

Brussels, 27. 11. 2009
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Dear Ms Lucas,

Thank you for your letter of 6 October 2009 on the protection of animals during transport.

Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005¹ on the protection of animals during transport has introduced a number of measures improving the transport conditions for all animals. In addition the regulation contains specific measures to protect horses. In particular, for long journeys it requires horses to be transported in individual stalls.

The Commission is conscious that the present rules are not sufficiently enforced in particular in the case of horses and never loses opportunities to highlight the importance of proper enforcement of the legislation.

At the same time, it should be noted that Member States are primarily responsible for the daily implementation of the Community legislation on animal transport. The Commission supervises the work of the competent authorities of the Member States through regular visits of experts from the Commission inspection service of Directorate General Health and Consumer Protection (Food and Veterinary Office).

Work on a possible proposal of the Commission on animal transport is ongoing. An inter-service consultation was launched on a draft proposal which aimed at revising travelling times and densities for long journeys and introducing a new system of monitoring animal movement, collecting data via the use of a central database (TRACES). From the internal consultation it emerged that a number of significant legal concerns related to the protection of personal data need to be addressed before introducing such an electronic system of checks. Given that the Commission is now acting in a 'caretaker' capacity, any new initiative on this issue will be a matter for the next college. I have asked my services to continue their work so that the next Commission will be in a position to take this matter up at the earliest opportunity.

Meanwhile Commission activities continue to concentrate on enforcement. Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport provides that before January 2011, the Commission shall present a report on the enforcement of the regulation. The report will have to take into account scientific evidence on the needs of the transported animals.

Yours sincerely,



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¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directive 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97, OJ L 3, 5.1.2005.