



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate D - Animal health and welfare
Director

SANCO

28. 11. 2008

Brussels,
SANCO D5 LPA/dj D(08)450345

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for your email/letter concerning protection of animals during transport addressed to President Barroso. I have been asked to reply on his behalf as responsibility for animal welfare legislation lies with the Directorate-General for Health and Consumers.

The Commission is aware of the campaign promoted by several animal welfare organisations, in which they aim at stopping the long distance transport of animals for slaughter.

The Commission shares your views concerning the need for better application of the animal transport legislation and is working intensively on the improvement of animal welfare during transport, dedicating considerable efforts to this issue. However, please be aware that day to day enforcement of the legislation falls under the sole responsibility of Member States.

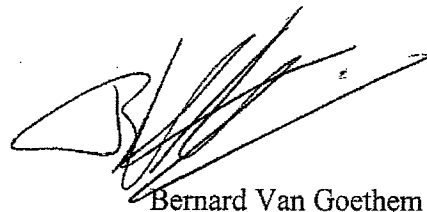
The Commission receives information on the enforcement from several stakeholders and attaches a priority to examining it and to provide feedback to competent authorities. In addition, the Commission inspection service of DG Health and Consumers (FVO - Food and Veterinary Office located in Grange, Ireland) regularly carries out inspection missions within the Member States, to verify whether the competent authorities have put in place the appropriate measures to apply EU legislation.

The FVO reports are available on the following website:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/ir_search_en.cfm.

Nevertheless the Commission is conscious that efforts in enforcing the legislation will only achieve limited progress without a new approach to certain provisions in the Regulation and, in particular, on travelling times and space allowances. The Commission believes that the present time limits are not fully in line with scientific knowledge and are also inconsistent with the social legislation applicable to drivers, making the overall implementation of transport times difficult.

Therefore the Commission considers the revision of travelling times and space allowances as a priority. As a first step, a wide internet consultation has been recently completed where different options for improving the situation were presented. Further work is ongoing to collect and analyse data on the social, economic and environmental impacts of the different policy options envisaged before the Commission will be able to finalise its proposal. One of the options under consideration includes the possible limitation of the transport time for horses intended for slaughter. The Commission's objective is to bring forward such a proposal before the end of this College's mandate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Bernard Van Goethem', written over a horizontal line.

Bernard Van Goethem