

Brussels, 2 March 2000  
SW D (1999) 1933

Dear Mrs Lucas,

Thank you for your letter of 16 November 1999, in which you express your concerns about the transport of live horses. I can assure you that the Commission has become increasingly concerned in general about the welfare of animals.

The Commission is aware, both from information gathered during inspection missions and as a result of the receipt of complaints from animal welfare organisations, that journeys which are in breach of the provisions of Council Directive 91/628/EEC as amended are still taking place in the European Union. As you mention, a report on the experience of Member States derived from the application of this Directive will be presented to the Council and to the Parliament during the first quarter of this year. The report will include the data submitted by Member States and those derived from the inspections performed by the Food and Veterinary Office.

The Commission may also consider, in due course, as to whether to open further infringement procedures under Article 226 of the EC Treaty against the Member States , which inadequately enforce the rules of the animal transport Directives.

In relation to the principal Eastern European countries involved in the transport of livestock to the Union, various contacts have taken place in relation to animal welfare and the relevant legislation of those countries has been obtained. The Commission will consider making more formal approaches to the countries concerned in due course. Anyway as most of these countries are preparing for EC membership they will have to bring their animal welfare provisions in line with EC legislation.

I will be sending copies of this letter to my colleagues Günter Verheugen, David Byrne and Franz Fischler.

Yours sincerely,

*[signed]*  
Pascal LAMY

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