

Animal Welfare Report 2024/25

Animal Welfare Report 2024/25

FSA 25/09/06 - Report by Richard Wynn-Davies and Kevin Maher

1. Summary

1.1 This paper updates the Board on the FSA's delivery of animal welfare controls in slaughterhouses during 2024/25. It outlines the work undertaken to improve welfare standards in England and Wales. It reports (section 4) a reduction in animals affected by welfare breaches in slaughterhouses despite a rise in regulatory breaches identified. It also reports a rise in animals affected by welfare breaches on-farm and during transport and an increase in regulatory breaches referred to other enforcement bodies.

1.2 The Board is asked to acknowledge and comment on:

- Work and progress since the 2023/24 update to the Board.
- Ongoing work to improve animal welfare at slaughter, and the FSA's position on taking proportionate action against all animal welfare breaches in slaughterhouses.
- Work to enhance and strengthen collaboration with other enforcement bodies responsible for farm and transport welfare.
- The activities undertaken during and following an incident of covert filming footage which was provided to the FSA in February 2025.

2. Introduction

2.1 This paper provides the annual report to the Board on the FSA's animal welfare delivery on behalf of the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and Welsh Government as policy holders for animal welfare in England and Wales, respectively.

2.2 The paper covers:

- Section 3 – Background and context

- Section 4 – Summary of animal welfare compliance data in slaughterhouses, on farm and in transport
- Section 5 – Progress of in year activities
- Section 6 – Data analysis
- Section 7 – Consumer and stakeholder interest in animal welfare
- Section 8 – Policy activity and forward look
- Section 9 – Conclusions

3. Background and Context

3.1 DEFRA and Welsh Government have policy responsibility for animal welfare laws in England and Wales for animals destined for slaughter covering farms, transport, and slaughterhouses.

3.2 Slaughterhouse operators are responsible for meeting all animal welfare laws and policies in slaughterhouses.

3.3 The FSA enforces animal welfare in slaughterhouses on behalf of DEFRA and Welsh Government, through Official Veterinarians (OVs) based on-site. In Northern Ireland, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) oversees policy and enforcement.

3.4 The FSA acts on every identified animal welfare breach in slaughterhouses. We apply a tiered enforcement approach. Minor breaches may lead to informal action, while serious or repeated breaches can result in formal measures such as written notices, suspension or revocation of slaughterhouse operative licences, prosecution, and/or removal of a business' approval to operate as a slaughterhouse.

3.5 The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and Local Authorities (LAs) enforce animal welfare laws on farms and during transport. Breaches identified by OVs in slaughterhouses are referred to them for investigation. The FSA leads a Referral Working Group with DEFRA, Welsh Government, APHA, and LAs to facilitate farm and transport enforcement and raise welfare standards.

4. Summary of Animal Welfare Compliance Data in Slaughterhouses, on Farm and In Transport

4.1 Overall compliance with animal welfare requirements remains very high across the sector. Over 1bn animals are processed annually in slaughterhouses, with only 0.0033% of animals detected as being affected by breaches of animal welfare requirements at slaughter. A slightly higher proportion, 0.1% of animals, are detected as being impacted by breaches of animal welfare requirements before arrival, occurring on-farm or during transport. When FSA inspectors identify pre-slaughter breaches, they refer them to APHA and LAs who are responsible for enforcement in those areas. Data is provided in Annexes 2 and 3 but in summary, for 2024/25,

there were:

- 509 welfare breaches enforced in slaughterhouses affecting 33,920 animals
- 4,464 farm and transport welfare breaches referred to APHA and LAs affecting 1,073,102 animals

4.2 A breach can affect a single animal (such as an ineffective stun, or lameness) or multiple animals (such as lack of water in holding pens, or heat stress during transport) or could refer to a technical breach not impacting animals (such as a CCTV system, or slaughterhouse documentation).

Comparison of Animal Welfare Breaches – 2023/24 vs 2024/25

Category	2023/24	2024/25	Change
Animals slaughtered	1.009 bn	1.035 bn	+2.6%
Slaughterhouse			
Number of breaches	362	509	+40.6%
Level 3 breaches (potential welfare risk)	193 (53%)	251 (49%)	-4 ppt
Level 4 breaches (imminent welfare risk/impact)	169 (47%)	258 (51%)	+4 ppt
Animals affected	44,015	33,920	-22.9%
Farm & Transport (referred to APHA and Local Authorities)			
Number of breaches	3,556	4,464	+25.5%
Level 3 breaches (potential welfare risk)	35 (1%)	60 (1%)	-
Level 4 breaches (imminent welfare risk/impact)	3521 (99%)	4,404 (99%)	-
Animals affected	722,963	1,073,102	+48.4%

5. Progress of in year activities

5.1 The Animal Welfare Action Plan (summarised in Annex 1) is managed by the FSA and is monitored and endorsed by the Animal Welfare Steering Group, represented by FSA, DEFRA, Welsh Government, APHA, DAERA, and Food Standards Scotland. The Animal Welfare Action Plan seeks to improve animal welfare and enhance:

- verification and compliance
- accountability and collaboration
- education and instructions
- the quality of our analysis and reporting

5.2 In 2024/25 the FSA worked closely with Welsh Government in developing guidance and implementing Mandatory CCTV in Slaughterhouses in Wales Regulations. The regulations came into force on 1 June 2024, with a six-month period for slaughterhouse operators to achieve compliance. Enforcement was permitted by the regulations from 1 December 2024. By this date, 16 of the 19 slaughterhouses were fully complaint with the regulations. 3 slaughterhouses required low level enforcement: one verbal advice, one written advice, and one CCTV enforcement notice. Full industry compliance was achieved on 31 January 2025.

5.3 In October and November 2024, the FSA led the seventh animal welfare themed audit. Thirty six slaughterhouses were audited during the period, 25 producing red meat and 10 producing poultry meat, with one producing both. The audit found that slaughterhouse systems are broadly implemented in compliance with the legislation and provide a good level of assurance that the animal welfare legislative requirements are being fulfilled. The audit was categorised into the following themes (with recommendations):

Theme	Recommendation
CCTV (requirements, maintenance, and access)	Slaughterhouse operators to be reminded of their legal obligations under CCTV regulations, namely the installation and operation of the CCTV system, including the retention of images and information.
	Slaughterhouse operators to be reminded to put in place a service and maintenance plan for their CCTV system.
	Remind OVs about their enforcement obligations for breaches of CCTV legislation.
Operation and maintenance of back up stunning equipment	Slaughterhouse operators to be reminded to retain records of maintenance and calibration of back-up stunning equipment.
Lairage (including water and feed provision)	Slaughterhouse operators to be reminded that drinking water must be provided in line with the legislation.
Prioritising killing of animals unfit upon arrival	Slaughterhouse operators to ensure that their SOP details the process for prioritising the slaughter of females that have given birth during the journey, and the procedures relating to lactating dairy animals and unweaned animals.
Handling and restraint	Slaughterhouse operators to be reminded to ensure that the SOPs clearly set out the operation of restraining equipment in line with Article 14. Para 2 of the legislation.
Stun to stick time (duration from stunning to bleeding of animals)	Slaughterhouse operators to be reminded that their SOP should detail action to take where ineffective stunning has been identified, including back up stunning methods.

Theme	Recommendation
Monitoring of unconsciousness /death	Slaughterhouse operators to be reminded that their SOP should set out the frequency of their routine checks for signs of unconsciousness between stunning and death.

5.4 The FSA wrote to operational staff, slaughterhouse operators and industry representatives to advise them of the findings of the themed audit and to remind them of their responsibility to implement the recommendations. We will validate whether the recommendations are having the desired impact by reviewing inspection and enforcement data and conducting follow-up audits in 2025/2026, which will look at trends from the past three annual audits.

5.5 In partnership with DEFRA and Government Digital Service the FSA developed an on-line system for individuals to apply for a Certificate of Competence (CoC) to handle and slaughter animals in slaughterhouses. A CoC is awarded following a 3-month supervised training period and an assessment. The proposal received support from industry and the new system was introduced in March 2025. It replaced a paper-based system and enables FSA to process applications more accurately and quickly. There were 85 CoC applications processed through the new system during March 2025.

5.6 A single incident of covert filming within a West Midlands slaughterhouse by an animal welfare activist group required significant attention in February 2025, though the footage was believed to be from July and August 2024. The FSA had already taken proportionate enforcement action in relation to animal welfare breaches at the slaughterhouse, had increased attendance, and had investigated a case for referral to the Crown Prosecution Service prior to the footage being released. The covert filming attracted the attention of residents, local and national media, and the local Member of Parliament. The footage became linked to other complaints against the slaughterhouse outside of FSAs jurisdiction, such as excessive traffic and noise. Due to repeated breaches of animal welfare regulations, which the slaughterhouse operator failed to rectify, we revoked the slaughterhouse operators' approval to operate in May 2025. There were 42 records of breaches at this slaughterhouse in 2024/25 which equates to 8.3% of all slaughterhouse breaches investigated by the FSA within the period.

5.7 Since this covert filming incident an internal audit has assessed the FSA's process for reviewing the approval of slaughterhouse operators. The audit sampled seven premises over a year of operation. The outcomes of the audit were reported to the FSA's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in June 2025. The audit concluded with a Moderate Assurance outcome, confirming that the policy and process is robust with some minor recommendations for improvement.

5.8 Following the Board discussion in September 2024 and the subsequent covert filming incident referenced above, we conducted further analysis to examine the distribution of animal welfare breaches across slaughterhouses, and to evaluate whether appropriate actions were being taken in response to repeated breaches. This is set out in paragraphs 6.5 and 6.6.

5.9 There was reduced prosecution activity of animal welfare cases in 2024/25 with many cases paused by a judicial review. The judicial review has since concluded in FSA's favour (July 2025) so, subject to any appeal, prosecution cases should begin to progress again. In the cases that had progressed:

- a slaughterhouse operator was fined £6000 with two of its operatives fined £600 and £400 for excessive bovine stunning

- a slaughterman was fined £266 for poor handling of sheep
- a slaughterhouse operator was fined £46,800 (plus other costs of £16,000) for obstructing FSA officials from carrying out their statutory duties

5.10 In 2024/25 the FSA produced new guidance or enhanced existing guidance to improve operational delivery:

- referring farm and transport cases
- recording animal welfare cases
- CCTV in Wales regulations
- CoC code requirements for restraint at stunning
- poultry that are dead on arrival
- the approval process for bovine restraint
- signposting to guides to good practice
- back up method for religious slaughter of poultry
- movement of oversized / large horned animals to another slaughterhouse
- recording of CCTV on mobile phones
- applying for a CoC online

6. Data analysis

6.1 A biennial Slaughter Sector Survey was conducted by the FSA in February 2024 on behalf of DEFRA and Welsh Government and it was published by DEFRA in November 2024. The scope of the survey was the same as in 2022. [Farm animals: slaughter sector survey 2024 - GOV.UK](#)

6.2 The 2024 survey examined throughput, slaughter methods, and additional areas such as where the livestock was sourced from and where the meat was distributed to, including exports. For non-stun slaughter it found that for all species most animals were stunned prior to slaughter, however non-stun slaughter in red meat, mainly sheep, had increased.

- 97% of all poultry animals were stunned prior to slaughter (95% in 2022).

- 85% of all red meat animals were stunned prior to slaughter (89% in 2022).
- 98% of cattle were stunned prior to slaughter (99% in 2022).
- 71% of sheep were stunned prior to slaughter (77% in 2022).
- 89% of goats were stunned prior to slaughter (75% in 2022).
- 97% of meat chickens were stunned prior to slaughter (98% in 2022).
- 90% of pigs were stunned with high concentration CO2 with 10% being stunned through electronarcosis to the head (88% and 12% respectively in 2022). There is no legal provision for pigs to be killed by a non-stun method.

6.3 Animal Welfare Legislation permits non-stun slaughter and aims to respect religious freedoms. The Government encourages the highest standards of animal welfare at slaughter and would prefer all animals to be stunned before slaughter but respects the rights of Jews and Muslims to eat meat prepared in accordance with their religious beliefs, which includes the use of permitted methods of non-stun slaughter. The FSA has no legal basis to approve a slaughterhouse based on their slaughter method. Operators may select a method in line with customer demand provided it complies with legal and religious requirements. We ensure that all slaughter complies with the legal requirements. Our analysis found no clear evidence that animal welfare breaches are more or less likely to occur during non-stun slaughter compared to stunned slaughter. We continue to promote the use of the voluntary Demonstration of Life scheme. The independently developed scheme, which the FSA supports, provides assurance to Muslim consumers that stunning of sheep and goats is compatible with halal slaughter requirements. There is no mandatory requirement for meat to be labelled as stunned or non-stunned, but we will continue to liaise closely with DEFRA and Welsh Government on method of production labelling (see section 8) and any other work related to non-stun slaughter.

6.4 Following the September 2024 Board discussion, the animal welfare team carried out supplementary analysis on:

- Animal welfare breaches in small, medium and large slaughterhouses during 2023/24 (paragraph 6.5)
- Whether appropriate actions were being taken in response to repeat animal welfare breaches (paragraph 6.6)

6.5 Breaches found in small, medium, and large slaughterhouses – For each slaughterhouse size category the data looked at farm, transport, and slaughter breaches collectively: all breaches identified at the slaughterhouse. The data showed that large poultry sites performed better because they had fewer animal welfare breaches per million animals delivered/processed. Small/medium cattle sites performed poorest using the same measure. However, it is important to consider other animal welfare factors such as:

- red meat slaughter has greater variation in procedures and more manual handling for stunning, shackling, and bleeding whereas poultry slaughter is higher volume and more mechanised with less variation and fewer manual interventions.
- due to the complexity of the slaughter industry and supply chains, animals transported to larger slaughterhouses may experience longer transit times compared to those transported to smaller facilities. While this may not result in a breach of welfare standards, longer journeys are generally considered less favourable from an animal welfare perspective.

6.6 Repeat breaches – a repeat was defined as a slaughterhouse with more than one Level 4 (critical) animal welfare breach during the assessment period (July 2024 to June 2025). There were 51 slaughterhouses that met this criteria. FSA Operational management teams were consulted about their oversight of slaughterhouse performance and the appropriateness of enforcement actions. All responses were validated against recorded operational and enforcement data. The analysis concluded that in all cases appropriate enforcement and escalation action was taken to ensure a prompt return to compliance. The enforcement (including escalation) was:

Written Advice	Welfare Enforcement Notice (WEN)	Referral for Investigation (RFI) for potential prosecution	Certificate of Competence Warning Letter	Certificate of Competence Suspension	Certificate of Competence Revocation
38	6	8	13	21	8

6.7 The FSA chairs the Animal Welfare Referrals Working Group, working closely with DEFRA, APHA, and LA reps to improve the quality of farm and transport referrals and the supporting evidence that we provide, with the aim of improving follow up enforcement actions. While the number of referrals and affected animals has increased, we remain largely unaware of the follow up actions taken by other enforcement bodies. We have reviewed the Working Groups' terms of reference and proposed that DEFRA, who set farm and transport animal welfare policies, assume the role of chair. We have also proposed that DEFRA establish a regular 'case conference,' requiring representatives of APHA and LAs to provide updates on the actions taken in response to breaches referred by the FSA.

7. Consumer and stakeholder interest in animal welfare

7.1 Latest insights from the FSA's Food and You 2 survey reveal the extent to which consumers are concerned about animal welfare in the food production process. In line with recent years a third of respondents (33%) reported that they were 'highly concerned' and 42% were 'somewhat concerned'.

7.2 There were nine Freedom of Information requests processed by the FSA animal welfare team during 2024/25. This figure represents 3.9% of the total received by the agency (232). The most common FOI themes were enquiries about slaughterhouse operations, FSA enforcement, and poultry breaches. We welcome the opportunity to respond and explain the information that we hold.

8. Policy activity and forward look

8.1 The FSA animal welfare team monitored a recent e-petition calling for the banning of non-stun slaughter in the UK, as some EU nations have done ([petition: ban non-stun slaughter in the UK](#), transcript at [debate: non-stun slaughter of animals](#)). Daniel Zeichner, the Minister for Food Security and Rural Affairs confirmed that the Government will continue to allow the religious slaughter of animals for consumption by Muslims and Jews, including use of non-stun slaughter. Minister Zeichner also addressed product labelling and concerns that meat from animals slaughtered without stunning may be sold to consumers who do not wish to consume meat killed in that way. A public consultation on proposals to improve and extend method-of-production labelling was conducted by the previous Government and the minister confirmed that DEFRA are looking closely at the consultation feedback. The consultation response has now been published - [summary of responses and government response - GOV.UK](#). It concludes:

- *“We will consider all views as we go forwards and will continue to work with relevant stakeholders including farming and food industry stakeholders, vets, scientists and NGOs as part of this continuing policy development... Recognising the strong support from the public and other stakeholders for clearer food information on welfare standards, we will consider the potential role of method of production labelling reform as part of the UK Government’s development of an overarching approach to animal welfare and the wider food strategy. We will continue to work with the Devolved Governments on this.”*

8.2 DEFRA are due to communicate findings from its second Post Implementation Review of the Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015 in 2026. The FSA will continue to work closely with DEFRA and Welsh Government and with the slaughter industry to implement any required changes to animal welfare laws.

8.3 CO2 is used in the slaughter of pigs and poultry, as well as food packaging. It is also used in the beverage industry, in agriculture, and in hospitals. Global production of CO2 has a history of instability. Currently only a small percentage of CO2 used in UK slaughterhouses is sourced from UK production as the majority is sourced from Europe, however, a change to UK supply could lead to pressure on import demands. The FSA continue to work closely with DEFRA, Welsh Government, and with the Department for Business and Trade on contingency planning for this.

8.4 The FSA animal welfare team will lead and deliver any improvement activities based on findings from our regular themed audits, our Welfare Assurance Team inspections, the Slaughter Sector Survey 2026, and we will always look to continuously improve our animal welfare inspection and enforcement activity and all associated operational guidance.

9. Conclusions

9.1 This paper provides an update on animal welfare activities in England and Wales. The Board is asked to acknowledge and comment on:

- Work and progress since the 2023/24 update to the Board.
- Ongoing work to improve animal welfare at slaughter, and the FSA’s position on taking proportionate action against all animal welfare breaches in slaughterhouses
- Work to enhance and strengthen collaboration with other enforcement bodies responsible for farm and transport welfare

- The activities undertaken during and following an incident of covert filming footage which was provided to the FSA in February 2025

Animal Welfare - Annex 1

25/09/06 - Annex 1

Animal Welfare Action Plan – actions completed 01/04/24 to 31/03/25

The Animal Welfare Steering Group is comprised of representatives from the FSA, Defra, Welsh Government, and Devolved Administrations. The Steering Group monitor progress of activities on the Animal Welfare Action Plan and identify and agree new activities to be added to the Animal Welfare Action Plan.

Strengthening verification and compliance

Action	Description
Conduct Animal Welfare themed audit	<p>In October and November 2024, the FSA animal welfare team conducted an animal welfare themed audit, which looked at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CCTV (requirements, maintenance, and access)• Back up stunning equipment (operation and maintenance)• Lairage (water, feed, and provision)• Prioritising unfit animals (provision and killing)• Handling and restraint (suitability and operation)• Stun to stick time (operation and governance)• Monitoring of unconsciousness/death (protocols and governance) <p>The audit found that Food Business Operator (FBO) systems are broadly implemented in compliance with the legislation and provide a good level of assurance that the animal welfare legislative requirements are fulfilled</p>
Develop an online facility for applying for a Certificate of Competence (CoC)	<p>During 2024-2025 we developed an online form for applicants to apply for a CoC to handle and slaughter animals in approved slaughterhouses. The online system was tested extensively and communicated to the meat industry before being implemented in March 2025</p>
Support mandation of CCTV in Wales	<p>In 2023-2024 we supported Welsh Government in their progression toward introducing mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses regulations. In 2024-2025 the regulations came into force. We communicated with the industry and ran a series of field surveys to inform Welsh Government and to support the industry in achieving compliance. Some low-level enforcement relating to positioning of cameras was required to achieve full compliance with the regulations</p>

Clarifying accountability and improving collaboration

Action	Description
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Agree 2024-2025 Animal Welfare Service Level Agreement (SLA)	We agreed funding of the 2024-2025 animal welfare SLA with Defra and Welsh Government, and we developed and agreed Key Performance Indicators
Deliver improvements under the animal welfare referrals joint working group	We improved guidance and procedures, and we continued to enhance data sharing on repeat offences and offenders to support enforcement decision making by APHA and LAs

Improving education and instruction

Action	Description
Produce technical guidance	We produced new technical guidance or enhanced existing guidance relating to referring farm and transport cases, recording animal welfare cases, CCTV in Wales regulations, CoC code requirements for restraint at stunning, poultry that is dead on arrival, the approval process of bovine restraint, guides to good practice, back up method for religious slaughter of poultry, movement of oversized / large horned animals to another slaughterhouse, and recording of CCTV on mobile phones
Develop guidance for applicants of a CoC	We designed and published revised guidance to assist those intending to apply for a CoC using the online application process

Better analysis and reporting

Action	Description
Produce a Board report	We produced and presented the 2023-2024 Animal Welfare board paper
Report on the 2024 slaughter sector survey	In the first half of 2024-2025 we produced a report on the 2024 slaughter sector survey on behalf of Defra and Welsh government.
Enhanced data reporting	We continued to refine our publicly open data, as well as data tailored for FBOs and other regulators

Animal Welfare - Annex 2

25/09/06 - Annex 2

Total throughput and non-compliances

This data shows the total annual throughput and incidences of major and critical animal welfare related non-compliances in slaughterhouses. The table below summarises the figures from 2020/21 to 2024/25. It shows that since 2020 the proportion of animals detected being involved in major and critical incidents has remained very low, at a fraction of 1% of all animals.

Level 3 (major) and level 4 (critical) slaughterhouse animal welfare non-compliances

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
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Total number of animals processed (throughput)	1,038,234,124	1,036,098,739	1,013,294,689	1,009,052,611	1,035,481,172
Animals processed in compliance with welfare	1,038,194,198	1,036,047,607	1,013,244,791	1,009,008,596	1,026,880,347
Animals processed not in compliance with welfare	39,926 (A)	51,132 (B)	49,898 (C)	44,015 (D)	33,920 (E)
Percentage of animals processed compliantly	99.99615%	99.99506%	99.99400%	99.99564%	99.99670%
Percentage of animals involved in noncompliance	0.00384%	0.00494%	0.00492%	0.00436%	0.00330%

(A) includes three instances, totalling 20,573 birds of mechanical breakdowns that delayed processing. There was no evidence that the birds experienced suffering or distress.

(B) includes three instances, totalling 46,281 birds where food / water / ventilation was not adequately provided. There was no evidence that the birds experienced suffering or distress.

(C) 40,089 of the 49,898 animals were scored at level 3 (potential for suffering). Of that, there was an incident of 17,400 birds in which unloading was delayed, however the birds were prioritised for slaughter and did not suffer from the delay.

(D) Includes a batch of 30,000 birds and a batch of 10,650 birds where slaughter was delayed due to plant breakdowns and feed/water was not provided.

(E) Includes one case affecting 28,800 birds where slaughter was delayed due to a plant breakdown and feed/water was not provided.

Animal Welfare - Annex 3

25/09/06 - Annex 3

Analysis of welfare trends for major and critical non-compliances in England and Wales.

FY - 2024

Management summary

Analysis of non-compliance numbers for the FY 2024 by location indicate that, slaughterhouse related non-compliances increased by 40.6% compared with previous year, on farm increased by 43% and transport by 21%. In total there were 3,413 Transport cases, 1,051 On Farm cases and 509 Slaughterhouse cases in FY 2024.

Throughout this report 'FY 2024' refers to the year from April 2024 to March 2025. The key findings were as follows:

Overall Slaughterhouse changes:

- *Sheep breaches nearly doubled since last year, going up substantially across all process points in the slaughterhouse. Sheep has overtaken both Cattle and Poultry to become the species with the most slaughterhouse breaches.*
- *Cattle breaches more than doubled in Movement but was fairly stable elsewhere.*
- *Poultry breaches also nearly doubled in Movement but fairly stable elsewhere.*
- *Pig breaches were similar to last year, going up by 7 (mostly also in Movement).*
- *Lairage remains the process point with the highest number of non-compliance cases (138 i.e., 26 more than FY 2023) at 27% of the total number of non-compliances for FY 2024. Lairage (27%), movement (27%) and stunning (17%) were the top 3 locations for non-compliances, accounting for 71% of all cases.*
- *The only process point to decrease was unloading however this accounts for a low number of cases (only 11 in FY 2024).*

Slaughterhouse CCTV:

- *Overall, the number of cases identified by CCTV increased from 80 to 118 between FY 2023 and FY 2024. However, the proportion of slaughterhouse cases identified by CCTV have stayed roughly the same with 22% being identified by CCTV in FY 2023 and 23% in FY 2024.*

On Farm and Transport:

- *On Farm non compliances were cases split between the four species with Poultry being 35% of cases, Cattle being 23%, Pigs 22% and Sheep 20%.*
- *Transport cases were more strongly weighted towards Poultry, with 47% of all Transport cases. 23% were Pigs, 16% Cattle and 14% Sheep.*
- *Less than 1% of cases for both types were not allocated to a species.*
- *Sheep was the only species to see a decrease in either On Farm or Transport cases.*

Section 1: Analysis of non-compliance by location

Figure 1 illustrates the comparative change in non-compliance levels for the respective animal welfare locations over the last 4 financial years: FY 2021 to FY 2024. This shows that, transport related non-compliances increased by 21% in FY 2024, on-farm non-compliances increased by 43% and slaughterhouse non-compliances increased by 41%.

Figure 1: Changes in non-compliances by financial years and location.

Figure 2 shows the comparative trends in non-compliance levels for the respective locations from FY 2021 to FY 2024.

Figure 2: Trends in non-compliances per location.

Table 1 below is a summary of non-compliances by severity (level 3 and 4) and location (transport, on farm, and slaughterhouse) for the last 4 financial years (FY 2021 to FY 2024). Compared with other locations, slaughterhouse non-compliances are relatively split between major and critical cases, whereas in the other locations the number of recorded critical cases far outweighs that of major non-compliance cases.

Table 1: Number of non-compliances by financial years and location.

Financial Year	Severity	Transport	On Farm	Slaughterhouse
2021	Level 3 (Major)	38	10	192
2021	Level 4 (Critical)	3067	825	180

Financial Year	Severity	Transport	On Farm	Slaughterhouse
2021	Total	3105	835	372
2022	Level 3 (Major)	21	8	198
2022	Level 4 (Critical)	3323	530	156
2022	Total	3344	538	354
2023	Level 3 (Major)	29	6	193
2023	Level 4 (Critical)	2793	728	169
2023	Total	2822	734	362
2024	Level 3 (Major)	39	21	251
2024	Level 4 (Critical)	3374	1030	258
2024	Total	3413	1051	509

Section 2: Slaughterhouse only analysis

Figure 3 illustrates the composition of total slaughterhouse non-compliances in FY 2022 to FY 2024 by different categories i.e., CCTV related and regular cases.

In this chart 'Regular' means non-compliances observed by or reported to the FSA Official. 'CCTV (live and retrospective)' means non-compliances identified via CCTV review by the FSA Official. 'CCTV regulation' means breaches of CCTV regulations, for example degradation of cameras. Although 'No SOP' is a Regular non-compliance, it is shown separately due to its prominence of occurrence historically.

In FY 2024, the proportion of CCTV (live and retrospective) non-compliances increased from 48 cases to 52. The proportion of CCTV regulation non-compliances increased from 14 cases to 35 cases. The proportion of No SOP non-compliances increased from 18 cases to 31 cases in FY2024. The number of regular non-compliances has increased from 282 cases to 391.

Figure 3: Breakdown of slaughterhouse non-compliances by financial year.

Figure 4 highlights the total non-compliance comparison between FY 2023 and FY 2024 by quarters. The comparison shows increased levels of non-compliances across all quarters of FY 2024 compared with the same period in FY 2023. The percentage increase of the non-compliances was quite consistent throughout the year with the lowest being a 35% increase in Q2 (from 96 to 130 cases) and the highest being Q1 with a 46% increase (from 79 to 115 cases).

Figure 4: Change in slaughterhouse non-compliances by financial year quarters FY 2023 vs FY 2024.

Figure 5 below shows non-compliances by process points within the slaughterhouse. Sheep related lairage cases and poultry related movement cases both account for 11% of all slaughterhouses non-compliances in FY-2024. In terms of the actual number of non-compliances, sheep related lairage increased from 38 cases in FY 2023 to 57 cases in FY 2024, and poultry related movement increased from 30 cases in FY 2023 to 55 cases in FY 2024.

There were changes in the level of cattle related movement breaches, which have increased from 30 cases in FY 2023 to 47 cases in FY 2024. Sheep made up just under half of all bleeding related non-compliances within slaughterhouse with 27 cases.

Figure 5: Number of non-compliances by animal species and process point – FY 2024.

Figure 6 illustrates the comparative change in the non-compliance numbers for FY 2023 and FY 2024 by process types per animal species in slaughterhouses. It captures changes across animal species year on year. For example, it highlights the increased numbers in movement of poultry and cattle. It also shows the increased non-compliances in sheep for every process type particularly lairage which increased from 38 to 57 in FY 2024. This chart also highlights how the number of bleeding non-compliances has decreased for poultry and stayed the same for cattle.

Figure 6. Comparison of FY 2023 and FY 2024 slaughterhouse non-compliances by animal species.

Figure 7 shows the trends in recorded slaughterhouse breaches split by severity over the past four years. The number of recorded level 3 non-compliances increased in FY 2024 from 193 cases in FY 2023 to 251, while recorded level 4 non-compliances increased from 169 to 258 over the same period.

Figure 7: Trends in slaughterhouse non-compliances – FY 2021 to FY 2024

Figure 8 illustrates the change in numbers of non-compliances across all animal species in FY 2024 in comparison with FY 2023. Cases involving cattle have increased by 24% (105 to 130), pigs by 17% (41 to 48), poultry increased by 16% (124 to 144) and sheep by 87% from 87 to 163 cases. Other animal species and non-compliances which are not related to a specific animal make up 5% of the slaughterhouse cases and have been excluded from this chart.

Figure 8. Change in the number of non-compliances per financial year by animal species.

Figure 9 shows the split by severity of cases for each of the slaughterhouse process points. Lairage has 138 total cases with 66% and 34% level 3 and 4 respectively. Bleeding (55 total cases) has the highest proportion of level 4 cases (80%), followed by stunning (86 cases) with 62% being level 4 cases and movement (135 total cases) with 60% level 4. Management has the lowest proportion of level 4 cases 32%.

Figure 9: Slaughterhouse non-compliances by process point – FY 2024.

Figure 10 illustrates the changes in non-compliances by process point between FY-2023 and FY-2024. The chart shows decreased cases (red bars) in unloading, all other process points have increased compared with FY 2023 (green bars).

Figure 10: Change in number of slaughterhouse non-compliances by process point – FY 2024.

Figure 11 also highlights changes in non-compliances across all the identifiable categories of animal species in FY 2024. Non-compliances have increased across all animal species with sheep and cattle registering the largest increase +76 and +25 respectively.

Figure 11. Change in number of slaughterhouse non-compliances by animal species – FY 2024.

Section 3: Analysis of Transport and On Farm non-compliances

Figure 12 illustrates changes in the number of on-farm and transport related non-compliances for FY 2023 and FY 2024. There has been an increase in both transport and on-farm non-compliances across all animal species except sheep, which decreased for both categories. In general, both transport and On-farm non-compliances have increased by 43% and 41% respectively in FY 2024.

This chart shows that the 1,051 on-farm cases break down between the four species as Poultry being 35% of cases, Cattle being 23%, Pigs 22% and Sheep 20%. Less than 1% of cases were not allocated to a species. (Note 125 Poultry cases were allocated as Trapping, which is often associated with Transport rather than On Farm. If these were reclassified, the four species would be much closer, with Poultry and Cattle both accounting for 26%, Pigs 25% and Sheep 23% of 926 On Farm cases).

Transport cases were more strongly weighted towards Poultry, with 47% of all 3413 Transport cases. 23% were Pigs, 16% Cattle and 14% Sheep. Again, less than 1% of cases were not allocated to a species.

Sheep is the only species to see a slight decrease in breaches when compared with the previous year, for both On Farm and for Transport.

Figure 12. Non-compliances in Transport and On-farm by animal species.

Transport

The biggest factor contributing to transport non-compliances was Trapping with 1172 cases (increase of 37%). Dead on Arrival (DOA) was the second biggest contributor with 926 cases but decreased by 12%. Although Dead on Arrival (DOA) suspected cold/ heat stress increased by 52% and Dead on Arrival (DOA) multiple deaths decreased by 44%. Lameness Score of 3 and 4 increased by 84% and 133% respectively.

Table 2. Major causes of Transport non-compliances - FY 2023 v 2024.

Type	FY 2023	FY 2024	Percentage Change
Trapping	857	1172	37%
Dead On Arrival (DOA)	1056	926	-12%
Incoordination/unable to walk/unable to stand	237	241	2%
Late stages of pregnancy - Identified at PM	243	203	-16%
Dead On Arrival (DOA) - suspected cold/heat stress	67	102	52%
Broken limbs	-	93	-
Lameness Score of 3	32	59	84%
Dead On Arrival (DOA) - Multiple deaths	101	57	-44%
Open wounds	-	55	-
Broken Leg	65	54	-17%
Bruising	-	54	-

Type	FY 2023	FY 2024	Percentage Change
Pododermatitis	-	46	-
Lameness Score of 4	18	42	133%
Broken horns	-	33	-
Late stages of pregnancy - Identified at AM	30	29	-3%
Tail bites	-	24	-
Crates/modules poorly maintained	18	22	22%
Prolapse	-	21	-
Lameness Score of 2	29	13	-55%
Overgrown/Ingrown horn	-	12	-
Dislocation (specify in text box)	-	11	-
Unloading causing injury	14	9	-36%
Hypothermic	-	9	-
Other*	55	126	130%

Other* – the sum of all the remaining 30 minor categories in FY 2024 and the sum of all 12 remaining minor categories in FY 2023.

On farm

Table 3 details the major sources of On-farm non-compliances in FY 2024 in comparison with their previous levels in FY 2023. Pododermatitis had 131 cases, a 14% increase. Lameness also increased for each of scores 2,3 and 4; with 17, 42 and 18 cases respectively. Some changes could be to do with how the data has been categorised – there were no Dead On Arrival On Farm cases last year where there are 112 this year, but the number of Transport Dead On Arrival cases went down 139 across the three DOA categories.

Table 3. Major causes of On Farm non-compliances – FY 2023 v 2024.

Type	FY 2023	FY 2024	Percentage Change
Pododermatitis	115	131	14%
Trapping	-	126	-
Incoordination/unable to walk/unable to stand	-	115	-

Type	FY 2023	FY 2024	Percentage Change
Late stages of pregnancy - Identified at PM	-	94	-
Dead On Arrival (DOA)	-	87	-
Open wounds	76	62	-18%
Lameness Score of 3	24	42	75%
Bruising	77	37	-52%
Tail bites	31	36	16%
Prolapse	31	35	13%
Mastitis	84	28	-67%
Broken Leg	-	21	-
Lameness Score of 4	6	18	200%
Lameness Score of 2	12	17	42%
Dead On Arrival (DOA) - Multiple deaths	-	15	-
Late stages of pregnancy - Identified at AM	-	13	-
Abscesses	8	11	38%
Dead On Arrival (DOA) - suspected cold/heat stress	-	10	-
Hernias	17	9	-47%
Arthritis	22	8	-64%
Broken horns	27	8	-70%
Broken limbs	61	8	-87%
Emaciation	5	8	60%
Other*	138	112	-19%

Other* – the sum of all the remaining 21 minor categories in FY 2024 and the sum of all 20 remaining minor categories in FY 2023.

On farm and Transport

It should be noted that some of the categories are similar in nature but recorded separately or have changed slightly. For example, there are three Dead on Arrival (DOA) categories under

Transport and a further three under On Farm. There are also different types of Lameness, and Late stages of pregnancy categories under Transport and On Farm. Some of these have gone down in value, and others up.

Caution should be taken with percentage changes when looking at farm and transport data individually. It therefore makes sense to review them collectively, with some categories collated to present a clearer picture.

Table 4. Major causes of On Farm and Transport non-compliances – FY 2023 v 2024.

Type	FY 2023	FY 2024	Percentage Change	FY 2024 Percentage of Total
Trapping	857	1298	51%	29%
DOA (all types)	1224	1197	-2%	27%
Lameness/incoordination (all types)	365	554	52%	12%
Late stages of pregnancy (all types)	273	339	24%	8%
Pododermatitis	115	177	54%	4%
Open wounds	76	117	54%	3%
Broken limbs	61	101	66%	2%
Bruising	77	91	18%	2%
Broken Leg	65	75	15%	2%
Tail bites	31	60	94%	1%
Prolapse	31	56	81%	1%
Broken horns	27	41	52%	1%
Mastitis	84	34	-60%	1%
Crates/modules poorly maintained	18	29	61%	1%
Overgrown/Ingrown horn	10	18	80%	0%
Abscesses	8	16	100%	0%
Hernias	17	15	-12%	0%
Dislocation	2	13	550%	0%
Emaciation	5	12	140%	0%
Deformities	5	11	120%	0%

Type	FY 2023	FY 2024	Percentage Change	FY 2024 Percentage of Total
Unloading causing injury	14	11	-21%	0%
Arthritis	22	10	-55%	0%
Contusion/Swollen	9	10	11%	0%
Hypothermic	4	9	125%	0%
Other*	156	170	9%	4%
Total	3556	4464	26%	

Other* – the sum of all the remaining minor categories in FY 2023 and FY 2024

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