

## Technical Note No 21

# Transport of Poultry<sup>1</sup>

## Summary

The EU Council Regulation on the protection of animals during transport and related operations came into force on 5 January 2007. The Regulation applies to all those who transport poultry as part of a business or trade. The Regulation sets out the general conditions for the transport of all vertebrate species, and outlines the specific provisions for the transport of poultry. The requirements also vary according to the length of journey. The documentation required for journeys under 65 km, over 65 km and up to eight hours, and over eight hours, are discussed. Drivers and attendants transporting poultry on journeys over 65 km are required to hold a certificate of competence issued by an independent assessor.

**All those involved in the transport of poultry, and related operations, need to be familiar with the requirements of the new Regulation.**

<sup>1</sup>Poultry is not defined in the Regulation but is taken to include: domestic fowl, ducks, geese, turkeys, guinea-fowl, quails, pheasants and partridges.

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## Legislation

This leaflet provides guidance on the EU Council Regulation<sup>2</sup> on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, and on the implementing legislation for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland<sup>3</sup>. The Regulation came into force on 5 January 2007.

The Regulation concerns all those who transport poultry for a commercial purpose and will include: farmers; poultry transporters; those involved in commercial pet breeding; and those moving poultry for films, zoos and leisure parks. The Regulation does not provide a definition of economic activity but the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has interpreted it to mean that if you transport animals as part of a business or trade then the Regulation's provisions will apply.

The Regulation does **not** cover the transport of poultry:

- a) if it is not for a commercial purpose
- b) to or from a veterinary practice or clinic under veterinary advice
- c) if it is a single animal accompanied by its owner or other responsible person
- d) if it is a pet accompanied by its owner on a journey
- e) by farmers transporting their own animals, in their own vehicles, less than 50 km (only limited parts of the Regulation apply)

The regulation includes a general requirement applying to the transport of all animals. This states that no person should transport animals in a way likely to cause injury or undue suffering.

## Requirements of the Regulation

The following general conditions for transport (Article 3) apply to all vertebrate species including poultry:

### Protection during transport

Anyone engaged in the handling and transport of poultry must be trained or competent to do so in a way that does not, or is not likely to, cause unnecessary fear, injury or suffering. All necessary arrangements must have been made in advance to minimise the length of the journey and meet the birds' needs during the journey. The birds must be fit for the journey and must remain sufficiently fit throughout the journey. They must be protected from inclement weather and extremes of temperature, and appropriate air quality and quantity must be maintained. The vehicle must be provided with sufficient ventilation to take account of the number of birds and the weather conditions<sup>4</sup>.

### Means of transport

The means of transport used must be designed, constructed, maintained and operated so as to avoid injury and suffering, and ensure the safety of the birds.

<sup>2, 3</sup> and <sup>4</sup> see Further Reading on the back page

This includes requirements for cleaning and disinfecting, and the provision of adequate lighting. The floor surfaces of containers must be strong enough for the weight of the birds, and should provide sufficient grip for stability during transport.

### Space allowances

Sufficient floor space must be provided for poultry appropriate to the intended journey and in compliance with the minimum floor areas as detailed in Table 1.

**Table 1 Densities applicable to the transport of poultry in containers. Minimum floor area to be provided.**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Area in cm<sup>2</sup></b>
Day old chicks	21 – 25 per chick
<b>Poultry other than day old chicks (weight in kg)</b>	<b>Area in cm<sup>2</sup> per kg</b>
< 1.6	180 – 200
1.6 < 3	160
3 to 5	115
>5	105

These figures may vary depending not only on the weight and size of the birds but also on their physical condition, the meteorological conditions and the likely journey time.

Defra states that these figures refer only to day old chicks and chickens. Different space allowances will be more appropriate to other types of poultry, or where they are not transported in crates or boxes.

Source: Council Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005, Annex 1, Chapter VII (E) Poultry  
Defra, *Welfare of Animals During Transport Guidance Notes - Part 2D*

### Duties of transporters

The welfare of the birds must not be compromised by insufficient coordination of the different parts of the journey, and weather conditions must be taken into account. For journeys over 65km a qualified attendant (ie one holding a certificate of competence) must accompany any consignment of animals, except where the driver performs the functions of attendant.

### Feed and water

For poultry, suitable food and water shall be available in adequate quantities, except in the case of a journey lasting less than: (a) 12 hours disregarding loading and unloading time; or (b) 24 hours for chicks of all species, provided the journey is completed within 72 hours after hatching.

## Transport distance

The requirements vary according to the length of journey. Anyone transporting poultry on any length of journey must ensure that they are fit to travel and will remain in a fit state throughout the journey. The means of transport and transport practices must comply with the requirements of the Regulation.

On all journeys poultry must be accompanied by an **Animal Transport Certificate (ATC)** which must contain information on:

- the origin and ownership of the poultry
- place of departure and destination
- date and time of departure
- expected duration of the journey

There is no prescribed format for an ATC. Provided the above points are met, the information does not have to be on a single piece of paper. Other documentation carrying this information, such as an Animal Movement Licence, will suffice. Farmers transporting their own poultry, in their own vehicles, less than 50 km need only comply with the general conditions set out in Article 3 of the Regulation.

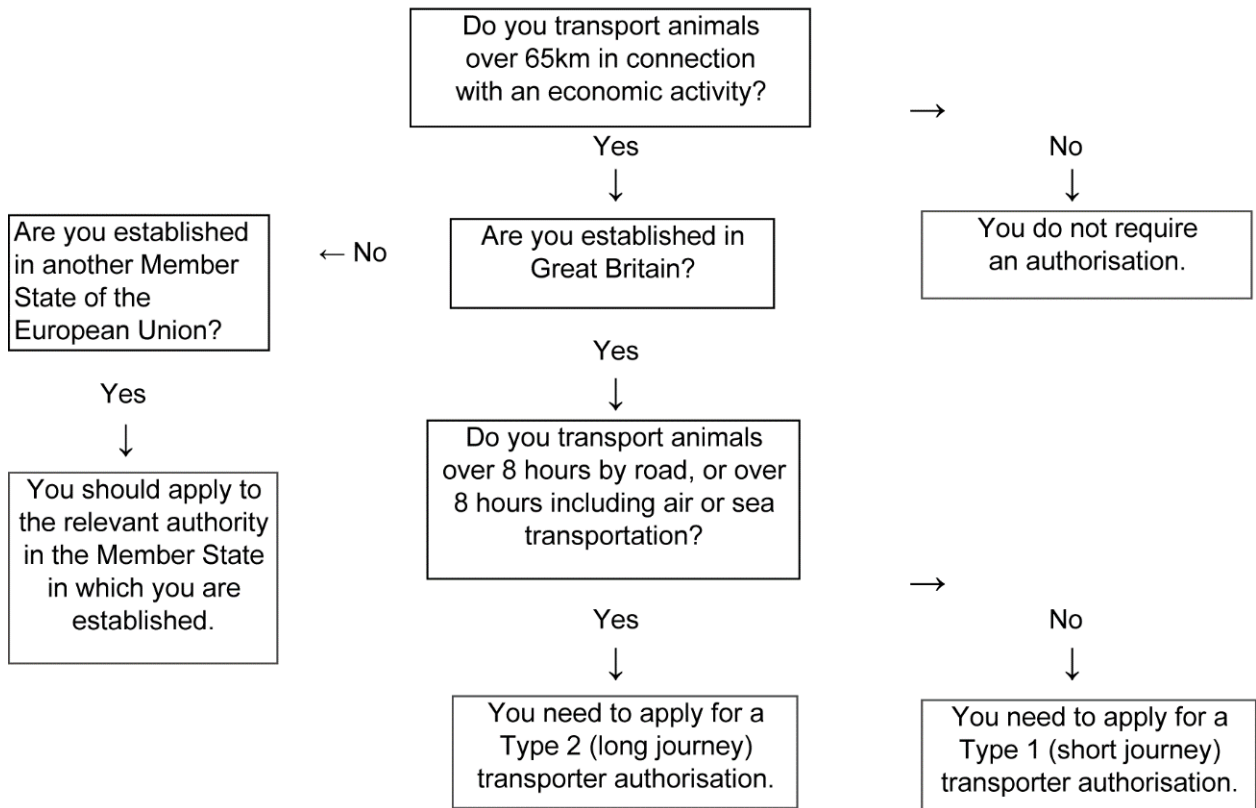
For poultry transported over 65 km and up to eight hours, in addition to the above requirements the transporter must hold a valid Type 1 (or short journey) **Transporter Authorisation** (see Figure 1) which in Great Britain is issued by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) –formally the State Veterinary Service. To obtain an authorisation the transporter must be established in Great Britain; have the appropriate equipment and operational procedures in place; ensure that all staff involved in transporting poultry are trained and competent; and anyone involved in the transport of poultry must not have been convicted of a serious animal welfare offence in the three years preceding the submission of an application. Authorisations will permit transporters to carry all species, but authorisations may be made species-specific if deemed necessary.

Vehicles and trailers for use on journeys over eight hours<sup>5</sup> require a Type 2 (or long journey) Transporter Authorisation and a **Vehicle Approval Certificate** which is issued following prior inspection and approval by the competent authority. Defra believes that the transport of poultry in containers falls outside the scope for vehicle inspection and approval. Therefore, for vehicles which only carry poultry in containers in the UK, neither the vehicle nor the containers need be inspected and certified. However, Defra cannot guarantee that other Member States have the same interpretation, and it is recommended that transporters check with the competent authorities in the relevant Member States.

<sup>5</sup> In the case of poultry Defra states this should be calculated from the time that the vehicle departs from the first place of loading.

**Flow Chart 1**

**Do I need a transport authorisation?**



Source: Defra

**Training and Certification for Competence**

The Regulation requires that transporters of vertebrate animals in connection with an economic activity, together with market and assembly centre staff handling animals, are trained in the relevant technical provisions of the Regulation. For transporters this covers: fitness for travel; the means of transport; use of its facilities; loading, unloading and handling; watering and feeding intervals, journey times and rest periods; space allowances; and documentation. For market and assembly centre staff: fitness, handling and separation.

The Regulation additionally requires that, transporters and attendants transporting cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, horses and poultry by road on journeys over 65 km in connection with an economic activity must be independently assessed as to their competence, and if successful awarded a certificate of competence.

The precise format and who may provide training is not specified in the Regulation. Training may be by means of 'on-the-job' training combined with practical experience, or by formal methods such as those leading to standards equivalent to qualifications accredited to National Qualifications Framework at levels 2 and 3 as provided by industry, agricultural colleges, transport businesses and commercial providers.

The certificates of competence will be issued by an independent body/bodies nominated by Defra, National Assembly for Wales (NAW), Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD) or Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD). The certificate must specify the role of driver, attendant (or driver/attendant), the length of the journey to be undertaken and the species to be transported.

If the journey is over 65 km, and less than eight hours, the assessment for the Certificate of Competence may be carried out by means of a theory test. If the journey is over eight hours the assessment must also include a practical component which will include driving and animal handling skills. The competence certificate needs to be submitted with applications for Type 2 transport authorisations for long journeys, and made available to the enforcement authorities on request.

Although no 'grandfather rights' are permitted under the Regulation, those holding certain qualifications (see Note A) may be issued with Certificates of Competence by the original awarding body under certain conditions.

### **Additional requirements**

- 1 The assessment of the fitness of poultry must be undertaken prior to packing them into transport crates. Where this assessment is not undertaken by the transporter, there should be clear and documented procedures as to who undertakes, and has responsibility for, making this assessment and the action to be taken if the birds are judged unfit for transport. Once loading of the birds commences the transporter is wholly responsible for the welfare of the birds until unloading at the end of the journey.
- 2 Animals which are unable to move independently without pain are unfit to travel. Broilers can suffer lesions to the feet which may be painful depending on the severity of the condition. Foot and leg health of the birds should be assessed before transportation. Defra's position is that birds with severe, painful conditions are unfit for transport. In addition birds with skin wounds, or any wound penetrating deeper into the tissues or body cavities should not be transported. Any bird suffering from prolapsed tissues around the vent is also unfit for travel.
- 3 The Regulation requires that when animals fall ill or are injured during transport they must be separated from others and receive treatment as soon as possible. However, it is recognised that bulk transport of poultry in containers makes it impossible to fully inspect the birds during transport.

- 4 The containers must be designed, constructed and maintained to high standards using suitable materials, and must be appropriate for the size of the poultry. They must permit adequate ventilation but protect the birds from adverse weather conditions. Where it is not obvious that the crates contain live animals, each must be marked clearly and visibly with “Live animals” and “Top of container”.

### **Technical requirements**

Technical requirements for the transport of animals are set out in Annex I of the Regulation. This includes specific provisions for the transport of farm animals and horses on long journeys.

- 1 The Regulation sets out specific requirements for the transport of all animals. Specifically, feed and water supply, journey times, rest periods and space allowances.
- 2 All ship operators carrying vertebrate animals (excluding farmed fish) should apply for a long journey authorisation as they may carry animals on journeys where the total duration (including the sea leg) may exceed 8 hours. Operators of livestock vessels where animals are kept in pens with bedding, food and water provided, must have their vessels inspected and approved. There is no requirement for Roll-on Roll-off vessels to be approved.
- 3 Aircraft operators should apply for a long journey authorisation as they carry animals on journeys where the total duration, including the air leg, may exceed eight hours. There is no requirement for aircraft to be inspected and approved.

### **Note: A**

Those holding the following qualifications may be issued with certificates of competence by the original awarding body if all aspects of the framework of competences have been covered.

Certificates issued by independent bodies approved by Ministers such as the National Proficiency Test Council part of the City and Guilds Group (NPTC) or the Road Haulage Association (RHA)

S/NVQ Level 3 in ‘Racehorse Care and Management’ – maintain the health and well being of horses during transportation, Unit 3.04

S/NVQ Level 3 in ‘Horse Care and Management’ – maintain the health and well being of horses during transportation, Unit 3.04

#### **DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY**

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## Further Reading

<sup>2</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 of 22 December 2004

<sup>3</sup> SI 2006, No 3260, The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006  
SI 2006, No 606, The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Scotland) Order 2006  
SR 2006, No 538, The Welfare of Animals (Transport) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006  
SR 2007, No 32, The Welfare of Animals (Transport)(Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007;  
Welsh SI 2007, No 1047, The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007

<sup>4</sup> Defra guidance is to provide sufficient ventilation for a “worst case” scenario, eg stationary vehicle in hot weather. Bulk transport of day-old chicks in containers requires a ventilation system capable of providing at least 30 air changes per hour.

Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, of 22 December 2004  
Official Journal of the European Union, 5/1/005

Statutory Instrument 2006 No 3260, The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006  
The Stationery Office Ltd, ISBN 0110754379

Statutory Instrument 2006 No 606, The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Scotland) Order 2006  
The Stationery Office Ltd, ISBN 0110714288

Statutory Rule 2006 No 538, The Welfare of Animals (Transport) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006  
The Stationery Office Ltd, ISBN 0337967873

Statutory Rule 2007 No 32, The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007  
The Stationery Office Ltd, ISBN 9780337968181

Welsh Statutory Instrument 2007, No 1047, The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007  
The Stationery Office Ltd, ISBN 9780110915678

Guidance Notes, Welfare of Animals During Transport  
Defra 2006