

AUGUST 2024

# Understanding the **LIVESTOCK AIR EXPORT JOURNEY**



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## 01/ LIVESTOCK CRATES

Animals are transported by air in small groups in specially designed livestock crates. These are manufactured to international standards to ensure strength, structural integrity and effective air flow around the animals.

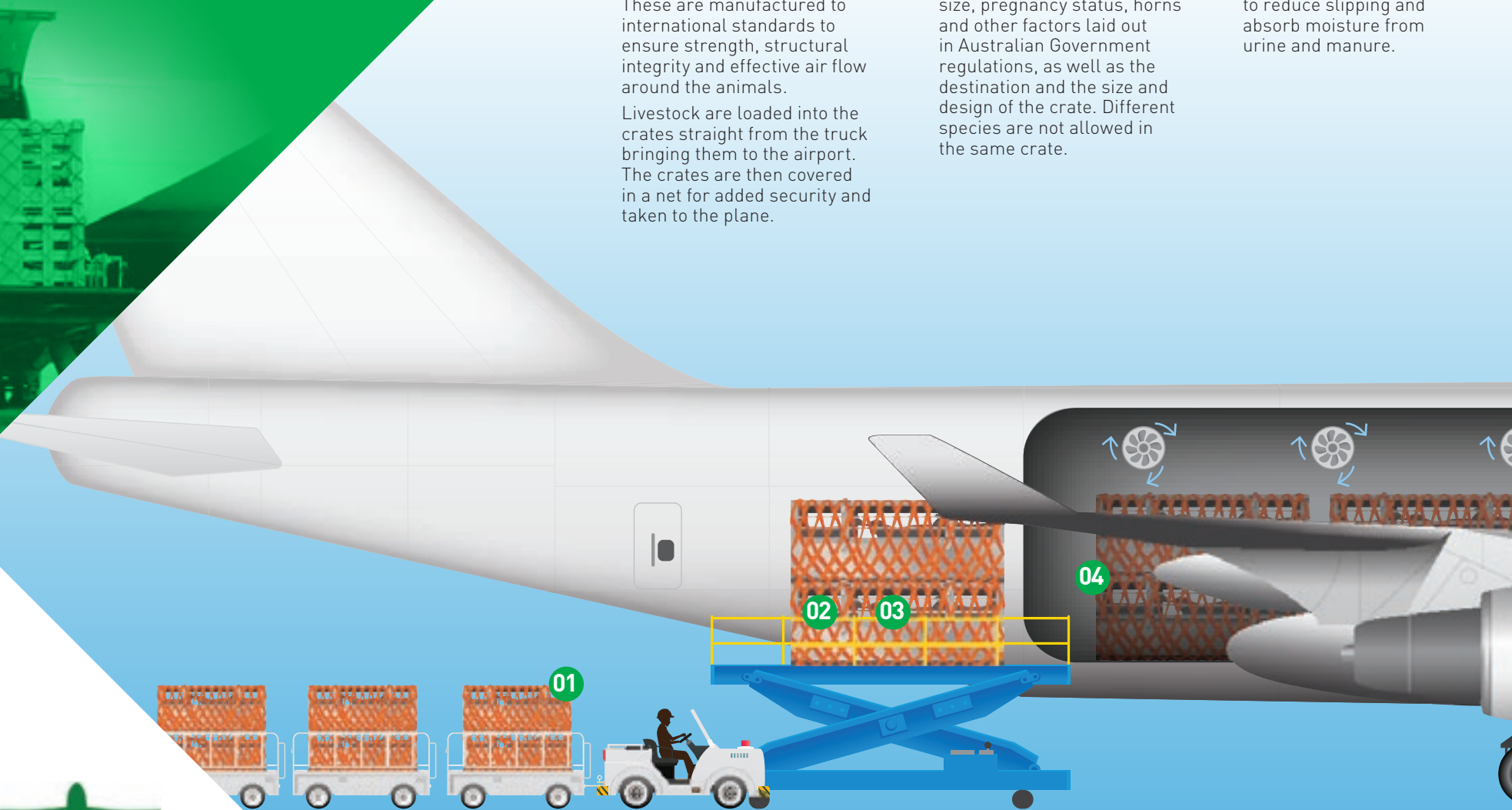
Livestock are loaded into the crates straight from the truck bringing them to the airport. The crates are then covered in a net for added security and taken to the plane.

## 02/ SPACE ALLOCATION

The amount of space given to animals within each crate depends on their species, size, pregnancy status, horns and other factors laid out in Australian Government regulations, as well as the destination and the size and design of the crate. Different species are not allowed in the same crate.

## 03/ FLOORING

An absorbent mat or bedding is placed on the floor of the livestock crate to reduce slipping and absorb moisture from urine and manure.



04/

## LOADING THE PLANE

The placement of individual livestock crates within a plane's hold is determined through a load plan prepared by the licenced exporter and approved by the Australian Government regulator. It must ensure the greatest air flow for the livestock as well as even distribution of weight across the plane.

05/

## VENTILATION AND ALARMS

Ventilation systems circulate fresh air through the hold during loading, the flight and unloading.

The environment control system is constantly monitored, with data automatically logged throughout the flight, and has alarms to alert the crew of any changes.

During loading, unloading and any stop-overs, additional air conditioning units are connected to the plane to maintain air flow and a suitable temperature while the engines are turned off.

06/

## FLIGHT DECK

Stock attendants travel with some shipments of animals. On freight planes, they travel in seats immediately behind the flight deck and can only access the lower cargo hold when the plane is on the ground.

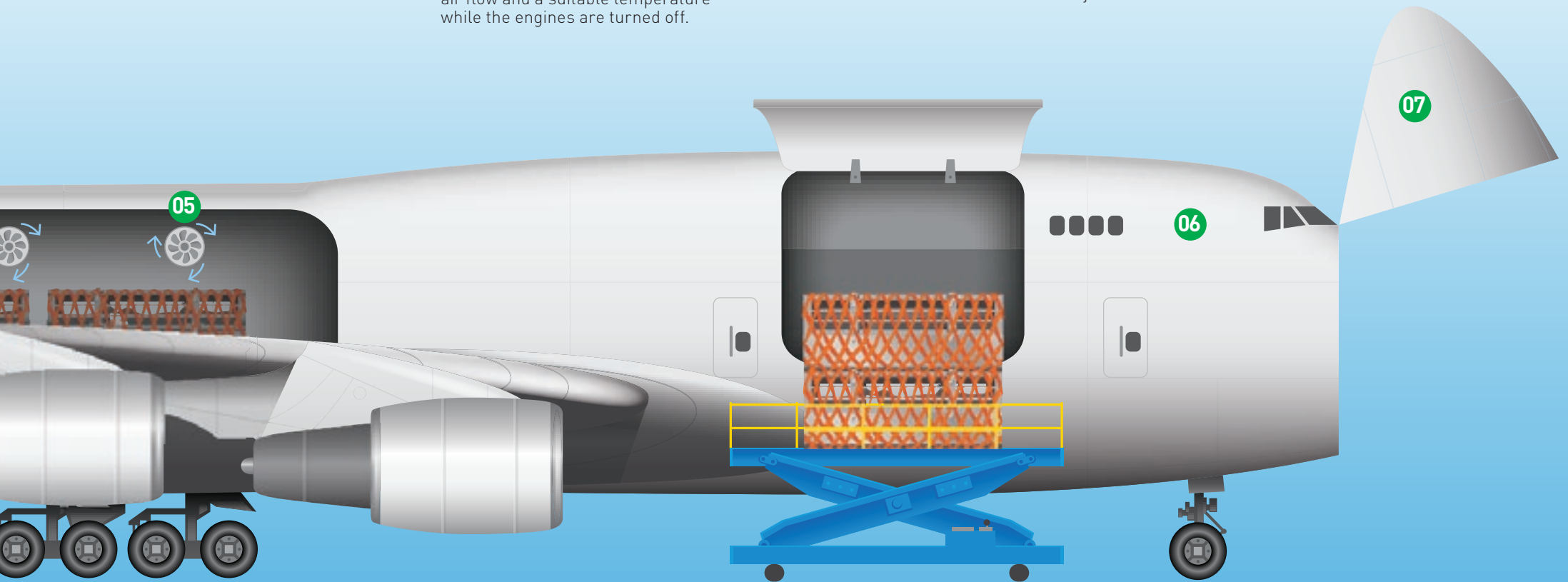
The Captain is provided with specific instructions when there are animals on board. The environment control system is monitored from the flight deck and has both visual and audible warnings if conditions in the hold need to be adjusted.

07/

## SPECIALISED PLANES

Most livestock exported by air are transported in freight planes, although occasionally some travel in the hold of passenger planes.

Freight planes often have a nose door to allow larger cargo to be loaded. The nose door is left open during loading of livestock to allow greater air flow through the hold.



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# DID YOU KNOW?

To maintain their health and welfare, the export of livestock from Australia is covered by stringent regulations.

The Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL) govern from on-farm within Australia to discharge within the importing country.

The Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) governs the treatment of feeder and slaughter livestock from discharge within the importing country to processing.



## INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

All goats are exported by air. Cattle and sheep exported by air are generally high value breeding stock. Air exports typically represent around 4% of Australia's total livestock exports. Australian livestock export regulations also cover buffalo, deer, alpaca and camels.



## HEALTH

All livestock must be healthy, fit to travel and meet the importing country's requirements. They are checked by veterinarians employed by the exporter, and again by a government veterinarian, before being loaded.



## SPACING

The number of animals in each crate is heavily regulated. They must be able to stand normally, without touching the top, and get up unassisted if they lie down. Additional space is allocated if they have horns or long wool, and when the crate is being transported amongst other cargo.



## FOOD & WATER

To minimise urine and manure (and ammonia) in the crates and reduce the risk of slipping, animals are not fed or watered immediately before or during flights. Food and water are provided immediately on arrival, less than 24 hours after departure.



## MORTALITY RATES

Air freight is extremely safe for livestock. Investigations are conducted into any flight with a mortality rate of more than 0.5% for cattle and buffalo, and 1% for sheep, goats, deer, alpaca, llamas and camels.



## VENTILATION

Temperature, humidity and ventilation are managed by powerful environment control systems which can be adjusted to suit the livestock on the plane. Air circulating through the hold is completely replaced with fresh air every 2-3 minutes.



## FLEXIBILITY

Air freight allows licenced exporters to deliver Australian animals anywhere in the world – quickly, safely and in both small and large groups. Flights can have livestock arriving in Asia within 12 hours and Europe within 24 hours of leaving their farm of origin.



For further information visit the **LiveCorp** and **LiveAir** websites:

[www.livecorp.com.au](http://www.livecorp.com.au)  
[www.liveair.org.au](http://www.liveair.org.au)