

Kent Action Against Live Exports (KAALE)

"I never give them hell. I just tell the truth and they think it's hell."

President Harry S Truman

Photographs used via the Stop Live Exports From The Port of Ramsgate Facebook campaign:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Stop-Live-Exports-From-The-Port-of-Ramsgate/205331499512961?fref=ts>

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Carla Lane: <http://www.carlalanecol.com/>

'The Black Spurs': <http://www.theblackspurs.com.au/Contents.htm>

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Thursday 22nd November 2012

KAALE Fully Supports RSPCA in call for full investigation into livestock sailing fiasco of Wednesday 21st November.

Kent NGO - Kent Action Against Live Exports (KAALE) are giving their full backing to the RSPCA in calling for a full and detailed investigation into events at Ramsgate port, Kent, on Wednesday 21st November 2012.

Both KAALE and the RSPCA were in attendance at Ramsgate throughout the day, and witnessed all events associated with this complete and utter fiasco.

Below is a summary of the days events:

At 0320hrs on 21st, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency issued the following warning - Gale force 6 currently off Dover, gusting 7/8 from lunchtime onwards.

A formal complaint from KAALE was sent to the MCA (Maritime and Coastguard Agency), the UK authority associated with all matters nautical; regarding the deteriorating weather conditions and the vessel Joline's intention to sail from Ramsgate to Calais loaded with livestock into a potentially ever increasing Channel gale. KAALE requested that their complaint be formally logged by the MCA.

No action was taken by AHVLA to stop the sailing as far as KAALE are aware. Two (2) transporters arrived at Ramsgate at 1040hrs, and after a brief inspection loaded onto the Joline which sailed approx 1115hrs.

Note as we said above, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency issued the following warning very early in the day - Gale force 6 off Dover gusting 7/8 from lunchtime onwards. 1115hrs when the 'Joline' set sail from Ramsgate, is approaching 'lunchtime'.

At 1330hrs vessel 'Joline' was still only approximately 30% across the English Channel, obviously struggling with the sea state and doing a mere 2.9 knots of speed. At 1400hrs, after veering from side to side; 'Joline' turned round and headed back to Ramsgate; berthing at approximately 1600hrs.

After a very brief inspection by an Animal Health approved vet which was undertaken on the vessel, and lasting in total 8 minutes – including the time taken for the vet to walk onto the ship; 'inspect' all the animals in the transporters, and leave again; the vehicles were given the 'ok' to move. DEFRA / the vet, was allowed onto the ship to inspect the animals as the conditions on the quay were so bad he felt it would be unsafe. They departed Ramsgate to return to their place of origin.

The two transporters were:

Registration BZ HX 63 front / OK 16 YN rear. Nationality DUTCH. No name displayed. Dark blue Scania cab with red "griffin" logo and white box chiller type trailer carrying sheep x 3 tiers. 1 driver.



Note – photo shows trailer type used, NOT actual tractor unit on day

Registration DK 55 RMX . Nationality ENGLISH. No name displayed, but this vehicle is known to belong to local, Kent based, haulier/dealer Trevor HEAD. Two tone blue rigid truck carrying sheep x 3 tiers. 1 driver



In their report 'DG(SANCO)/ 2008-7690-MR-FINAL' relating to their mission to the UK undertaken by the EU FVO between 18th-22nd February 2008, the FVO expressed their concerns to UK 'Competent Authority' supporting many KAALE official complaints prior to 2008 that there was nothing in Kent in the form of a suitable 'facility' to which animals could be sent should any emergencies happen, or bad weather delays occur at Kent ports.

The FVO report declares (point 9 page 17) – “it is questionable if sending the animals to a control post some three hours drive away is an appropriate arrangement for dealing with such circumstances”.

- see points 9 and 10 on page 17 of the FVO report which is attached.

- See also recommendation No 5 on page 17 of the report; which declares:**
- Recommendation - “Arrangements are in place so that where there are delays at ports or emergency, measures are needed to deal with non-compliances detected, the CA can take any necessary actions to safeguard animal welfare, including the possibility to unload animals in suitable accommodation as required by Article 22(2) and 23(2)(e) of Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005”.**

And so, on the witnessed experiences of 21/11/12, some 4.5 years after the production of the official FVO report, what are we now witnessing appears to be; NO Kent facility being used for the box trailer transporter – instead, animals still being returned to a location (Kettering suspected) at least 3 hours drive away from the port !

So what has changed in the last 4.5 years ?

Where is the Kent 'facility' to deal with emergencies such as was seen on 21/11 ? Why did the box trailer with all its sheep have to return to a facility outside of the county of Kent (Kettering ?) – as the FVO said: “it is questionable if sending the animals to a control post some three hours drive away is an appropriate arrangement for dealing with such circumstances” ?

Animal Health appear to be blaming the Joline captain and the MCA for what happened.

As far as we are concerned, it is not an MCA issue; it was giving these weather conditions from early in the morning, and AH are supposed to be the 'Competent Authority' at Ramsgate port.

As is now regular, the RSPCA were refused access by AHVLA to do any inspections.

Please write to your MP and ask him or her to ask Rt Hon David Heath, the secretary of state for DEFRA, personally to answer and not pass the complaint on to the civil servants in DEFRA. Ask why this obviously unsuitable ship was allowed to sail in such weather conditions, and also why, the RSPCA, the most respected Animal Welfare Charity in the world, is being denied access to inspect the animals because the 'Competent Authority' inspectors at alleged 'Animal Health' think they are doing better.

Keep it in mind that when the RSPCA inspect, they check all (100%) of vehicles and animals; when AH inspect, the only check around 30% (1 in 3) transporters.

What are DEFRA / AHVLA afraid of?

Are they afraid the RSPCA will once again leave them with egg on their faces when they find faults that the DEFRA 'Competent Authority' inspectors are either missing or IGNORING ?

We understand that Trevor Heads vehicle went towards Dover; and we believe the Box trailer vehicle loaded with sheep went towards London. We understand that it had been told to stop in a service area and rest for one hour before continuing its journey, which we believe to finish at Kettering.

Understandably, and quite rightly, the RSPCA are once again very frustrated and angry with the general 'carry on' fiasco witnessed on the 21st; but are helpless in view of DEFRA and Animal Health's insistence that it is 'nothing to do with them' and 'they should mind their own business'.

We also understand that Animal Health are now issuing reports on [Twitter.com/avhla](https://twitter.com/avhla) which says the events were all the MCA's fault as they told the captain it was OK.

We wonder what the MCA thinks of this ?

We know that at 1015hrs on the morning of the events; the MCA were issuing forecast of Force 6 at Dover, gusting to Force 7/8 in centre of the English Channel. Strangely, the transporters didn't arrive in Ramsgate port until 1040hrs, but they were still authorised to sail. By whom we ask ?

J 72.

KENT ACTION AGAINST LIVE EXPORTS

**KAALE REPORT ON THE SHIPMENT OF LIVESTOCK FOR SLAUGHTER
On Wednesday 21st November 2012. from Ramsgate, Kent , England to Calais, France.**

VESSEL. M V JOLINE, small Ro-Ro ferry with a single , open deck which gives no shelter from foul weather for anything carried. Built 1988 and registered in Riga, Latvia.

NOTE - This vessel is not registered Lloyds of London but with a Russian Maritime Authority and has recently been re-classified as regards sailing in adverse weather conditions. Previously wind strength was the deciding factor, up to wind force 6.

Now the classification is WAVE HEIGHT and it has been fixed at FOUR METRES (which is around 12 feet +). Given that this ship has a VERY LOW FREEBOARD of around 1 ½ metres, it is obvious that any lorry carried on deck could very well be swamped by high waves - indeed such waves could go right over a lorry carried on this exposed deck. A wave height of four metres on the Beaufort Scale equates to Force 7; classified as near gale wind speed 26-33 knots.

**ATTENDING: KAALE monitors with KAALE and TALE members .
RSPCA Inspectors.**

DEFRA, Animal Health team from Dover - who incidentally now consider themselves so far above the members of the public to whom they are answerable, they now REFUSE CATEGORICALLY TO SPEAK TO KAALE - KAALE is at a loss to understand why.

Kent Police , accompanied by their riots vans, cars and their ever popular Section 14 .

CONDITIONS: WIND SPEED INCREASING AND WEATHER CONDITIONS DETERIORATING RAPIDLY AS THE THE MORNING PROGRESSED.

Rain at times. Poor to moderate visibility.

M.V. Joline left her base in Calais around 0500 hrs and berthed in Ramsgate at 0915 hrs.

A formal complaint from KAALE was sent to the MCA (Maritime and Coastguard Agency); the UK authority concerned with all matters nautical, about the deteriorating weather conditions and the vessel Joline's intention to sail loaded with livestock into an ever increasing gale; supported with a request that the complaint be formally logged by the MCA.

FULL LIVESTOCK LORRIES ARRIVING AT RAMSGATE DOCKS

10.32 hrs. (1) Registration BZ HX 63 front / OK 16 YN rear. Nationality DUTCH; No name displayed. Dark blue Scania cab with red "griffin " logo and white box chiller type trailer carrying sheep x 3 tiers. 1 driver.

10.37 hrs. (2) Registration DK 55 RMX . Nationality ENGLISH. No name displayed, but this lorry is known to belong to local, Kent based, haulier/dealer Trevor HEAD. Two tone blue rigid truck carrying sheep x 3 tiers. 1 driver.

Both these lorries were given a brief inspection by Animal Health (so obviously not been subject to supervised loading). The RSPCA were again refused permission to inspect the Box trailer but the driver of the other truck was compliant.

The white box trailer was driven on to the vessel Joline and the rear door of the lorry opened because during the inspection it was thought that there was a lame sheep carried. An AH operative went inside the tier to see, and found nothing amiss. The rear door was then closed and the lorry temporarily came off the ship, by which time the second lorry had been inspected and this promptly loaded on to the ship followed swiftly by the white box lorry.

The ship's bow door was raised and shut and Joline left Ramsgate at 1100 hrs.

INTO AN EVER INCREASING WIND (which incidentally was forecast earlier in the day); but in their greed, the exporters obviously thought they could beat the weather.

NOT SO - by the time the Joline had got a couple of hours out into the English Channel it was plain that she was not coping with the horrendous seas; and THE SHIP TURNED BACK TO RAMSGATE.

Wind now gusting up to force 9 with frequent rain squalls. It then took the vessel and its animal cargo over three hours to get back into port.

We would like to think that the master was thinking about the sheep carried; he quoted that reason - strange he never has expressed any interest in the welfare of any sheep carried previously, but no doubt, he was only thinking of his own miserable skin, the crew and the two drivers (interestingly it was reported that the driver of the griffin lorry was Mr. Ondewater himself; so maybe best not to drown the owner of the ship – eh !).

NOTE - Wind force 9 on the Beaufort Scale is classed as Severe Gale 41-47 knots with a wave height of 7 Metres. Before Joline turned around back to Ramsgate, the wind was gusting force 8-9. A livestock lorry even with closed vents, as with Trevor Head's vehicle, water would still possibly have got in. Who knows what was going on in that and the box trailer with all the sheep in artificial conditions; combined with the rolling and pitching of the ship.

Vessel Joline made very slow progress back to Ramsgate, being buffeted by wind and waves, being difficult to control.

Even when she reached the comparative calm of the harbour she was being blown around. 1620hrs; Joline RE-BERTHED in Ramsgate with extreme difficulty, and with assistance from the Ramsgate Harbour tug.

UPDATE Thursday 22nd November

Shortly after her arrival back in Ramsgate yesterday afternoon, the vessel Joline was boarded by Animal Health inspectors from their base in Dover with a Defra vet from Wye in Kent. They briefly inspected the two livestock lorries whilst they were still on the vessel, it took ALL OF EIGHT MINUTES and then the two lorries full of sheep were declared fit (! !) to proceed off the ship and move out of the docks.

The RSPCA Inspectors were denied access to the ship and both lorries.

In the howling wind and the pouring rain, both lorries then sped out of the docks at Ramsgate and as there is still no adequate facility in the county of Kent for situations such as this, the animals were to be sent back to their point of origin.

In the case of the Scania griffin lorry with the white BOX trailer, this meant a journey of four hours or so up the motorway to Kettering in Northamptonshire.

The driver was supposed to stop for an hour to rest the sheep (still loaded). Why was that not done before he left the docks ? - We doubt it happened.

The sheep in Mr Head's lorry had been loaded at Lydden (near Dover) at 7am on 21st Nov and therefore in theory were to return to that loading place. That lorry did not return there, but was seen in the area of a premises used many years ago as a lairage not too far away just off the A2; a few miles north east of Dover, Kent.

The vessel Joline has remained at Ramsgate Harbour .

This is KAALE report J 72 compiled on Wednesday 21st and updated on Thursday 22nd November 2012.

Pictures to accompany the above events can be found online on the KAALE website www.kaale.org.uk and go to the start of the picture gallery .

