

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: From many sources this time; Ros, Bill and Frankie, Jane etc. Thanks to all.

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

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(Newsline normally updated each Sunday evening; more regularly during every shipment as data gathered)

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Friday 7th September 2012

‘J64’

KAALE REPORT on the LIVESTOCK SHIPMENT from Ramsgate Port, Kent, UK to Calais, France on Wednesday 12th September 2012

Please note that events relating to this shipment, which has been the biggest farce yet; took place over a period of almost 24 hours. This report aims to provide an overview of the main events, but does not cover all in specific detail.

VESSEL: M.V. ‘JOLINE’. Registered in Riga, Latvia. Small Ro-Ro with a single, open deck offering no foul weather shelter for anything carried. Capacity: seven full sized lorries (transporters). Owned and operated by Onderwater – see attached KAALE letter to DEFRA for his squeaky clean past history !

CONDITIONS : Dry and clear with good visibility. Sea state calm, rising to choppy during the day with an increasingly chilly, westerly wind.

ATTENDING. KAALE monitors and TALE and KAALE members.

RSPCA officers. DEFRA Animal Health and Kent Police.

Even more, including Kent Trading Standards (KTS) and members of Thanet District Council (TDC) as events unfolded during the day.

Motor Vessel ‘JOLINE’ left her base in Calais shortly before midnight on 11th September and berthed in Ramsgate at 0330 hrs on 12th September.

Sheet 1

BAN LIVE ANIMAL EXPORTS

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0605 hrs. Peter Z, the UK agent for the 'Joline' and the exporters, arrived at the dock in his usual white van.

FULL LIVESTOCK TRANSPORTERS ARRIVING AT RAMSGATE HARBOUR

0815 hrs (1). Registration: DK 55 RMX (front and rear). Nationality: ENGLISH. No name displayed on this blue and silver transporter but it is a regular visitor and known to belong to Trevor HEAD, a local Kent livestock dealer. This half length transporter contained sheep in 3 tiers.



Photo: Bill.

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0815 hrs (2). Registration: BV ZN 73 (front) / 77 WF NT (rear). Nationality: DUTCH. Name: RINUS VAN BEER. Orange, red and blue cab with double trailers (drawbar unit) each carrying sheep crammed into 3 tiers. As this vehicle swung round the roundabout at the docks entrance the driver was observed using a mobile phone. Police who were on the scene were informed of this and shown camera evidence; so hopefully prosecution will follow.



Both Photos: Bill.

This transporter loaded very quickly onto the 'Joline'. The cab section of this drawbar was parked at the narrow part of the stern of the ship, and the detached trailer was parked ahead of it and to one side, where the deck widens out on the starboard side. Presumably there are arrangements in place to ensure continued

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operation of systems for the well being of the sheep when the two halves of the drawbar are detached and the engine is switched off?

***0827 hrs (3). Registration: BZ HX 63 (front) / OF 68 RN (rear).
Nationality: DUTCH. No name displayed. Dark blue cab with a Scania 'Griffin' logo on the sides. Grey x 3 tier trailer filled with sheep.***



Photo: Bill.

***0827 hrs (4). Registration: BR GN 82 (front) / WJ TN 74 (rear).
Nationality: DUTCH. Nam: RINUS VAN BEER. Carrying sheep crammed in 3 tiers.***

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**0827 hrs (5). Registration: BN XH 63 (front) / OB 29 JS (rear).
Nationality: DUTCH. Name: F DE JONG. Light blue cab.
Trailer carrying sheep crammed in 3 tiers.**



BN XH 63 F de Jong – KAALE Archive Photo

**0827 hrs (6). Registration: BR 368 AW (front) / BV 884 YJ (rear).
Nationality: FRENCH. Name: ROCHE ET FILS. Dark blue cab with white design
and pale blue and grey step trailer. (ie. the part of the trailer nearest the cab is 3 tier
and the rest of the trailer is four tiers). **THIS TRANSPORTER HAD SERIOUS
FAULTS, RESULTING IN A REFUSAL TO SAIL AND THE TWO DRIVERS BEING
ARRESTED** - see below.**



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Above 3 Photos: Bill.

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Photo: Jane

**0840 hrs (7). Registration: BZ BX 67 (front) / WV 40 LV (rear).
Nationality: DUTCH. Name: JEROEN VAN OORT. Drawbar vehicle carrying
sheep. Two drivers for this transporter, which loaded onto the 'Joline' at 0855 hrs.**



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Above 2 Photos: Bill.

Inspections of the transporters by Animal Health and the RSPCA then followed with particular attention being paid to vehicle number 3 with the Griffin logo, which was the last to load at 0920 hrs. This was the ‘tyre problem’ vehicle from Wednesday 29th August shipment – see KAALE Report J62.

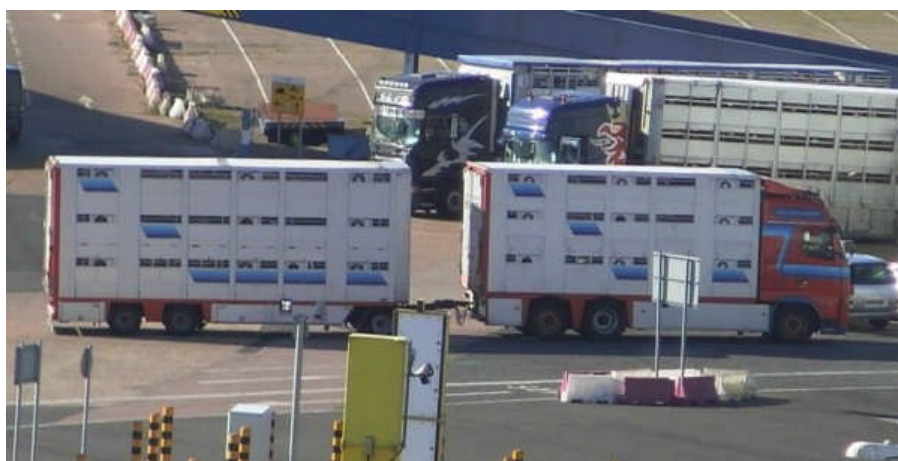


Above: Archive Photo – ‘Griffin’ Vehicle Tyre troubles as detailed in KAALE Report J62.

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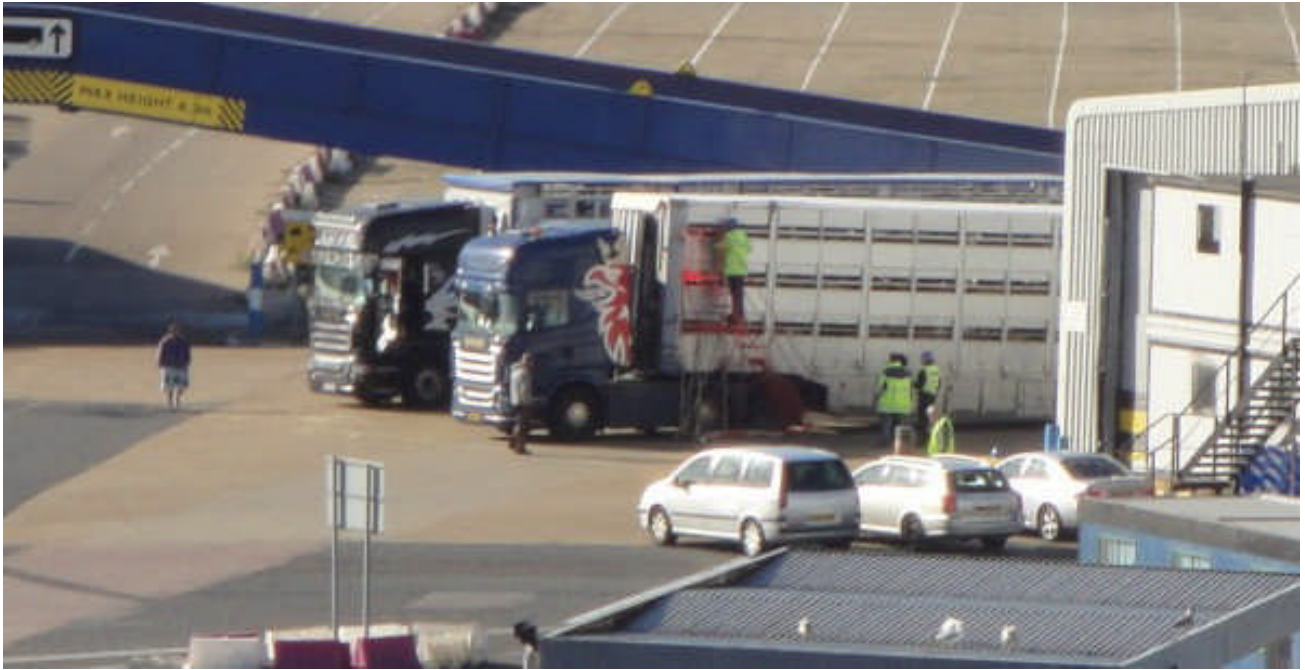


Photo: Jane.

MV 'Joline' sailed from Ramsgate port at 0940 hrs bound for Calais, but leaving one transporter (6), ROCHE ET FILS, (photo above) still standing on the quay within the harbour.



Above 2 Photos: Jane.

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Animal Health and the RSPCA had found multiple faults with this vehicle and therefore it was refused permission for sailing, and therefore was not allowed to board the ship.

A TRAGEDY THEN UNFOLDED

On the ROCHE ET FILS transporter it was discovered that sheep had trapped legs when the floor on one of the tiers within the trailer had become detached from the side and left a gap and some sheep's legs had slipped down this gap resulting in legs being broken.



Above Photos: Via Ros.

At one point during the lengthy inspection - 0925 hrs; a person from Animal Health was seen to wipe the ventilation bars on the side of this lorry with a cloth; he then moistened the cloth with some liquid from a bottle and wiped the bars again.

Was he wiping away blood ? It is entirely possible.

DEFRA and RSPCA vets were brought into the docks.

THE SHEEP WITH BROKEN LEGS WERE SHOT IN THE DOCKS.

Other sheep were found to be lame; with possibly more broken limbs or foot rot – the details are still emerging. Eventually, and after hours of deliberation it was decided that the condition of the trailer was so bad that the trailer had to be emptied and the sheep re-loaded on to another vehicle to be taken to a holding facility.

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In spite of DEFRA having told the European Authority post their February 2008 visit that one such place existed in Kent, there are actually none - so what now ?

At 1420 hrs a small Ifor Williams livestock carrier arrived at the docks pulled by a grey pick-up registration GY 02 VVO, which locals immediately recognised as belonging to Trevor Head. This vehicle had obviously arrived to remove the dead, dying or injured sheep. The vehicle was seen the next day back at Lydden Court farm near Dover.



Photo: Bill.

The next decision to be taken at Ramsgate port was where to put the surviving sheep within the docks whilst waiting for the replacement transporter to arrive. An area of the Thanet Council owned harbour and docks that was not leased but on the Council's space was selected.

An area was chosen by DEFRA but Thanet District Council were not informed that this was about to happen.

So, FINALLY A TRUCK WASH AREA within the harbour WAS DEEMED SUITABLE. This facility has a low wall on three sides being constructed of breeze (building) blocks, topped with a blue wooden plank fence and open on the fourth side to allow trucks to drive in to the jet wash area.

Metal barriers were deployed to create a pen for the sheep and they were then slowly unloaded from ROCHE trailer into the area.



Above 2 photos Via Ros.

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DURING THE UNLOADING OF THE TRAILER ONE OF THE FLOORS BETWEEN THE TIERS OF THE TRAILER COLLAPSED, AND MANY SHEEP WERE INJURED. 41 OF THESE SHEEP WERE CONSIDERED TO BE IN TOO BAD A CONDITION TO CONTINUE AND WERE SHOT.

WHEN THE REMAINING SHEEP WERE FINALLY IN THE TRUCK WASH PEN they were greeted by a concrete floor and water, but no feed of any kind. They were fenced in with the metal barriers.



Above 2 Photos Via Ros.

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AT SOME POINT THE PRESSURE OF TOO MANY SHEEP IN TOO SMALL A SPACE CAUSED THE BARRIERS TO GIVE WAY, AND SHEEP SKIDDED OUT ACROSS THE CONCRETE. SIX OF THEM FELL INTO THE WATER (which was probably the waste water area from the truckwash).

FOUR OF THESE SHEEP WERE RESCUED; THE OTHER TWO SHEEP DROWNED.

It has been difficult to get correct information as the tragedy unfolded throughout the day and succeeding night. Suffice to say that

SIXTEEN HOURS AND FORTY MINUTES AFTER ARRIVING AT RAMSGATE; ELEVEN OF WHICH WERE SPENT IN A CONCRETE PEN WITH NO FOOD AND IN THE POURING RAIN FOR PART OF THAT TIME, ANOTHER TRANSPORTER FINALLY ARRIVED IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THURSDAY MORNING AT 0107 HRS TO TAKE THE SHEEP, SOME OF THEM SHORN, TO A SECURE APPROPRIATE HOLDING FACILITY.

IT CAME AS NO SURPRISE TO DISCOVER THAT THE TRANSPORTER WHICH TURNED UP WAS ONE OF ONDERWATER'S OWN, WITH A VERY FAMILIAR NUMBER PLATE: BT JD 75 front / OD 39 DD rear; AND IT HAD CLEARLY SPENT THE DAY WORKING WITH OTHER LIVESTOCK. IT STANK OF DUNG; NEVER MIND THE POSSIBLE CROSS CONTAMINATION BECAUSE OF A COMPLETE LACK OF WASH OUT. Beside the driver was Peter Z the (Ramsgate / 'Joline') agent; he certainly gets around !

The problems continued during the re-loading phase when sheep escaped from the truck wash pen and ran amok, causing yet more panic.

When all the sheep were loaded on to the transporter it left the harbour; destination unknown.

So what can be said about this ?

At best it could be said that DEFRA, who after are the OFFICIAL 'COMPETENT AUTHORITY', did their best in a difficult situation.

OR IT COULD BE SAID that if HM Government officials; namely DEFRA; had actually put into place within Kent the proper facilities for emergency situations such as this, as they told the European Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) they would when they visited the UK in February 2008, along with more recent promises by Jim Paice; DEFRA's task this day would have been so much easier and maybe so many sheep would not have died in such terrifying circumstances.

KAALE is also left wondering how many more faults on transporters; along with sick and suffering animals in transport, have been missed over the years due to DEFRA's 30% only required rule for livestock vehicle inspection.

Only since the RSPCA began inspecting 100% of livestock transport passing through Ramsgate harbour have more and more faults, failures and discrepancies on lots of the trucks come to light. Failures which would have possibly been completely missed by the UK 'Competent Authority' with an inspection rate of just 30%.

Is 'competent' the correct word here ?

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***This is KAALE report 'J64' compiled on Thursday 13th September 2012.
Distributed on Friday 14th September 2012.***



Photo Via Ros.

ON THE HOOK, NOT THE HOOF !

And saving the best until last

***KAALE sends Congratulations to everyone involved with the Ramsgate campaign to
stop this trade in animal suffering.
In memory of those animals which have died in recent weeks through the
incompetence and financial greed of man.***

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Live transport suspended from Ramsgate port

Thursday 13 September 2012

The RSPCA is welcoming the news tonight that live transport from Ramsgate port has been suspended with immediate effect by Thanet council following a day of horror at the port yesterday when 45 animals died.

The RSPCA last night called for an immediate suspension of the live transport of animals from the port after two sheep drowned, two were put to sleep due to injuries and another 41 were shot as they were severely lame.

RSPCA inspector Caz Doe spent more than 15 hours at the port yesterday helping to improve the welfare for the sheep.

She said: "Yesterday was one of my worst ever days at work – it was just horrendous. But this news has made today one of my best. This has been a long time coming.

"I'm thrilled to have been a small part in a massive operation to stop such a cruel and barbaric trade. I'm pleased the sacrifices weren't for nothing."

Yesterday a lorry loaded with 500 sheep over four tiers was stopped at the port and declared to be unfit to travel due to faults to the vehicle and the sheep had to be unloaded while the transporters tried to get another lorry. It was the same lorry that was declared unfit to travel just last month. It has had two further failures at previous visits.

One sheep had a broken leg and another was also injured and they were put to sleep on veterinary advice. In a further tragedy, sheep were loaded into an area where the floor then collapsed - six sheep fell into water and four were rescued, but two drowned.

A vet then inspected all the sheep and found that a further 41 were lame and so these animals had to be shot.

Two French lorry drivers were arrested at the scene.

RSPCA chief executive Gavin Grant today met with David Heath, MP, the new Minister of Agriculture, alongside Thanet MP Laura Sandys. The minister ordered an immediate investigation and report of the events at the port.

Gavin said : "I greatly welcome this news. Now we need to move to make the suspension a permanent one, not only from Ramsgate but the whole country. It is tragic that it had to happen this way, but the council have made the right decision and we are fully behind them."

Ramsgate was the only British port currently being used for shipping animals abroad for further fattening and slaughter.

The RSPCA has fought against this trade for well over 100 years.

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