteria for implementing risk-based veterinary supervision** at loading, while allowing Member States the flexibility to apply more stringent measures within their own territories if deemed necessary.

The implementing act should define:

- A **list of animal categories** subject to mandatory veterinary supervision of loading including defined categories of **vulnerable animals** (Young, Old, Pregnant, Immunocompromised)
- **Categories and destinations of transport** requiring supervision (e.g. cross-border, to third countries, or long distances)
- A **defined timeframe to determine fitness for transport** (e.g. within 24 – 48 hours prior to loading)
- Mechanisms that allow Member States to apply measures relating to **specific requirements for national conditions**



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CAPACITY BUILDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT

FVE and EASVO view this as critical to support effective and sustainable implementation:

- **Sufficient investment in staffing and resourcing** of veterinary services, particularly in rural areas, and critical infrastructure such as at [EU regulation] approved collection centres and control posts and at border control posts (BCPs) / exit points
- **Training and upskilling** of all involved with animal keeping and transport
- **Digital tools** to support efficient data collection, traceability, and communication between competent authorities and transporters
- Consideration of deploying training and assurance within **preventive animal health visits** as laid down in Art. 25 of the Animal Health law or equivalent

FVE and EASVO urge national governments to **prioritise investment in the strengthening of Veterinary Services**, ensuring all EU Member States have enough resources to adequately implement and enforce the Transport Regulation.

Notes to the editors:

The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) is the umbrella organisation from 39 European countries representing a total of around 330.000 veterinarians. FVE strives to promote animal health, animal welfare and public health across Europe. For further information, consult the FVE website www.fve.org

The European Association of State Veterinary Officers (EASVO) is the European umbrella group of national organisations representing Veterinary Officers/Inspectors and Official Veterinarians. Currently EASVO represents 18 member organisations and has one observer member. For further information, consult the EASVO website www.easvo.org