

Brussels,

19.06.2003 D/001177

Dear Dr. Lucas,

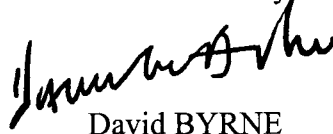
Thank you for your letter of 15 April 2003 concerning the protection of animals during transport. I would like to apologise for the delay in replying.

In 2001 the Commission undertook the revision of EU legislation in this field as its report to the Council and the European Parliament revealed insufficient implementation. In March 2002 the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare provided the necessary scientific elements for moving forward. In November and December 2002 the Commission organised a wide consultation of stakeholders.

My services have now commenced the final stage of consultation on the proposal with the various Directorate-Generals within the Commission. All going well, I would expect that the Commission could adopt the proposal by mid July and then forward it to the Council and European Parliament.

The desired outcome of our work is to come forward with a proposal which really improves the welfare of animals that are transported, particularly over long distances, which at the same time stands a realistic chance of being accepted by Member States.

Yours sincerely,



David BYRNE

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