

Guidance for those who transport horses by road

The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006

Horses shall not be transported in a way which causes, or is likely to cause, them injury or unnecessary suffering, e.g. vehicles must be of sound construction, have non-slip floors, no sharp projections, and have adequate space to allow the horses to stand in their normal position.

A horse shall not be transported unless it is fit for the intended journey

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A horse shall not be considered fit if it is ill, injured, infirm, fatigued, or has given birth during the previous week. A horse shall not be considered fit if it is new-born and its navel is not completely healed, or is a mare which is beyond 90% of its gestation period, or for any other reason, unless it is transported direct to the nearest available place for veterinary treatment or diagnosis.

Note: Registered horses * are exempt from the regulation prohibiting the transport of pregnant females beyond 90% of their gestation period and transporting mares with their newly born foals if: a) the journey is to improve the health and welfare conditions of the birth and b) they are accompanied throughout the journey by a dedicated attendant.

** Registered horses are those registered with a recognised breed society or company, such as Wetherby's. Registered horses NOT going to market or slaughter are exempt from the requirement for journey logs, watering and feeding intervals, journey times and rest periods, and Animal Transport Documents.*

A horse may not be dragged or pushed by any means, or lifted by a mechanical device, unless under the supervision and in the presence of a veterinary surgeon who is arranging for it to be transported with all practicable speed to a place for veterinary treatment.

Where horses are not led into, or out of, a vehicle, the loading ramp must be provided with protection on each side, sufficient to prevent them from falling off or escaping. Ramps must not have an angle exceeding 20 degrees and must be fitted with foot battens or otherwise to prevent slipping. Precautions in the form of partitions must be fitted to support the horses and prevent them being thrown about by the motion of the vehicle.

The 2006 Order has no further implications for the transport of pet horses, including privately owned horses used for recreational purposes, unless the transport is of a commercial nature.

Commercial journeys

Anyone transporting horses in connection with an **economic activity** on journeys **over 65km and under eight hours must ensure that:**

- they hold a transporter authorisation (Type 1) issued by DEFRA;
- from 1st January 2008, drivers and attendants are in possession of a certificate of competence;
- an Animal Transport Document is completed.

For journeys **over 65km and over eight hours, transporters must:**

- have a long journey transporter authorisation (Type 2) issued by DEFRA;
- ensure that the vehicle used has been inspected and approved;
- ensure that contingency plans are in place in the event of an emergency;
- ensure that a journey log is completed for journeys going outside the UK (this does NOT include registered horses);
- complete an Animal Transport Document if the journey is within the UK;
- ensure that drivers and attendants are in possession of a certificate of competence.

Construction

Vehicles used for the transport of horses shall be designed, constructed, maintained and operated so as to:

- avoid injury and suffering, and to ensure the safety of the animals;
- protect the animals from inclement weather or extreme temperatures;
- prevent the animals escaping or falling out;
- ensure the air quality and quantity appropriate to the species transported can be maintained;
- provide access to the animals to allow inspection;
- provide anti-slip flooring;
- minimise the leakage of urine or faeces;
- provide a means of lighting sufficient for inspection of the animals;
- provide sufficient space inside the animal compartment to ensure that there is adequate ventilation above the animals when they are standing in their natural position; and
- ensure that partitions are strong enough to withstand the weight of the animals.

Fittings shall be designed for quick and easy operation, and vehicles in which horses are transported shall be clearly and visibly marked, indicating the presence of live animals.

All vehicles must be constructed, maintained and operated so as to allow appropriate cleansing and disinfection.

Vehicles used for the transport of horses over eight hours must be inspected and approved by an authorised body.

Except in an approved vehicle, no horse may be transported on a journey in excess of eight hours. In an approved vehicle, horses may be transported for 24 hours, provided that, at eight-hour intervals, they are given liquid and, if necessary, fed. At the end of the 24-hour period of transport, horses must be rested for at least 24 hours.

General

Protective boots, bandages, poll and tail guards, rugs and sheets may be useful to protect those areas of the horse that are most likely to suffer bruising or rubbing during transport, or, in the case of rugs or sheets, to keep the horse warm or to prevent chilling due to sweating. All clothing must fit correctly, be suitable for the purpose for which it is intended, and be securely fastened to prevent slipping or risk of injury.

At an appropriate time before the journey begins, horses must be offered liquid and food.

There must be appropriate ventilation and sufficient air space above the horses to allow air to circulate properly.

Horses may not be transported in a vehicle with more than one deck in operation. Minimum internal height shall be 75 cm higher than the height of the withers of the highest animal.

When transported in groups, horses older than eight months must wear halters (unless they are unbroken).

Unbroken horses shall not be transported in groups of more than four individual horses.

Tied animals shall be transported separately from untied animals.

A stallion or a mare with a foal at foot may not be transported in the same undivided vehicle as any other horse (unless raised in compatible groups, are accustomed to each other, or where separation will cause distress).

During transport, horses must be accompanied by an Animal Transport Documentation (ATD) giving details of the journey and the horses being transported. Persons transporting their own horses, within their own means of transport, for a distance of less than 50 km from their holding, are exempt from this requirement.

Handling

It shall be prohibited to: strike or kick the animals; apply pressure to any particularly sensitive part of the body in such a way as to cause them unnecessary pain or suffering; use prods or other implements with pointed ends; knowingly obstruct any animal which is being driven or led through any part where animals are handled; or lift or drag the animal by the head, ears, legs, or tail. For animals which need to be tied, the rope, tethers, or other means used, shall be strong enough not to break during normal transport conditions, shall allow the animals, if necessary, to lie down and to eat and drink, and be designed in such a way as to eliminate any danger of strangulation or injury, and to allow animals to be quickly released.

Horse passports

Horses being moved under the following circumstances must be accompanied by their horse passport:

- a) Into or out of Great Britain.
- b) For the purpose of competition or breeding.
- c) To premises where a veterinary medicinal product is to be administered.
- d) To the premises of a new keeper (even on a temporary basis).
- e) To a slaughterhouse.
- f) To market or horse fair for sale.
- g) For the purpose of sale.

During transport, horses must be accompanied by a competent person.

**Transport of Animals (Cleansing & Disinfection) (England)
(No 3) Order 2003**

Cleansing and disinfection

Any person transporting horses shall ensure that:

(a) they are loaded onto a means of transport which has been cleansed and, where necessary, disinfected; and

(b) any soiled litter and excreta are removed as soon as practicable.

Pet, non-commercial, etc exemption no longer applies.

Cleansing and disinfection of means of transport

1. LEVEL OF CLEANSING AND DISINFECTION

All cleansing and disinfection shall be carried out so as to reduce the transmission of disease.

2. METHOD OF CLEANSING

Cleansing shall be by removing any feeding stuff to which the animals have had access, bedding, excreta and other material of animal origin, mud and other contaminants - using appropriate means and then cleaning with water, steam or, when appropriate, chemicals, until free of dirt.

3. DISINFECTION AFTER CLEANSING

After cleansing has been completed, anything to be disinfected shall be disinfected using an 'approved disinfectant.'

Disposal of material after cleansing

All material removed from vehicles after cleansing has been carried out must be:

(a) destroyed;

(b) treated to remove the risk of transmission of disease;

(c) disposed of so that animals have no access to it.

For the purpose of this leaflet, 'horse' includes: pony, donkey, ass, mule or hinny.

Please note

This leaflet is not an authoritative interpretation of the law, and is intended only for guidance.

For further information, please contact **Environmental Protection, Animal Health Section, Swindon Borough Council, Premier House, Station Road, SN1 1TZ**

Telephone – (01793) 466068

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