

The Sheiling
London Road,
Sholden,
Deal,
Kent CT14 0AD
3rd October 2013

Mz. Caroline Howes,
Complaints & Legal Co-ordinator,
Corporation Office,
2nd Floor,
Berkeley House,
Croydon Street,
Bristol BS5 0DA

Dear Mz Howes,

I would like to answer your letter dated 24th September 2013.

We firstly agree with VOSA, that to stop livestock vehicles in transit could cause unnecessary problems for the animals being carried. However the vehicles to which we are referring are foreign transporters, mainly Dutch, and as a result do not have premises in this country.

The vehicle involved in the incidents on the 4th and 6th/7th of September was a Dutch transporter belonging to a Johannes Onderwater who also owns the Live Export ship on which it was to travel to the continent, Calais to be precise and then beyond.

The vehicle Registration number is BN GV O1 on the cab and OF 68 RN on the trailer and is a regular vehicle passing through Dover for the export ship.

We understand there are VOSA inspectors in the port and have always believed that at the point of embarkation these officers could use random checks on these vehicles bound for the continent.

We, that is KAALE (Kent Action Against Live Exports www.kaale.org.uk) have monitored this trade for the last 18 years with trained observers both at the dock entrance and on the cliffs immediately above the port with binoculars and cameras and at no time have we ever seen VOSA officials check anything to do with these vehicles.

We have been told that the VOSA inspectors do not wish to become involved with this contentious trade but we believe passionately that the trade must be made to run legally as every other haulier has to. By cutting corners the trade is made viable and we believe that if the rules were tightened, as they should be, then the profits would be smaller thus making the trade non viable.

I await your reply with interest as we have complained many times to VOSA officers about non compliance of hours by the drivers but each time we have been fobbed off. We understand you are dealing with foreign, that is non British, drivers but they are driving on our roads and just recently there have been two incidents on the continent where drivers of animal transporters have fallen asleep at the wheels of their vehicles causing much carnage.

Sorry to involve you in this issue but VOSA is the competent body for this and as such we have to come to you.

Yours Sincerely,

I.F.Birchall