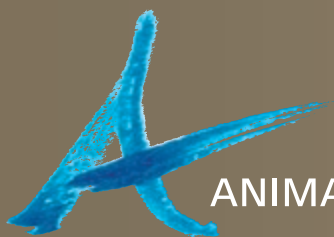


# The Welfare of Dromedary Camels during Road Transport in the Middle East



According to the Arab legend, when God created the human being,  
there were two portions of clay left.

With one, he created the dromedary, and with the other one,  
the date palm. One and the other are miracles in a hostile world  
in which the wind throws blinding blasts of cold sand,  
and in which, at night, the cold, after a whole day of burning sun,  
turns the stones into dust.



ANIMALS' ANGELS

we are there with the animals

## Aim of this paper

This paper aims to shed light on the conditions in which dromedary camels<sup>1</sup> are transported by road in the Middle East on basis of empiric examples from Egypt, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. The objective of this report is to improve the conditions for camels during transport. It is directed to stakeholders involved in the transport of camels, to competent authorities, to international organizations and universities concerned in animal health and welfare.

The paper is accompanied by a short documentary that can be scanned here or downloaded at:  
[www.animals-angels.de/camels](http://www.animals-angels.de/camels)



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<sup>1</sup> Hereinafter „camels“

## Acknowledgement

We thank our colleagues from Kamel-Kompetenzzentrum Schweiz<sup>2</sup> who provided insight and expertise that greatly assisted this documentation. We are very grateful to Paula Wehmeyer from Boundless Productions who provided freely her voice to lead the audience through the short documentary accompanying this paper.

We thank Abdelali Ziani for assistance with research and translation and our dear colleagues who supported our field research and who reviewed the documentation.

We would also like to show our gratitude to the ‘anonymous’ camel lovers, handlers, breeders and veterinarians for sharing their pearls of wisdom with us during the course of this research.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://kamel-kompetenzzentrum.ch>

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## Dedication



IBRAHIM, 12TH OCTOBER 2017

We dedicate this paper to Ibrahim, a blind camel who was transported to a Middle East slaughterhouse, and to all other camels whom we met during the last years unable to ease their suffering during transport.

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## I. Introduction

There are approximately 28.4 million camels in the world.<sup>3</sup> They are mainly found in Africa, Asia and have been introduced in some parts of Australia. The largest camel populations in the Middle East are found in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Oman followed by Iran and Egypt.<sup>4</sup> The Arabian world where the camel is famously known as ‘ship of the desert’ attaches great importance to these animals. In many countries in the Middle East, camels have been commercially exploited for hundreds of years. Today, they are mainly used for sports and leisure, for milk, meat and fiber production and as ‘pack’ animals, depending on the country.

Camel transport in the Middle East is carried out mainly in relation to trade, slaughter and for sports events. Beside short distance transports, camels are transported by road and/or vessel in long and

very long journeys. Partly, these transports are combined with long distances that the camels have to walk. In all kinds of transport, the welfare of the camels is not or not sufficiently taken into consideration. All too often, additional suffering, pain, fear and injuries are caused to the animals during transport and loading and unloading procedures. Poor transport conditions result in exhaustion and even death. Vehicles are not designed and not suitable for animal transport, and operators are not adequately trained. In general, the animal welfare standards of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) are not complied with.

<sup>3</sup> FAO 2016

<sup>4</sup> FAOSTAT 2016

## II. The use of camels for human purposes in the Middle East

Scientists title camels as 'multipurpose' animals<sup>5</sup> as they are used for sports (camel races), beauty contests, leisure, tourism, transport as well as for milk, meat and fibre production. Whereas camels used as 'transport' or 'pack' animals and for fibre production have no significant importance in the Middle East, camel races and camel beauty contests take mainly place in the Gulf Countries. There is camel trade and movement among the Gulf Countries related to these events.

However, the Middle East countries also import camels for their local meat production. Among other African countries, mainly Sudan and Somalia are important exporters of live camels. On a much smaller scale, the Gulf Countries import feral camels from Australia.

According to statistics of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), camels slaughtered worldwide in 2009 produced around 373,565,000 tonnes of meat, most of which was produced in Somalia, Sudan, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, Somalia and Sudan export large numbers of camels raised for meat production to Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other Gulf States.<sup>7</sup>

Raising of camels for meat production is possible on arid land where not much else is viable. As problems of global warming and the expansion of arid areas become more severe and the international market for halal products is increasing, it is likely that the production of camel meat will increase significantly in the future.<sup>8</sup>

Camels can lactate under severe drought conditions, they are able to retain lactation even when dehydrated and when other milk-bearing animals perish.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, camel milk production is possible on arid and drought land. Somalia is by far the largest camel milk producer in the world, followed by

Kenya and Mali.<sup>10</sup> In the Middle East, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are the most important camel milk producers.<sup>11</sup>

## III. Effects of transport on the welfare of camels

Live animal transport is undoubtedly a stressful and injurious operation that often contributes significantly to poor animal welfare. Poor transportation can have serious detrimental effects on the welfare of animals. Additionally, considering economic interests, badly performed transport can lead to significant loss of quality and production. Effects of transport include among others: stress, bruising, injuries, heat stress, dehydration and exhaustion.<sup>12</sup> Some key factors affecting the welfare of animals during transport and related handling are the attitude towards the animals and the training of staff, the methods of staff payment, laws and retailer's codes, the rearing conditions and experience, mixing of animals from different social groups, driving methods, space allowances or journey length.<sup>13</sup>

Accordingly, scientific evidence has proven that poor transport conditions in particular may cause severe welfare consequences for camels as well as economic losses.<sup>14</sup> Scientists came to the result that transportation of camels either by trucks or walk imposes marked stress upon them as indicated by behavioral and physiological measures.<sup>15</sup>

5 Faye, B., *Camel Meat in the World*. In: Kadim, I.T. et al. (eds.) *Camel Meat and Meat Products*, CABI, 2013

6 FAO 2011

7 Kadim, I.T. & Mahgoub, O., *Camel Carcass Quality*. In: Kadim, I.T. et al. (eds.) *Camel Meat and Meat Products*, CABI, 2013

8 Swatland, H.J., *Prospects for grading of camel meat yield and quality*/Faye, B., *Camel Meat in the World*. In: Kadim, I.T. et al. (eds.) *Camel Meat and Meat Products*, CABI, 2013

9 Yagil, R., Zagorski, O., van Creveld, C., Saran, A., *Science and camel milk production*, 1994

10 <http://www.fao.org/dairy-production-products/production/dairy-animals/camels/en/> 05.09.2018

11 FAO 2013

12 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/x6909e/x6909e08.htm>, 05.09.2018

13 Broom, D.M., *The welfare of livestock during road transport*. In: Appleby, M., Cussen, V., Garcés, L., Lambert, J. (eds.) *Long Distance Transport and Welfare of Farm Animals*, CABI 2008

14 Emeash, H.H., *Assessment of transportation stress in Dromedary camel (Camelus dromedarius) by using behavioural and physiological measures*. JAVS Vol. 1(1), 2016. <http://erepository.cu.edu.eg/index.php/JAVS/article/view/7088>

15 Ibid

"The welfare of the animals during their journey is the paramount consideration and is the joint responsibility of all people involved".

Article 7.3.3.  
of the Terrestrial Code

## IV. International standards on camel transport

### 1. OIE ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS

The animal welfare standards of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code include a chapter on transport of animals by land (Chapter 7.3.). The OIE animal welfare standards play an important role in international trade because they are the only global, science-based standards agreed on by the trading nations of the world. All Middle East countries are OIE Members and accordingly the standards must be followed in all of them.

The preamble to Chapter 7.3. of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code<sup>16</sup> reads: "These recommendations apply to the following live domesticated animals: cattle, buffaloes, camels, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry and equines (...)."

As a general principle, the standards stipulate that the time the animals spend on a journey should be kept to the minimum.

Furthermore, it puts emphasis on the importance of practical experience and/or sufficient training of the persons handling the animals respectively being responsible for their transport. According to Article 7.3.3. of the Terrestrial Code "(...) the welfare of the animals during their journey is the paramount consideration and is the joint responsibility of all people involved". Point 3 of Article 7.3.3. reads: "Animal handlers are responsible for the humane handling and care of the animals, especially during loading and unloading". The minimum knowledge an animal handler should have includes among others:

- Appropriate space allowance, feed, water and ventilation requirements.
- Responsibilities for animals during the journey, including loading and unloading.
- Animal behavior, general signs of disease, and indicators of poor animal welfare such as stress, pain and fatigue, and their alleviation.
- Assessment of fitness to travel.
- General disease prevention procedures, including cleaning and disinfection.
- Appropriate methods of animal handling during transport and associated activities such as assembling, loading and unloading.
- Methods of inspecting animals, managing situations frequently encountered during transport such as adverse weather conditions, and dealing with emergencies, including humane killing.
- Age-specific aspects of animal handling and care, including feeding, watering and inspection.

The OIE standards consider adequate planning of the transport as a key factor (Article 7.3.5.). Plans should be made in relation to:

- preparation of animals for the journey,
- transport time,
- vehicle design and maintenance,
- required documentation,
- space allowance, rest, water and feed,
- observation of animals en route,
- control of disease,
- emergency procedures,
- weather conditions (e.g. being too hot or too cold to travel during certain periods of the day),
- waiting time at frontiers and inspection points.

Article 7.3.5. point 6 goes into detail about space allowances and lit. c) reads: "When animals lie down, they should all be able to adopt a normal lying posture, without being on top of one another, and allowing necessary thermoregulation".

Great importance is also attached to the loading procedures. Point 1 of Article 7.3.8. reads: "a. Loading should be carefully planned as it has the potential to be the cause of poor welfare in transported animals. b. Loading should be supervised and/or conducted by animal handlers. The animals are to be loaded quietly and without unnecessary noise, harassment or force. Untrained assistants or spectators should not impede the process (...)."

Point 2 of Article 7.3.8. requires that facilities for loading including the collecting area, races and loading ramps should be designed and constructed to take into account the needs and abilities of the animals with regard to dimensions, slopes, surfaces, absence of sharp projections, flooring, etc. Point 3 stipulates that painful procedures (including whipping, tail twisting, use of nose twitches, pressure on eyes, ears or external genitalia) or the use of goads or other aids which cause pain and suffering should not be used to move animals.

Excessive shouting at animals or making loud noises to encourage them to move should not occur, as such actions may make the animals agitated, leading to crowding or falling. Animals should be grasped or lifted in a manner which avoids pain or suffering and physical damage (e.g. bruising, fractures, dislocations). Grasping or lifting animals only by their ears, noses, tails, head and limbs causing pain or suffering is not permitted. Conscious animals shall not be thrown, dragged or dropped.

Article 7.3.9. describes requirements during the travel which include that drivers and animal

*"Animal handlers are responsible for the humane handling and care of the animals, especially during loading and unloading".*

*Article 7.3.3. of the Terrestrial Code*

Unloading should be supervised and/or conducted by an animal handler with knowledge and experience of the behavioral and physical characteristics of camels.

*Article 7.3.10.  
of the Terrestrial Code*

handlers should check the animals immediately before departure to ensure that they have been properly loaded. They should also carry out periodic checks throughout the trip. Drivers should utilize smooth, defensive driving techniques, without sudden turns or stops, to minimise uncontrolled movements of the animals.

Methods of restraining animals should be appropriate to the species and age of animals involved and the training of the individual animal. Animals should be protected against harm from hot or cold conditions during travel. To minimise slipping and soiling, and maintain a healthy environment, urine and faeces should be removed from floors when necessary and disposed of in such a way as to prevent the transmission of disease. A driver or an animal handler finding sick, injured or dead animals should act in accordance with a predetermined emergency plan. Sick or injured animals should be segregated. When killing is necessary, it should be carried out as quickly as possible and assistance should be sought from a veterinarian or other person(s) competent in humane killing procedures.

If journey duration is such that feeding or watering is required, suitable feed and water for all animals should be provided. There should be adequate space for all animals to move to the feed and water sources and due account taken of likely competition for feed. Animals that are being transported should be rested at appropriate intervals during the journey and offered feed and water, either on the vehicle or, if necessary, unloaded into suitable facilities. Suitable facilities should be used en route which meet the needs of camels and allow all animals access to feed and water.

Article 7.3.10. deals with the requirements for unloading and post-journey handling. The principles of animal handling detailed in Article 7.3.8. apply equally to unloading, but consideration should be given to the likelihood that the animals will be fatigued. Unloading should be supervised and/or conducted by an animal handler with knowledge and experience of the behavioral and physical characteristics of camels. Animals should be unloaded from the vehicle into appropriate facilities as soon as possible after arrival at the destination but sufficient time should be allowed for unloading to proceed quietly and without unnecessary noise, harassment or force. Facilities should provide all camels with appropriate care and comfort, adequate space and ventilation, access to feed and water and shelter from extreme weather conditions.

## 2. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK ON ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Numerous countries in the Middle East such as Egypt or Qatar have not yet adopted national animal welfare rules and offer no provisions on the protection of animals during transport. This is in spite of the fact that the Middle East Regional Animal Welfare Strategy (2014-2019), endorsed by the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East at the OIE 82nd General Session in May 2014, foresees as major goal an “enhanced regional approach and commitment to ensure high standards of animal welfare based on a legislative framework and standards consistent with the OIE Animal Welfare Guidelines”. Oman and the UAE have animal welfare rules including provisions on animal transport.

In 2014, a proposal for a common animal health and welfare legislation by the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC<sup>17</sup>) was tabled and even ratified by several member countries. It includes in its article 6 provisions on animal transport, but so far this legislation did not come into effect.

Legal framework for movements of camels between GCC countries as well as animal quarantine laws exist but are limited to animal health and do not take protection and welfare of the camels into account.

<sup>17</sup> Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates



## V. Field studies into transport of camels in Egypt, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

In 2017 and 2018, Animals' Angels carried out field studies into the transport of camels in Egypt, Oman, Qatar and the UAE.

## Egypt

### A. GENERAL INFORMATION

Egypt is one the most important camel meat producers relying on the import of camels for its meat production.<sup>18</sup> The number of camels imported exceed by far the dimensions of the domestic camel herd (in 2015: 152,518 heads acc. FAO<sup>19</sup>) and with a slaughtering rate of 121%, Egypt is slaughtering more than its own camel population.<sup>20</sup> Egypt imports camels mainly from Sudan and a smaller number from Somalia and Ethiopia<sup>21</sup>, they arrive to the country via vessel, road transport and by foot. According to the information received by drivers and camel dealers, the majority of the camels are transported via the Sudanese-Egyptian border at Argeen. In Sudan, most of the camels start in Dafur, from where they are transported to Kurdufal – their journey takes three days. From Kurdufal, they are further transported to Dungula (three days of journey). From Dungula, again they are further transported to Argeen (two days of journey). From Argeen, the camels must walk for two days to Abu Simbel in Egypt. At Abu Simbel, there is a 'quarantine stable' where they stay for one day. After this, they are transported on trucks to Birqash camel market or other trading centres for camels in the country such as the market of Daraw. On their journey from Abu Simbel to Birqash, they are non-stop on board the trucks. The journey takes between 24-30 hours. Around 40 camels are transported on each truck. During their long transport to Birqash, they don't receive any water or food. They are shackled the

whole trip, forced to sit in sternal position and don't receive rest. At Birqash market, the animals usually stay for one night before being sold further to slaughterhouses or further fattening.

As mentioned before, Egypt has no animal welfare law respectively anti-cruelty law; apart from the OIE standards there is no legal framework to protect animals during transport.

### B. EMPIRIC EXAMPLES

In February and July 2018, Animals' Angels observed camel transports arriving to and departing from Birqash camel market where thousands of camels are sold every week. Furthermore, Animals' Angels trailed transports from the market to slaughter places and fattening farms.

The camels coming from the south are transported on big trailers: no loading ramps, no bedding, no watering devices, no compartment separation, and the majority has no roof. The vehicles are mainly construction or other discarded trucks. None of them is designed for animal transport. For the transports from the market to the slaughter places or other destinations, medium-sized or small pick-up trucks are used with the same characteristics than the large trailers.

The animals are transported seated with at least their front legs shackled. The shackles are often very tight around their legs hindering proper blood circulation and made of rough and hard material or thin ropes such as hay strings. Additionally, many camels wear halters, ropes around their necks or nose-rings and are tied to the vehicles. Normally, no bedding material is used. The vehicles are usually overloaded, and the animals are squeezed together as tight as possible. During transport from the south (24-30 hours), the animals are not provided with water or food and not given any rest. Animals that fell severely sick during transport or that get severely injured are killed on board by cutting their throat and exsanguination.

Loading and unloading procedures are done with extreme violence towards the animals, not considering bruising and injuries. The animals are violently hit including in the face and joints, poked into their genitals, violently torn by nose-rings, grabbed by the nasal septum, by the lips, ears and tail. Hobbled animals are thrown from the vehicles, dragged across the floor, and smashed into other animals. Many animals suffer from diarrhoea during transport.

18 Faye, B., *Camel Meat in the World*. In: Kadim, I.T. et al. (eds.) *Camel Meat and Meat Products*, CABI, 2013

19 <http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/QA>, 04.07.2018

20 *Camel meat in the world*. In: Kadim, I.T. et al. (eds.) *Camel Meat and Meat Products*, CABI, 2013

21 Napp S, Chevalier V, Busquets N, Calistri P, Casal J, Attia M, et al. (2018) Understanding the legal trade of cattle and camels and the derived risk of Rift Valley Fever introduction into and transmission within Egypt. *PLoS Negl Trop Dis* 12(1): e0006143. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pntd.0006143>

**EXAMPLE 1:**

Unloading of a camel transport arriving to Birqash camel market from Abu Simbel quarantine station; animals destined for slaughter, 8 February 2018



Number of animals:	35 to 40 adult camels
Means of transport:	large multipurpose truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices <sup>22</sup> :	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	YES
Bedding material used:	NO
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
One dead camel on board	
Two downer camels (Aziz and Bennu)	
No stationary ramp used for unloading	
Animals have to jump from chest height (or higher) to the ground, more than 14 camels fall off the truck while the workers unload them.	
Several camels shackled during unloading, therefore the animals have severe problems getting up again after falling	
Camels fall upon each other during unloading	
Heavy hitting	
Animals dragged and pulled by their tails and ears	
Animals pulled by the nasal septum	
Minimum one bull poked into his genitals	
Operators screaming and shouting during unloading	
Operators walking over seated, shackled camels on board the truck	



<sup>22</sup> Ramp or crane



**EXAMPLE 2:**

Loading of camels at Birqash camel market; animals destined for slaughter or fattening, 9 February 2018



Number of animals:	3
Means of transport:	small pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material used:	NO
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
No stationary ramp is used for loading	
Animals grabbed by their noses and lips	
Animals pulled by their tails	
Animals pushed hard against the vehicle	
Throughout loading the animals scream continuously	
Operators screaming and shouting during loading	



**EXAMPLE 3:**

Loading of camels on middle-size pick-up truck at Birqash camel market; animals destined for slaughter, 9 February 2018



Number of animals:	8
Means of transport:	middle-size pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material used:	NO
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
A stationary ramp is used to load the animals, the entrance to the vehicle is not smooth; there is an elevation where the animals have to go across	
The animals are hit heavily and constantly, including in sensitive parts of their bodies such as joints	
Animals partly hobbled and shackled during loading	
One animal falls and gets trapped between the ramp and the vehicle and suffers a slight injury.	
Animals pulled by their tails	
Throughout loading the animals scream continuously	
Operators screaming and shouting during loading	





**EXAMPLE 4:**

Unloading of transport of camels from Birgash camel market to Bilbeis; animals destined for slaughter, 9 February 2018



Number of animals:	9
Means of transport:	middle-size pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material used:	NO
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
Exceeded loading density: the animals are squeezed together and partly sit on top of each other	
No stationary ramp is used for unloading	
Unloading from the long side of the platform: the animals must jump from the vehicle over a height of approx. 1,20 m	
Animals partly shackled during unloading	
Rough handling: the animals are hit heavily on face, neck, breast and back	
One camel is grabbed by one leg to throw her from the vehicle	
One camel is pushed backwards from the truck and falls badly banging his head twice on the platform	
Several camels undernourished	
Operators screaming and shouting during loading	



**EXAMPLE 5:**

Loading and unloading of camel transport from Birqash camel market to Markaz Imbaba, Mansheat El Qanater; animals destined for fattening, 10 February 2018

**Loading**



**Unloading**





Number of animals:	12
Means of transport:	middle-size pick-up truck
Loading area:	8,96 m <sup>2</sup> (4,35 m x 2,06 m)
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material used:	NO
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
A stationary ramp is used for loading, but the camels have to take a big step down (approx. 50 cm) on the truck's platform	
Cruel loading procedure: hitting and beating of the camels, also in sensitive parts like face, neck and joints; grabbing the camels' nose; operators dragging and throwing the camels on the platform of the truck	
Exceeded loading density (0,74 m <sup>2</sup> per animal)	
Fast driving on bumpy, sandy road with camels on board	
For unloading, no stationary ramp is used	
Unloading from one long side of the truck. The camels have to jump from a height of approx. 90 cm	
Camels partly shackled at one or two legs during unloading	
In total, five camels fall from the truck during unloading	
Partly, the camels are hit heavily to make them stand up during unloading	
Operators screaming and shouting during loading and unloading	
Throughout loading the camels scream continuously	



**EXAMPLE 6:**

Loading of camels on middle-size pick-up truck at Birqash camel market; animals destined for slaughter, 5 July 2018



Number of animals:	minimum 7 (tall adult animals)
Means of transport:	medium-size pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material used:	NO
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
No stationary ramp is used for loading	
The animals have to step (min.) 70-80 cm up on the loading deck	
The animals appear very fearful, nervous and anxious, and refuse loading	
Animals pushed and crushed against the vehicle and pulled violently onto the loading deck	
Animals poked and hit into sensitive body parts	
Animals grabbed by their noses and lips	
One camel is bleeding from mouth and nose	
Exceeded loading density: four camels are squeezed in the first row, min. three more camels closely behind them	
During loading the left foreleg of the camel bull Tarek gets stuck at another camel	
Even with several attempts by Animals' Angels to convince the operators to use the stationary loading ramp, they do not want to and continue loading without any ramp	





### C. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN PROBLEMS OBSERVED DURING FIELD INVESTIGATIONS INTO ROAD TRANSPORT OF CAMELS IN EGYPT

- Extremely brutal handling including hitting, kicking, grabbing animals in sensitive parts of their bodies. Grabbing and pulling camels by the nasal septum, poking into genitals
- Handling resulting in bruising and bleeding injuries
- Handling causing dangerous situations for humans and animals
- Exhausted, emaciated, bleeding, injured, sick and dead animals
- Animals with contagious skin disorders and diseases
- Parasite infestations of camels
- No first aid treatment and no veterinary supervision
- No operator skill and training
- Severely overloaded transports
- No use of bedding material inside the vehicles
- Inadequate tight shackling (shackles made of rough, hard and/or incising materials)
- Animals remain shackled/hobbled during loading and unloading
- Shackling for many hours, including exceeding 30 hours and more
- Vehicles without loading/unloading devices
- Vehicles without top cover
- No use of stationary ramps
- Very long transports of several days

## Oman

### A. GENERAL INFORMATION

As other Gulf Countries, Oman accords special status to camels and they are linked to Omani citizens since ancient times. In Oman, camel race is a local sport eagerly followed by the public. Besides being used for sport and leisure, camels serve for meat and milk production.<sup>23</sup> In 2013, 242.832 camels existed in Oman, with 85% living in the region of Dhofar.<sup>24</sup> Oman imports and exports camels, e.g. there is an active trade with the UAE. Furthermore, it is estimated that Oman imports two and a half million camels per year from Sudan. Apparently, the majority of these animals are further exported to other Gulf Countries.<sup>25</sup>

In June 2017, Oman adopted a new animal welfare law (رقم 21/2017 بإصدار قانون الرفق بالحيوان) مرسوم سلطاني Sultani Decree No. 21/2017 Promulgating the Animal Welfare Law) which includes provisions on animal transport as well as the corresponding enforcement tools.

### B. EMPIRIC EXAMPLES

In September 2017, Animals' Angels observed camel transports in Oman in relation to sport events, slaughter, further fattening and other farming purposes. In May 2018, Animals' Angels witnessed

further transports of camels for racing and slaughter coming from Oman and crossing the border to the UAE.

Camels are usually transported seated in sternal position in small and medium-sized pick-up trucks which are multi-use vehicles not designed for animal transports. Despite the very high temperatures in the country and the intense sun, these vehicles used for animal transport are not fitted with top covers to protect the animals from the direct sun. Animal transports are carried out at all times of the day, including during the hours of most intense heat. The vehicles are usually not equipped with loading ramps or other devices to load the animals such as cranes. Often, camels suffer from diarrhoea during transport. Differences could be observed in the handling of 'race' camels and camels destined for meat production. In case of loading of 'race' camels, operator skill and calm, reasonable attitude towards the animals was observed and the vehicles were fitted with thick and soft mats, shackles were made of soft material and for example sand mounds were used as ramps to load and unload the animals. In the loading and unloading of camels destined for slaughter, probably including untrained camels, much rougher and partly brutal and ruthless handling was observed, as well as lack of operator skill and training. The means of transport often were not fitted with any bedding material, no ramps were used, and the shackles were of hard or incising material.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.maf.gov.om/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?lang=AR&Cat=0&Id=0&DId=10005&CId=0&CMSId=800241&id=2407303>

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.maf.gov.om/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?lang=AR&Cat=0&Id=0&DId=10005&CId=0&CMSId=800241&id=2407303>

<sup>25</sup> <http://2015.omandaily.om/?p=121856>

EXAMPLE 1:

Camel unloaded from pick-up vehicle at Sinaw market, 14 September 2017



Number of animals:	1
Means of transport:	small pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material used:	NO
Camel transported seated and shackled:	YES
No stationary ramp is used for unloading	
The camel is shackled by its hind and front legs during unloading	
For unloading, the operators just throw the animal head first from the vehicle (over a height of approx. 80 cm)	





**EXAMPLE 2:**

Loading of three camels destined for slaughter at Sinaw market, 14 September 2017



Number of animals:	3
Means of transport:	small pick-up car
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material used:	NO
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
No stationary ramp is used for loading	
Rough handling	
Camels forced, pushed and thrown on the ground in order to shackle them at their front and hind legs	
Shackled camels are dragged onto the pick-up car, also by heavily pulling their tails	
Inadequate shackling: shackles made of hard, incising cord rope and tied too tight around the camels' neck and legs	
Exceeded loading density: the animals are squeezed together	
During loading, all camels are screaming constantly	





EXAMPLE 3:

Camels loaded after race event onto a medium-size open pick-up truck, Ibra, 15 September 2017



Number of animals:	4
Means of transport:	pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material used:	thick and soft foam mats and carpets
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
A sand mound is used as loading ramp	
Calm handling and no shouting of the operators while the camels are led onto the truck	
The camels wear halters and blankets and at least one camel is muzzled	





**EXAMPLE 4:**

Transport of three racing camels from Sinaw, Oman to Sweihan, UAE and back (270 km one way<sup>26</sup>), 11 and 12 May 2018



Number of animals:	3
Means of transport:	small pick-up van with Omani license plates
Vehicle fitted with loading facilities:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material:	thick foam mats and carpets
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
Their back legs are tied with broad pieces of cloth, additionally they are tied to the vehicle by the halters	
The camels wear blankets (their fleece is shaved) and halters are muzzled	
Exceeded loading density: There is no space between the animals, neither in front nor behind them, they sit body next to body without any further space	
For unloading, the transport backs up to a sand hill used as loading ramp. The drivers untie the camels, and one after the other stands up and walks backwards from the vehicle	
All operations are carried out calmly	
The camels participate in a UAE race event and are transported back to Sinaw the following day	



<sup>26</sup> See google maps

**EXAMPLE 5:**

Transport of two unweaned camel-calves (Jason and Filco) from Salala, Oman to Al Ain, UAE over a distance of 1.086 km.<sup>27</sup> The young animals are destined for slaughter, 12 May 2018



Number of animals:	2
Means of transport:	small pick-up van with Omani license plates
Vehicle fitted with loading facilities:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material:	carpet
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
Material used for shackling: plastic sack cut in stripes, rope, and piece of cloth	
The young camels are screaming loudly throughout the time of observation	
For unloading the animals are pushed softly from the vehicle after releasing the shackles, no ramp is used. The animals fall to the ground from a height of approx. 80 cm. The operators try to hinder that they fall roughly	
Animals are pulled and lifted by their tails	
The animals have difficulties walking; they walk very wobbly and insecurely	
The tissue around their knees appears swollen, there are abrasions on their carpal joints	
According to the information received, the animals were unloaded every 12 hours	



<sup>27</sup> See google maps

## C. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN PROBLEMS OBSERVED DURING FIELD INVESTIGATIONS INTO ROAD TRANSPORT OF CAMELS IN OMAN

- Lack of operator skill and training, especially in case of transport of animals destined for slaughter and further fattening
- Brutal handling during loading and unloading of camels destined for slaughter or fattening, including e.g. hitting, lifting by tails, ears, noses, dragging across the floor and throwing off the vehicle
- Often no use of bedding material inside the transports
- Inadequate shackling (shackles made of rough, hard and/or incising materials)
- Shackling and/or hobbling during loading and unloading
- Vehicles not designed for animal transport
- Vehicles without loading/unloading devices
- Vehicles without top cover
- Animal transports carried out during the hottest hours of the day
- Partly very long transports of several days
- Transport of unweaned animals without supply of adequate nutrition during prolonged period of time

## Qatar

### A. GENERAL INFORMATION

Qatar has a camel population of around 84.216 animals.<sup>28</sup> Until the beginning of the Gulf crisis in June 2017, Qatar imported camels by road from and via Saudi Arabia, and camels travelled for example for sport events from Qatar to other countries in the Gulf Region. Since June 2017, the overland routes to Qatar are closed, therefore it is likely that camels are transported by vessel, but no current data is available.

Within the small country of 11.571 km<sup>2</sup>, camels are transported over short distances mainly in connection with domestic trade, slaughter and sport events.

Qatar did not yet adopt a national animal welfare law. Apart from the OIE standards, there is no legal framework to protect animals during transport and related operations.

### B. EMPIRIC EXAMPLES OBSERVED IN QATAR

In 2017, Animals' Angels monitored camel transports in Qatar, including transports for slaughter, for other farming and trade purposes and in connection with race events.

Camels are usually transported in small and medium sized pick-up trucks which are multi-use vehicles not designed for animal transport. Despite the very high temperatures in the country and the intense heat, these vehicles are not fitted with top cov-

ers to protect the animals from the sun. Animal transports are carried out at all times of the day, including during the hours of most intense heat. The vehicles are usually not equipped with loading ramps. However, many vehicles are fitted with cranes to load and unload the animals, others have no loading devices at all. In many cases, the loading surfaces are covered with thin carpets used as bedding material. The camels are transported seated in sternal position, usually with their front and back legs shackled. The shackles are made of different materials ranging from wide and soft ribbons to thin and incising metal wire. Additionally, many camels are tied by halters. The camels loaded by crane wear belts around their bodies by which they are lifted. Before loading by crane, the animals must sit down to affix the shackles and the body belt. Except in the case of well-trained camels, these procedures usually are difficult and accompanied by violence, stress, fear and pain for the animals. The situation worsens where no loading facilities are used. The camels are excited during these procedures and scream continuously. Often during loading by crane, the operators don't exercise sufficient care and the animals hit against fences, the vehicle or other obstacles. Sometimes, the crane devices are not sufficiently secured and hit against the animals' heads during driving. Many camels suffer from diarrhoea during transport. Especially in transports of camels destined for slaughter, lack of operator skill and training is observed.

Transports in Qatar usually do not exceed two hours, however, long waiting times at slaughterhouses due to lack of coordination were observed.

<sup>28</sup> FAOSTAT



**EXAMPLE 1:**

Loading and unloading of the two young camels Yasha and Neven, short distance transport to the slaughterhouse, Doha, 8 October 2017



Number of animals:	2
Means of transport:	small pick-up van
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material:	NO
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
Material used for shackling:	thin metal wire
Camels pushed onto the loading deck by pulling and twisting their tails and by ropes around their neck and belly	
The fore leg of camel Yasha gets twisted during loading. The operator pushes and drags the leg into bent position, also by using his foot	
Yasha is grabbed by his mouth and nostrils during loading.	
Both camels scream during loading	
For unloading at the slaughterhouse, the animals are thrown from the vehicle (height of approx. 1 meter) with their legs shackled, as if they were packages	
They fall onto the concrete floor and are dragged further across the floor into the slaughter-room	





**EXAMPLE 2:**

Unloading of five 'race' camels from medium sized pick-up truck, As Shahanyia,  
6 October 2017



Number of animals:	5
Means of transport:	medium-size pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading facilities:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material:	thin carpet (also as side protection inside the vehicle)
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
shackled by both fore and hind legs in bent position	
Material used for shackling:	pieces of cloth
The camels are muzzled and wear halters	
Stationary loading ramp used for unloading	
Several men release the shackles and the animals stand up and walk calmly from the vehicle	
Only one younger camel doesn't want to walk off alone, so the men untie two other camels, and together they walk off the truck	
No screaming of the operators nor the camels	

**EXAMPLE 3:**

Unloading of five camels from medium-sized open pick-up vehicle via crane at farm compound near Al Saliya, 7 October 2017



Number of animals:	5
Means of transport:	medium-sized pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	crane
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material:	thin and dirty carpets
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
Shackled by both fore and hind legs in bent position	
Material used for shackling:	thin rope and hard cords
Unloading by crane	
One camel has a rope of another camel around her head, while being unloaded. A man has to untether her. When lifting her to the ground, she falls onto her right side, and struggles to get back in upward position due to being shackled	
Another camel is kicking with her front legs and screaming during unloading	
Some camels suffer from diarrhoea	





**EXAMPLE 4:**

Loading of two camels on small pick-up truck via crane at Abu Hamour market, Doha, 8 October 2017



Number of animals:	2
Means of transport:	small pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	crane
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material:	partly thin, dirty carpet
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
Material used for shackling:	cord rope

The mother camel is already tied and shackled. She is calmly lifted by the crane onto the platform of the truck

The young camel tries to run away from the operators. By chasing her with a rope and pulling her tail, the operators catch the young camel. They force her to lie down by grabbing one hind leg and pulling her tail. During the shackling the young camel screams

During loading by crane, the two front legs of the young camel slip off the body belt. Thus, one leg gets trapped outside the truck's railing

**EXAMPLE 5:**

Loading of camels on medium-sized pick-up truck via crane at Abu Hamour market, Doha, 12 October 2017



Number of animals:	10
Means of transport:	medium-sized pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	crane
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material:	dirty bedding, covered with manure
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
Material used for shackling:	incising metal wire
Two camels are loaded at the same time leading to an increased risk of injury for the animals	
Due to the significantly increased weight carried by the crane: increased safety risk	
Exceeding loading density	
At least one camel suffers from diarrhoea	
During the loading operation, the camels protest and shout continuously	





### C. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN PROBLEMS OBSERVED DURING FIELD INVESTIGATIONS INTO ROAD TRANSPORT OF CAMELS IN QATAR

- Lack of operator skill and training, especially in case of transport of animals destined for slaughter and further fattening
- Often no bedding material used, or insufficient (thin, dirty carpets)
- Vehicles not designed for animal transport
- Animals loaded or unloaded without using loading devices (no ramp/no crane)
- Unskilled, rough and brutal handling, including e.g. hitting, tail twisting, grabbing by ears, noses and tails.
- Transport of sick and injured animals
- No veterinary supervision
- Lack of operator training
- Unnecessary long waiting times at the slaughterhouse/lack of coordination
- Shackling with inadequate materials (incising into the skin of the camels' legs)
- Transports carried out during hottest hours of the day
- Risk of injury during transport, loading and unloading

## United Arab Emirates

### A. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

In 2014, the camel population in the UAE amounted to 392,660 animals<sup>29</sup> which constitute around 9% of the total number of 'farm' animals<sup>30</sup> in the country.

As in other Gulf Countries, camels are kept for sentimental value, for racing, beauty shows, and there are camels to whom significant economic value is attributed. A large number of camels participate in competitions and other events in neighboring countries. In 2015, 82,643 camels were transported outside the country for this purpose and 83,446 camels entered the country for the same reason.<sup>31</sup>

Camels are also used for milk and meat production.

The UAE Federal Law N16 of 2007 on animal welfare ( بشأن رعاية الحيوان المتحددة رقم 16 لعام 2007 القانون الاتحادي لدولة الإمارات ) includes provisions for animal transport. Furthermore, different Emirates and

municipalities developed and are developing further provisions and guidelines aiming to protect camels during transport.

### B. EMPIRIC EXAMPLES

In May 2018, Animals' Angels carried out an intensive investigation into camel transports in the Emirates Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

<sup>29</sup> The United Arab Emirates (UAE), Country Presentation, Ministry of Environment & Climate Change (MOECC), GFTADS Sub-regional Conference on Camel Diseases, 14<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

<sup>30</sup> Poultry not taken into consideration

<sup>31</sup> The United Arab Emirates (UAE), Country Presentation, Ministry of Environment & Climate Change (MOECC), GFTADS Sub-regional Conference on Camel Diseases, 14<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

# EXAMPLE 1:

Loading of transport of camels destined for slaughter from Lisaili (Dubai) to Al Ain (Abu Dhabi), 8 May 2018



Number of animals:	4
Means of transport:	medium sized multi-purpose truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material: the floor of the truck is padded with a carpet as well as the side walls	
Camels transported seated and shackled: both front legs and back shackled, forcing the animals to remain in sitting position	YES
A dirt hill is used as loading ramp	
The animals suffer from diarrhea	
The animals are beaten heavily and constantly during the loading operation	





**EXAMPLE 2:**

Loading of four young camels destined for slaughter at Al Ain market (Abu Dhabi),  
10 May 2018



Number of animals:	4
Means of transport:	medium sized multi-purpose truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material:	the floor of the truck is padded with a carpet as well as the side walls
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
No ramp is used to load the animals	

To load the camels, they put them a halter on or a rope around their necks. They push one after the other close to the truck. Once they are in front of the vehicle two men lift the animals up from the platform, while another man pushes them from the ground

The camels are screaming continuously and trying to escape

The handling is very rough

Once the animals are on the vehicle-platform, one man stands on the camel's neck/head while another shackles the back legs very tight. Once the hind legs are tied, the camels are dragged violently through the truck by their tails or ropes around their necks

Additionally, the animals are hit and kicked



### EXAMPLE 3:

Loading of a young camel destined for slaughter at Al Ain market (Abu Dhabi), 10 May 2018

Number of animals:	1
Means of transport:	small pick-up
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material:	dirty and sandy carpet
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
Material used for shackling:	plastic belt and a hard rope
No ramp is used to load the camel	
Brutal and inadequate handling	
Two men push the camel towards the back of the vehicle. Another two men stand on the pick-up platform pushing and dragging the animal onto it. He lands in a lateral position and the men turn and push him into the desired sitting position; his back legs are tied with a belt and his front legs with a thick but hard rope. Two hay strings fixed above him to prevent him from standing up	
The camel is screaming during the loading	





**EXAMPLE 4:**

Unloading of the camels Lilu, Colo and Kaluna at Al Ain market (Abu Dhabi), camels destined for slaughter, 10 May 2018



Number of animals:	3
Means of transport:	middle-size pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	NO
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material:	Carpets
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES

Unloading at a stationary ramp

Injured/sick (including skin disorders), weak and emaciated camels

The male camel Colo is unable to get up and walk on his own. The operators beat and pull him, but he remains sitting. With a crane and two belts put under his belly, they pull him up to make him stand

The camel Lilu is pulled out of the truck sitting down. Lilu gets pushed, pulled and kicked. The operators have to lift her on her legs to make her stand

The camel Kaluna is violently pulled out of the truck in sitting position by her tail while a lot of men keep rocking her from side to side. Kaluna has a twisted neck. An operator grabs her head and pulls heavily until the neck straightens out again

Rough and ruthless handling: camels are repeatedly beaten, pulled and kicked

The camels scream during unloading

Lilu is dragged off the truck sitting down and does not get up. She remains sitting next to Colo (see pic) and is then lifted up by some men and remains standing

Colo: after he has been unable to get up, he is dragged on his feet by crane

Kaluna is dragged off the truck by her tail sitting down. Her neck is twisted



# EXAMPLE 5:

Loading of camels on middle-size pick-up truck at Al Ain market (Abu Dhabi), camels destined for slaughter, 10 May 2018



Number of animals:	at least 6
Means of transport:	middle-size pick-up truck
Vehicle fitted with loading devices:	crane
Vehicle fitted with top cover:	NO
Bedding material:	carpet
Camels transported seated and shackled:	YES
Example of loading operation: Camel sits on the floor with her front legs tied individually with hay strings and additionally hobbled with a rope	
The back legs are tied with a blue ribbon	
The camel is wearing a halter	
One man is fixing a belt under the camels' hind legs. Then the crane lifts the camel a little bit and the men fix another belt under the camel's belly. The crane then starts lifting the whole camel into the truck	
There are already at least 5 other camels on the truck. The men struggle to find a place for the camel and she hangs in the belts over the truck for quite a while	
The camel is shouting throughout the loading	





### C. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN PROBLEMS OBSERVED DURING FIELD INVESTIGATIONS INTO ROAD TRANSPORT OF CAMELS IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

- Lack of operator skill and training, especially in case of transport of animals destined for slaughter and further fattening
- Often insufficient bedding material used
- Inadequate shackling (shackles made of rough and hard or incising materials)
- Animals loaded or unloaded without loading devices (no ramp/no crane)
- Partly brutal and rough handling, including e.g. hitting, kicking, grabbing by tails, ears, noses
- Excessive use of electric prodders during unloading at slaughterhouse at Al Ain
- Transport of sick and injured animals
- Risk of injury during transport and loading
- Vehicles without loading/unloading devices
- Vehicles without top cover
- Vehicles not designed for animal transport
- Animal transports carried out during the hottest hours of the day

## VI. Conclusions

**The OIE animal welfare standards are not complied with in camel transports in the Middle East. Unnecessary additional suffering and distress are regularly caused to camels during transport.**

This is for the following reasons:

1. The vehicles used for camel transport are not appropriate and not designed for the transport of large animals. The vehicles usually are not fitted with loading devices. They do not allow transporting the animals unrestrained as they have not sufficient side protection and dividers. In most cases, the vehicles do not offer any protection from sun or other weather influences such as sandstorms.
2. The animals are always transported in restrained sitting position without the possibility to move or change their position, even during very long journeys.
3. Shackles and hobbles are often made of hard and incising material.
4. Too often animals are transported without using any bedding material.
5. Animals are transported during the hottest hours of the day with temperatures exceeding 40 °C.
6. Poor and brutal handling is common practice.
7. In general, operators and animal handlers are untrained and unskilled.
8. Commonly, the transport of camels is not linked to any conditions (e.g. official permissions, certificates of competence, vehicle authorization).

9. Animal transport is not sufficiently regulated by law.
10. There are nearly no official controls on animal welfare during transport.

Despite the important role these animals play in the Middle East, no efforts are undertaken to properly transport camels. During transport, the welfare of camels is ignored: multi-use vehicles are used that only allow transport of camels in restrained sitting position. Unskilled low-wage workers with often no experience are employed to handle and transport the camels which results in violence towards the animals and means fear, distress, pain and all too often injury. From an ethical point of view, ignoring the basic needs of sentient beings is unacceptable.

At the same time, neglecting animal welfare means risking animal health and by implication public health and food safety. Scientific research has demonstrated a critical association between animal health and animal welfare. Animal health and agriculture authorities around the world acknowledge this link.<sup>32</sup> As transport is extremely stressful for the animals and poor transportation can have serious detrimental

<sup>32</sup> American Veterinary Medical Association, Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, European Food Safety Authority, International Organization for Standardization, United States Animal Health Association, OIE, World Veterinary Association, Canadian National Farm Animal Care Council, FAO, IF-OAM\_Organics International, US Department of Agriculture, Agricultural research service (The Critical Relationship Between Farm Animal Health and Welfare, Animal Welfare Institute, April 2018)

effects on the welfare of animals (see point IV), also their health and physical integrity can be easily affected during transport. The stress that animals experience during transport may have negative effects on their immune system. Disease can result from different factors in relation to transport, including tissue damage, tissue malfunction, increased susceptibility to infection and disease, increasing infectivity. Both increased susceptibility to infection and disease, and increased infectivity are a consequence of the effects of the stress response on the immune system.<sup>33</sup>

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) explains how animal welfare impacts not only animal health but also food safety: The safety of the food chain is indirectly affected by the welfare of animals, particularly those farmed for food production, due to the close link between animal welfare, animal health and food-borne diseases. This can pose risks to consumers, for example through common food-borne infections like *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter* and *E. Coli*.<sup>34</sup>

Furthermore, transport stress can cause poor carcass quality when the animals are transported for too long or under inappropriate conditions.<sup>35</sup> International scientists point out that mishandling practices can have a considerable impact on the acceptability of the camel meat. Pre-slaughter handling of camels has a significant effect on meat quality. For instance, rough handling of camels before slaughter results in abnormal appearance in the hump. This condition results from the increased flow of blood into the peripheral capillaries and inadequate drainage after slaughter. They also come to the result that salmonellae in animals increase with animal stress, and state that all aspects of handling camels should be carried out by experienced personnel aware of domestic and international legislation on animal welfare.<sup>36</sup>

Other scientists detail that during transportation, high ambient temperatures, truck vibration, movement and acceleration, confinement, noise and crowding expose animals to stress which compromises their physiological and biochemical processes, meat quality and quantity, resulting in economic losses. Prior to slaughter, animals experience excessive stress owing to a sudden change of environment which increases the secretion of enzymes (creatine kinase, creatine phosphokinase, transaminases and lactate dehydrogenase) and hormones (catecholamines and cortisol), consequently reducing the quality of meat and its products. In such instances, animal welfare is compromised, resulting in reduced meat quality and downgraded carcasses.<sup>37</sup>

**In the light of the above examples and considerations, it is clear that the practices of camel transport in the Middle East have to be revised urgently and adapted to ethical standards and scientific findings. Furthermore, all Middle East Countries should undertake best efforts to comply with OIE standards.**

## V. Recommendations



### 1. LEGISLATION

Since the welfare and the physical integrity of the animals are easily badly affected during transport, it is essential to lay down rules protecting the animals in the best way possible.

In order to comply with OIE standards all Middle East countries should adopt without further delay appropriate legislation to protect animals during transport.

### 2. GUIDELINES

Legislation may be accompanied or complemented by guidelines and recommendations for best practices on camel transport.

### 3. MINIMUM STANDARDS

In the light of the above and taking into consideration scientific expertise as well as the animal welfare standards of the OIE, the following minimum standards on camel transport should be complied with:

33 Manteca, X., *Physiology and Disease*. In: Appleby et al. (eds.) *Long Distance Transport and Welfare of Farm Animals*. CABI 2008

34 European Food Safety Authority, *Animal Welfare*. <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/topics/topic/animalwelfare>

35 Hartung, J., Nowak, B. and Clauß, A., *Animal welfare and meat quality. Improving the Sensory and Nutritional Quality of Fresh Meat*. 2009; [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285018621\\_Animal\\_welfare\\_and\\_meat\\_quality](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285018621_Animal_welfare_and_meat_quality) [accessed Jul 16 2018].

36 Kadim, I.T., Farouk, M., Mahgoub, O. and Bekhit, A., *Slaughtering and Processing of Camels*. In: Kadim, I.T. et al., *Camel Meat and Meat Products*, CABI 2013

37 Chulayo, A.Y. and Muchenje, V., *A balanced perspective for improved meat and meat products*, *South African Journal of Animal Science* 45 (5), 2015.



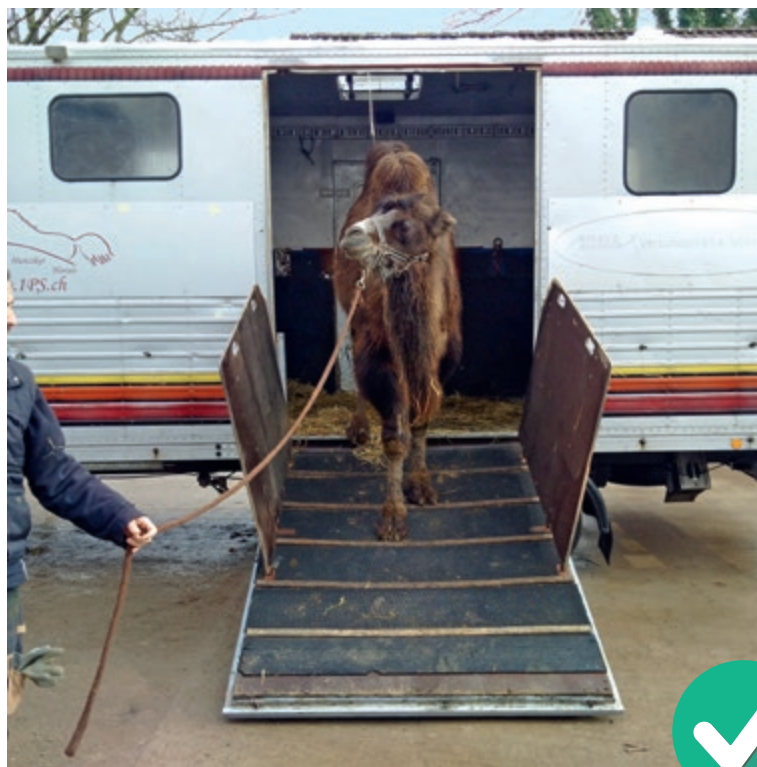
## A. UNRESTRAINED TRANSPORT IN APPROPRIATE ANIMAL TRANSPORT VEHICLES

Experts on camel transports<sup>38</sup> clearly recommend the unrestrained transport of camels in adequate vehicles being appropriately equipped for transporting live animals. Hereby, special attention should be given to equipment and means of transport:

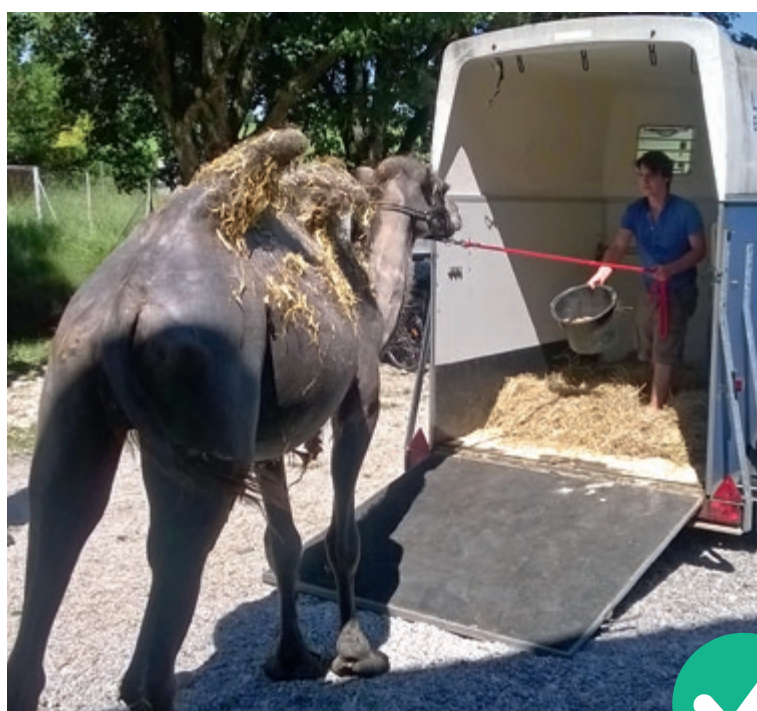
- Type of transport vehicle: open vehicles without top cover are not suitable for the transport of camels.
- Appropriate height and size of the transport vehicle must be considered. Minimum height of 2,3 m of the transport vehicle to ensure sufficient headroom for the camels.
- Camels should be transported in single boxes, separated by dividers to ensure the animals' safety during transport.
- Anti-slip floor and sufficient bedding are essential for a safe and comfortable transport for the animals.
- Adequate ventilation inside the transport vehicle is important, especially during high temperatures.
- Loading ramps with lateral protection must be used to avoid that animals get stuck with their legs or slip off the loading ramp.

For loading and unloading operations, experts recommend:

- Calm handling: the animals should never be hit or beaten. The camels will remember the bad experience for future loading and unloading procedures.
- Operators are not allowed to push and drag the camels onto the vehicle by their legs, backs or any other body parts. This can lead to dangerous situations for both, camel and human, and increase the risk of injury.
- Camels should be loaded calmly and with sufficient time given. They should be positively encouraged during loading procedures.
- Experienced camels should be loaded first, thus leading younger, unexperienced camels.
- Before transport, the animals should get used to the vehicle as well as loading and unloading should be trained with the camels beforehand.



*Camel is calmly led out of the vehicle, via smooth non-slip ramp; no violence, no fear, no pain involved.*



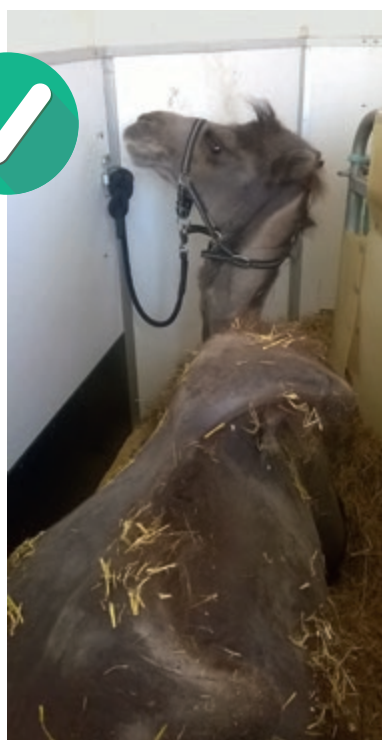
*Camel is calmly and patiently loaded onto horse trailer; via smooth non-slip ramp.*

(all pictures on page 37 and 38 kindly provided by Kamel Kompetenzzentrum Schweiz)

<sup>38</sup> E.g. Kamel Kompetenzzentrum Schweiz <http://kamel-kompetenzzentrum.ch>, Statement from July 2018



*Camel transported in horse trailer; sufficient bedding material used.*



*The animal lies down voluntarily and is unloaded calmly. No pain, no suffering, no additional stress caused to the animal.*



Experts with longstanding experience in transporting camels state that it is not necessary and even dangerous to transport camels in forced, restrained sternal position. They consider the loading of camels by crane and a forced, restrained transport as cruel practice causing unnecessary stress and increasing the risk of injury and even death for the animals.

### **B. RESTRAINED TRANSPORT IN MULTI-USE VEHICLES**

Taking into account that the factual circumstances in most countries will not change from one day to the other, for restrained transport, the following minimum standards must be complied with:

**RESTRAINING:** Hobbles and shackles must be made of soft materials and may not be incising. Animals may not be shackled or hobbled for more than four hours.

**BEDDING MATERIAL:** The loading platforms of the vehicles must be fitted with adequate bedding material able to avoid bruising and abrasions, to absorb excrements and to guarantee a minimum comfort for the animals.

**SAFETY:** No objects such as brooms, brushes, buckets, spare tires, etc. may be transported inside the animals' compartments.

### **C. LOADING AND UNLOADING FACILITIES**

**RAMPS:** Vehicles must be fitted with flat ramps (10-20 degrees) made of resistant and non-slip material. Where the vehicle is not fitted with a ramp, the animals must be loaded or unloaded using stationary or mobile ramps of adequate height.

**SAFETY:** There may not be any gaps between the ramp and the vehicle. Side protections should always be used.

**CRANES:** Cranes can be used to load and unload camels. The animals must be tied safely using broad belts around the animals' bodies. The animals must be loaded/unloaded smoothly one by one.

**SAFETY:** High operator skill and attentiveness is required to ensure that the animals do not hit other animals, the ground, the vehicle platform, the side walls or other objects.



## D. PROTECTION FROM THE WEATHER ELEMENTS

**HEAT BAN:** Especially, during the hot summer months, animal transport should be carried out only by night.

**WEATHER PROTECTION:** All animal transports should be equipped with a top cover and side walls to protect the animals from weather conditions such as sun or sandstorms.

## E. PROHIBITED PRACTICES

When handling animals the following practices are prohibited:

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Tail twisting
- Poking animals into sensitive parts of their bodies, such as genitals, eyes, joints
- Grabbing or lifting animals by their tails, ears, noses, limbs
- Use of nose rings
- Grabbing into nasal septum
- Use of electric prods
- Throwing animals



## F. WATER AND FOOD SUPPLY

During transport it must be guaranteed that the camels are provided with sufficient and adequate food, at least twice per day.

Clean and fresh water should be given ad libitum and at least twice per day.

## G. SPACE ALLOWANCE

There must be enough space for all camels to lie down on their sternums.<sup>39</sup>

The number of animals which should be transported on a vehicle and their allocation to compartments should be determined before loading. All animals should all be able to adopt a normal lying posture, without touching each other to allow necessary thermoregulation. Further factors which may influence space allowance include:

- vehicle design;
- length of journey;
- need to provide feed and water on the vehicle;
- quality of roads;
- expected weather conditions;
- age, condition and sex of the animals.<sup>40</sup>

## H. TRANSPORT TIME

The amount of time animals spend on a journey should be kept to the minimum<sup>41</sup> and may not exceed eight hours.

When animals are restrained during transport, the shackles must be removed after four hours of transport and the animals must be given the possibility to stand up and move.<sup>42</sup>

## I. TRAINING OF OPERATORS INVOLVED IN ALL STAGES OF CAMEL TRANSPORT

All people responsible for animals during journeys should be competent to handle and care for camels. Competence may be gained through formal training and/or practical experience. Animal handlers must have knowledge in:

- planning a journey, including appropriate space allowance, feed and water requirements;
- responsibilities for the welfare of animals during the journey, including loading and unloading;
- sources of advice and assistance;
- animal behaviour, general signs of disease, and indicators of poor animal welfare such as stress, pain and fatigue, and their alleviation;
- assessment of fitness to travel; if fitness to travel is in doubt, the animal should be examined by a veterinarian;
- general disease prevention procedures, including cleaning and disinfection;
- appropriate methods of animal handling during transport and associated activities such as assembling, loading and unloading;
- methods of inspecting animals, managing situations frequently encountered during transport such as adverse weather conditions, and dealing with emergencies, including euthanasia;
- species-specific aspects and age-specific aspects of animal handling and care, including feeding, watering and inspection.<sup>43</sup>

41 Article 7.3.1. OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code

42 GB3.16 Australian Animal Welfare standards and guidelines – Land transport of livestock

43 Article 7.3.4. OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code

39 SB3.9 Australian Animal Welfare standards and guidelines – Land transport of livestock

40 Article 7.3.5. OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code

## 1. Egypt



Egypt, Birqash, 8 February 2018:  
Camels destined for slaughter **transported in crowded situation over approx. 30 hours. One camel was emergency killed and exsanguinated during transport and not removed from the vehicle.**



Egypt, Birqash, 11 February 2018:  
**Camel bull Omar bleeding from nose and mouth after being badly beaten during loading at Birqash market.**



Egypt, Birqash, 11 February 2018:  
**Extremely brutal loading of a camel. The camel cow is beaten, pushed and thrown by the operator on the pick-up truck and falls heavily onto her neck.**



Egypt, Birqash, 8 February 2018:  
Camels destined for slaughter **transported in crowded situation over approx. 30 hours**



Egypt, Birqash, 11 February 2018:  
**Downer camel is dragged several hundred meters behind a truck over the sand, for loading at the stationary loading ramp. Despite his very poor condition, he is further transported to a slaughter-house.**



## 2. Oman

The positive aspects of the situations illustrated in the pictures are highlighted in green. The examples do not reflect ideal situations.



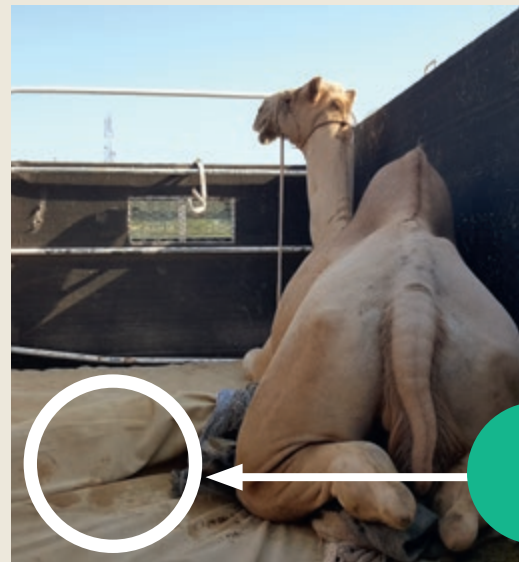
Oman, Sinaw, 14 September 2017:  
Camel transported to Sinaw market.

The animal is sitting on soft under-ground and is shackled with soft material (food sack cut in stripes).



Oman, Sinaw, 14 September 2017:

Camel loaded at Sinaw market onto pick-up car without ramp. The animal is pulled by the tail.



Oman, Adam, 15 September 2017:

Camel transported for sports event, thick foam cushion used as bedding material.



Oman, Sinaw, 14 September 2017:

Camel loaded on small pick-up car without using a loading ramp. The animal is pushed and pulled heavily by the tail.



Oman, Sinaw, 14 September 2017:

Camels destined for slaughter transported on open platform of pick-up vehicle, no bedding material is used incising, thin hay strings used to shackle the animal.

### 3. Qatar



Qatar, As Shahanyia, 7 October 2017:

**Two camels loaded by crane at the same time.  
The operation constitutes a risk of injuries.**



Qatar, Abu Hamour, 12 October 2017:

**Operator grabbing the camels' nose during  
unloading.**



Qatar, Abu Hamour, 8 October 2017:

**Wire used to shackle camels during transport,  
no bedding material used for transportation.**



Qatar, Abu Hamour, 12 October 2017:

**Two camels unloaded by crane at the same time.  
The operation constitutes a risk of injuries. Wire used  
to shackle the animals.**



Qatar, Abu Hamour, 12 October 2017:

**Soft material (food sacks cut in stripes)  
used to shackle the camel during transport**



## 4. United Arab Emirates



UAE, Abu Dhabi, Al Ain market, 11 May 2018:  
**Operator pulling the camel by his tail during unloading while the camel's legs are still shackled.**



UAE, Abu Dhabi, Al Ain market, 11 May 2018:  
**Loading of a young camel without ramp by pushing heavily and pulling its tail.**



UAE, Abu Dhabi, Al Ain market, 11 May 2018:  
**Very tight shackling of the camel's legs with incising, thin hay strings. No bedding material used.**



UAE, Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, 12 May 2018:  
**Calm unloading of 'race' camels by leading them off the truck and by using a stationary loading ramp.**



UAE, Abu Dhabi, Al Ain market, 11 May 2018:  
**Operator hitting the camel Amari into his face during loading operations.**



UAE, Dubai, Al Lisaili, 7 May 2018:  
**Calm unloading of camels by leading them off the truck and by using a loading ramp.**



نشكركم على جهودكم المبذولة



ANIMALS' ANGELS

we are there with the animals