Food Standards Agency
Board Meeting – 17 June 2026

FSA 26-06-08

ANNEX

Analysis of Trends for Major and Critical Animal Welfare Law Breaches in England and Wales.

FY 2025

(April 2025 to March 2026)

Management Summary:

In FY 2025 (April 2025 to March 2026) slaughterhouse breaches (also known as non-compliances) increased by 6% compared with previous year, transport breaches increased by 12%, while on-farm breaches decreased by 11%. In total there were 3,829 transport breaches, 940 on-farm breaches and 542 slaughterhouse breaches in FY 2025.

Overall slaughterhouse changes:

- Poultry had the highest number of breaches in FY 2025. Cattle and pigs experienced moderate increases, while sheep showed a decline, although levels remained higher than in FY2023.
- Poultry saw an increase in breaches from 144 last year to 197 (37% increase) and has become the species with the most slaughterhouse breaches, overtaking sheep.
- Poultry breaches more than doubled in the category of management and stunning.
- Poultry breaches in the category of movement increased significantly in FY 2024 but decreased approx. 70% in FY 2025.
- In both cattle and sheep, there was an increase in management related breaches but a significant decrease in movement related breaches. Overall sheep breaches dropped by 21% while cattle breaches stayed at a similar level to the previous year.
- Lairage related breaches increased by approximately 89% in cattle.
- Pig related breaches increased by approximately 17% in each of the two years from FY 2023 to FY 2025.

Slaughterhouse CCTV:

The number of breaches identified by CCTV decreased from 118 to 103 between FY 2024 and FY 2025. As the overall numbers of breaches increased, this means the proportion of slaughterhouse breaches identified by CCTV have decreased slightly from 23% in FY 2024 to 19% in FY 2025.

On-Farm and transport:

On-farm breaches increased in cattle and pigs while decreases were seen in poultry and sheep, however in terms of overall numbers, there was a slight decrease. Transport breaches have increased in cattle, poultry and sheep while decreasing slightly in pigs. Overall, breaches in transport saw a slight increase.

Section 1: Analysis of breaches by location they occurred

Figure 1 and Fig 2 illustrate the comparative change in breaches for the respective animal welfare locations over the last 4 financial years: FY 2022 to FY 2025. Transport related breaches increased by 12% in FY 2025 compared to FY 2024. On-farm breaches decreased by 11% compared to FY 2024, having risen substantially for the two previous financial years. Slaughterhouse breaches increased in each of the past three financial years, increasing 41% in FY 2024 followed by a much smaller 6% increase this year (FY 2025).

Fig 1: Trends in breaches per location.

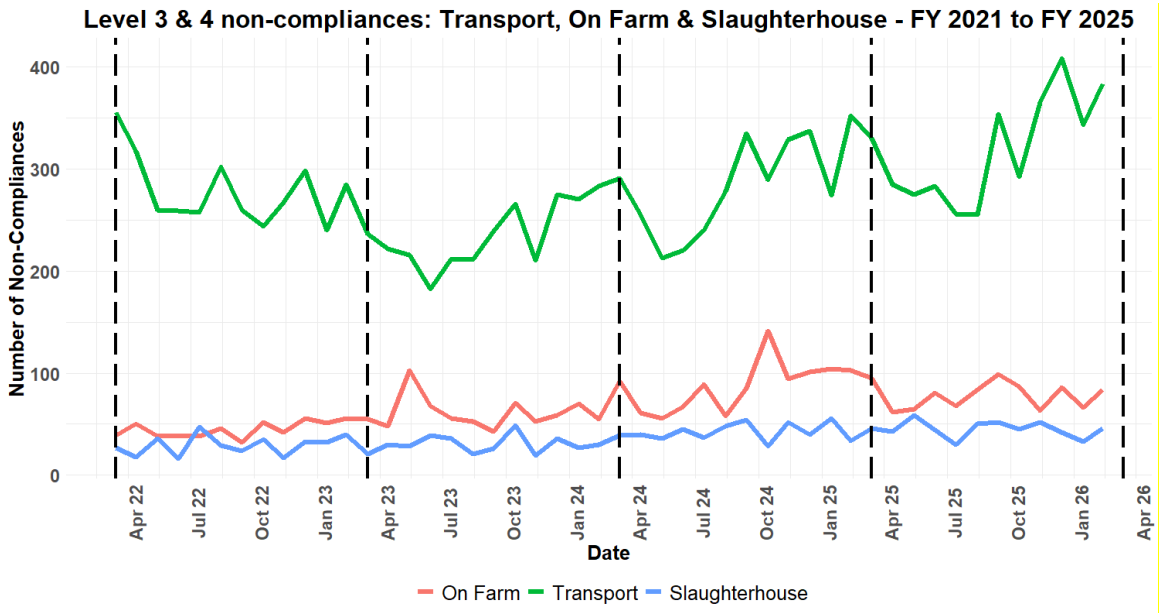


Figure 2: Changes in breaches by financial year and location.

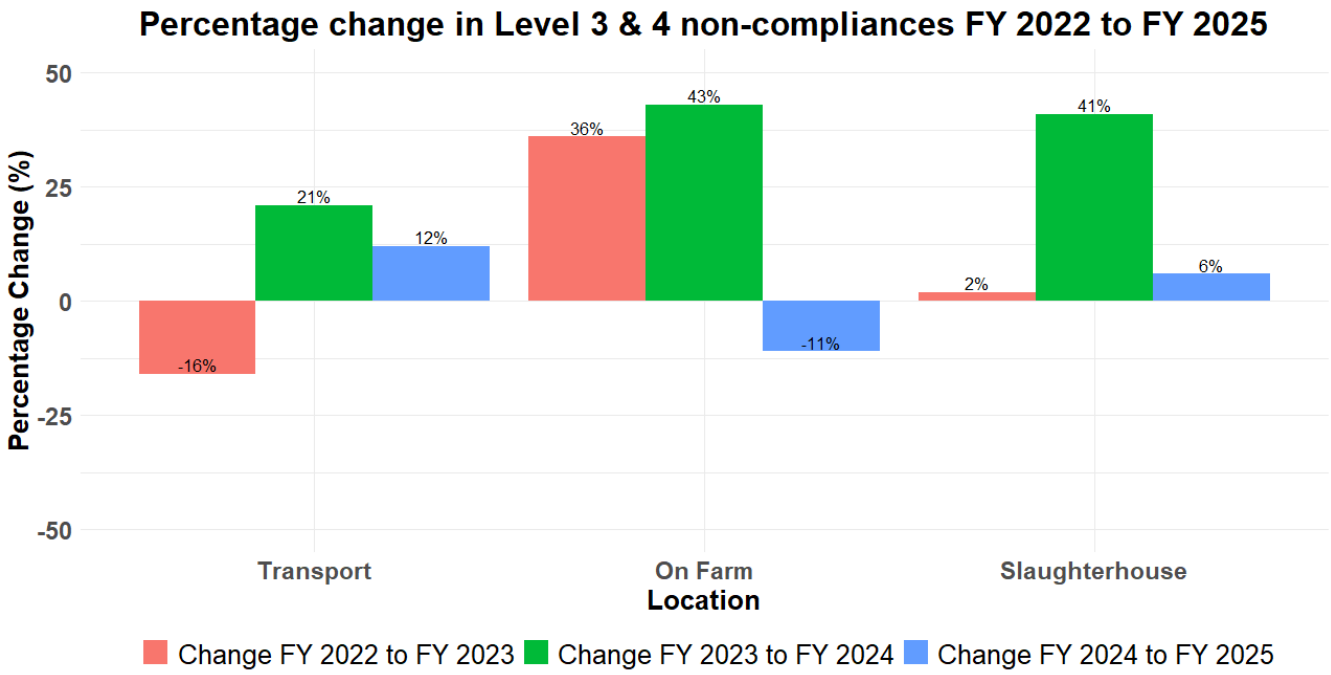


Table 1 below is a summary of breaches by severity (level 3 and 4) and location (transport, on-farm, and slaughterhouse) for the last 5 financial years (FY 2021 to FY 2025). Compared with other locations, slaughterhouse breaches are evenly split between major and critical, whereas in the other locations the number of recorded critical breaches far outweighs that of major breaches across the years.

Table 1: Number of breaches by financial years, severity and location

Financial Year	Severity	Transport	On-Farm	Slaughterhouse
2021	Level 3 (Major)	38	10	192
2021	Level 4 (Critical)	3067	825	180
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**
2025	Level 3 (Major)	53	23	263
2025	Level 4 (Critical)	3776	917	279
2025	**Total**	**3829**	**940**	**542**

Table 2 below is a summary of breaches by location (transport, on-farm, and slaughterhouse) over the last eight financial years (FY 2018 to FY 2025). Transport related breaches were consistently the highest in each year. On-farm breaches showed a different pattern: the numbers peaked in 2019 and have since almost halved. In contrast, slaughterhouse breaches showed modest year on year fluctuations, with a gradual increase observed from 2023 onwards.

Table 2: Trend of breaches by financial years and location

Financial Year	Transport	On-Farm	Slaughterhouse
2018	4250	1536	382
2019	3645	1910	480
2020	2609	1631	338
2021	3105	835	372
2022	3344	538	354
2023	2822	734	362
2024	3413	1051	509
2025	3829	940	542

Section 2: Slaughterhouse only analysis

Figure 3 illustrates the composition of total slaughterhouse breaches in FY 2023 to FY 2025 by different categories i.e., CCTV related and regular breaches.

In this chart, ‘regular’ means breaches observed by or reported to the FSA Official. ‘CCTV (live and retrospective)’ means breaches identified via CCTV review by the FSA Official. ‘CCTV regulation’ means breaches of CCTV regulations, for example degradation of cameras. Although ‘No SOP’ (Standard Operating Procedure) is a regular breach, it is shown separately due to its prominence, historically.

In FY 2025, the proportion of CCTV (live and retrospective) breaches decreased from 52 to 34. The proportion of CCTV regulation breaches (which increased from 14 to 35 in FY 2024) has increased from 35 to 47 in FY 2025. The proportion of no SOP breaches decreased from 31 to 22 in FY 2025. The number of regular breaches has increased again this year, from 391 to 439.

Fig 3: Breakdown of slaughterhouse breaches by financial year.

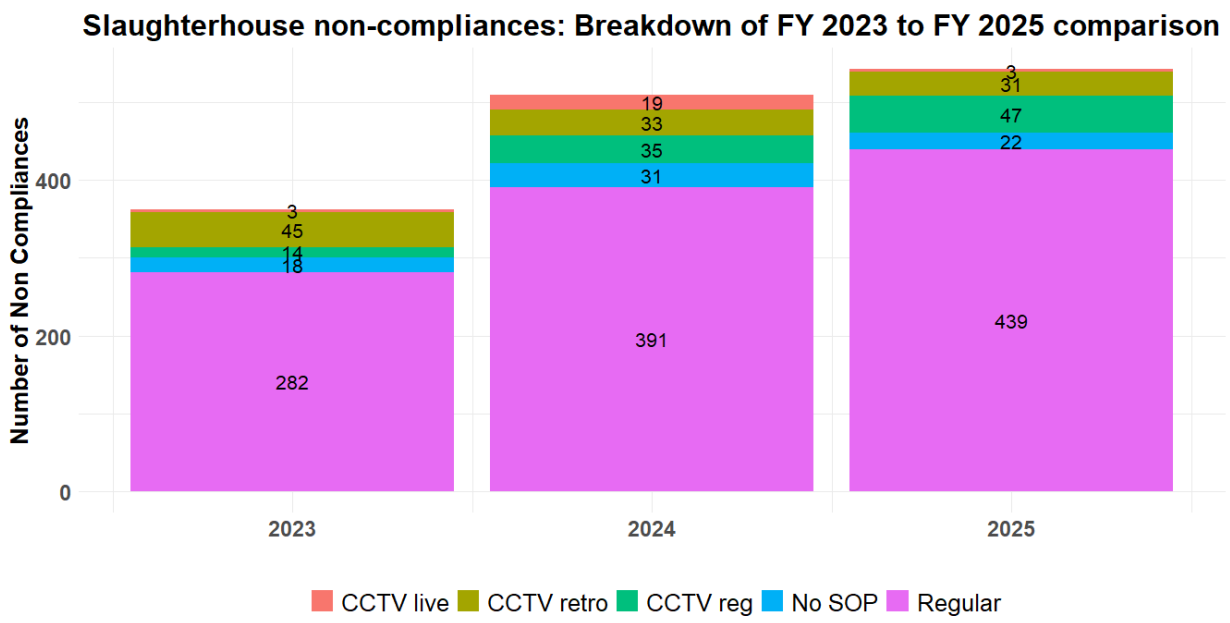


Figure 4 highlights the total comparison of breaches between FY 2023, FY 2024 and FY 2025 by quarters. FY 2024 showed a marked increase in breaches compared with FY 2023 in every quarter. The numbers have increased even more in FY 2025 in Q1 and Q3. Although FY 2025 shows a slight decrease in Q2 and Q4, the levels remain substantially higher than those observed in FY 2023.

Fig 4: Change in slaughterhouse breaches by financial year quarters FY 2023 to FY 2025.

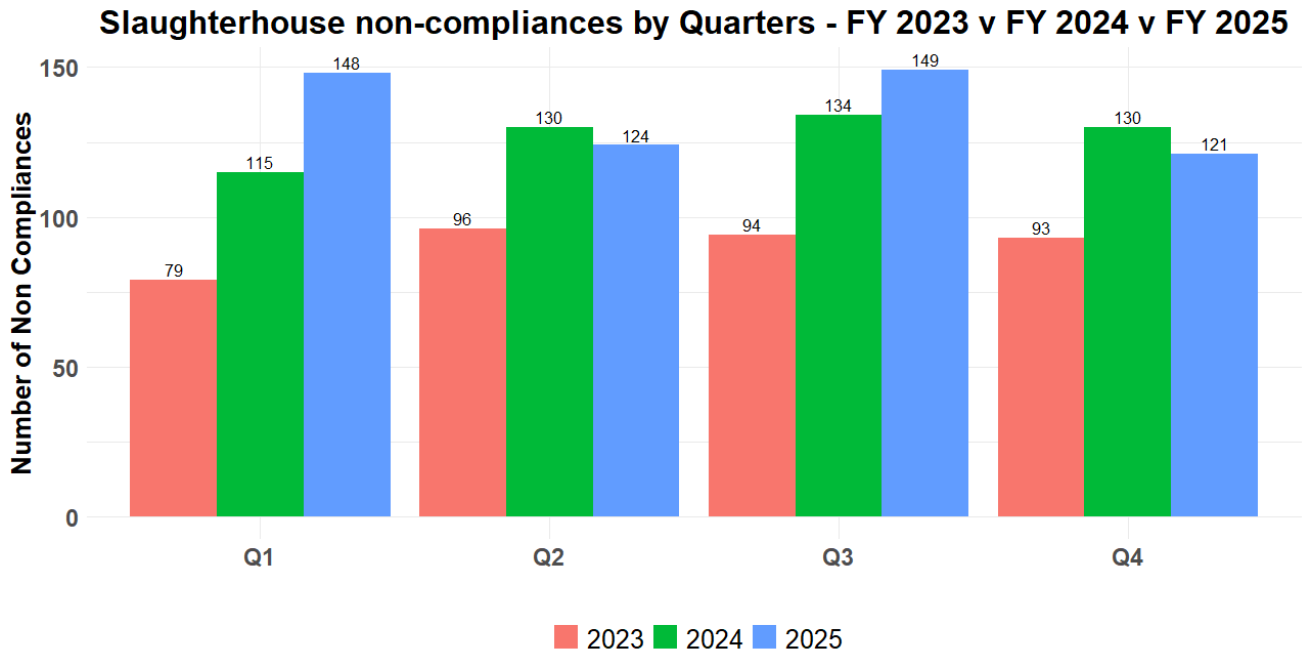


Figure 5 presents Level 3 and Level 4 slaughterhouse breaches in FY 2025, broken down by animal species (cattle, pigs, poultry, and sheep) and process points (bleeding, lairage, management, movement, stunning, and unloading). Overall, the chart shows that breaches were concentrated in certain process points, with variation by animal species.

Overall, management, lairage, and stunning accounted for the highest numbers of breaches. Poultry recorded the highest counts in stunning (67) and management (60), indicating these stages are key contributors over all welfare issues for poultry in FY 2025.

Cattle and sheep also account for substantial numbers, especially in lairage and management, while remaining relatively low at other process points. In contrast, pigs show comparatively lower numbers of breaches across all process points.

Breaches during unloading are generally lower for all animal species, although poultry again records higher counts than other species here.

Fig 5: Number of breaches by animal species and process point – FY 2025.

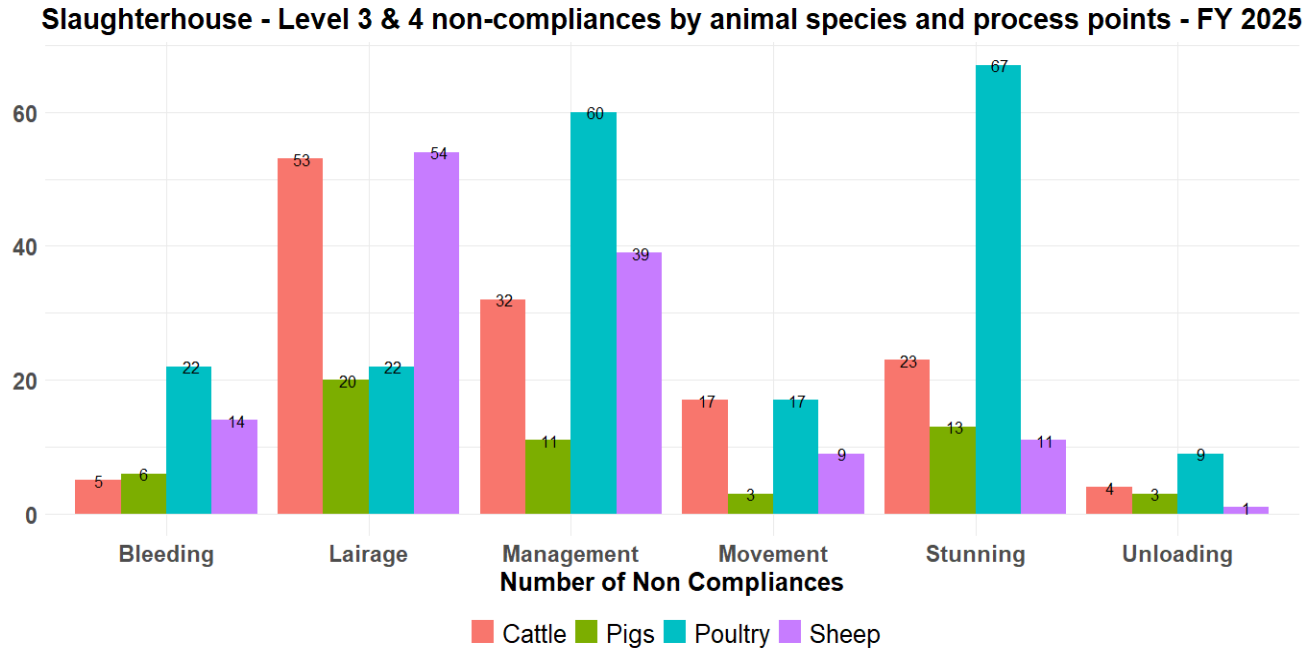


Figure 6 shows the trends in recorded slaughterhouse breaches split by severity over the past five years. The number of recorded level 3 breaches increased slightly from 251

in FY 2024 to 263 in FY 2025, while recorded level 4 breaches also increased slightly from 258 to 279 over the same period.

Fig 6: Trends in slaughterhouse breaches – FY 2021 to FY 2025

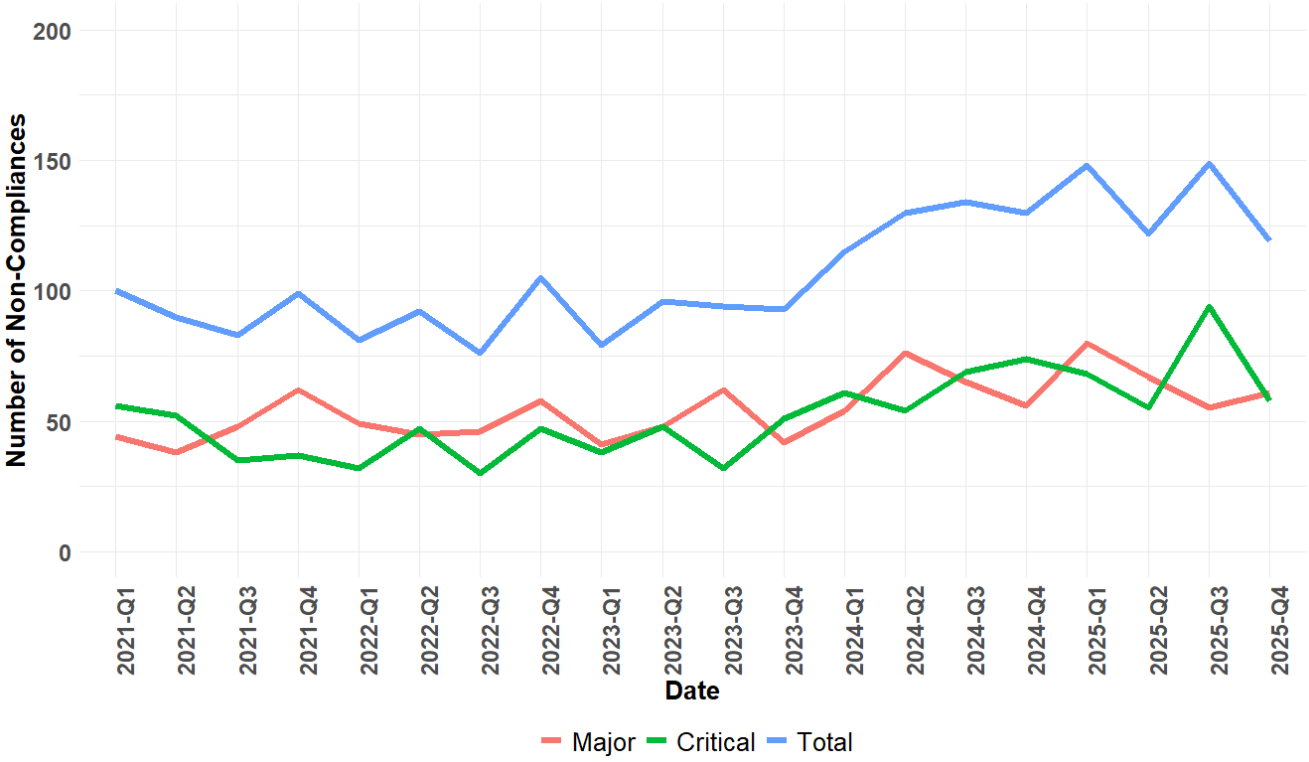


Figure 7 compares slaughterhouse breaches by animal species for FY 2023 to FY 2025. Overall, the chart shows an upward trend in breaches across most species, apart from sheep, which was higher in 2025 than 2023, but has had a drop in the past year.

For cattle, the number of breaches increases from 105 in FY 2023 to 130 in FY 2024, (24% increase). This is followed by a smaller rise to 134 in FY 2025. Overall, cattle breaches increase by 29 (28% increase) across the three-year period, indicating a moderate upward trend.

Among pigs, breaches rise from 41 in FY 2023 to 48 in FY 2024 and then to 56 in FY 2025 (17% increase).

The most evident changes are observed regarding poultry. Breaches increase from 124 in FY 2023 to 144 in FY 2024, a rise of 20 (16% increase), before increasing to 197 in FY 2025. This is an additional 53 (37% increase) between FY 2024 and FY 2025. Overall, poultry breaches increase by 73 (59% increase) across the period, making poultry the largest contributor to the overall rise in Slaughterhouse Level 3 and 4 breaches.

In contrast, sheep breaches reduced to 128 in FY 2025, a decrease of 35 (21% decrease). Despite this decline, the FY 2025 level remains 41 higher than FY 2023 (47% higher).

Fig 7: Change in the number of breaches per financial year by animal species.

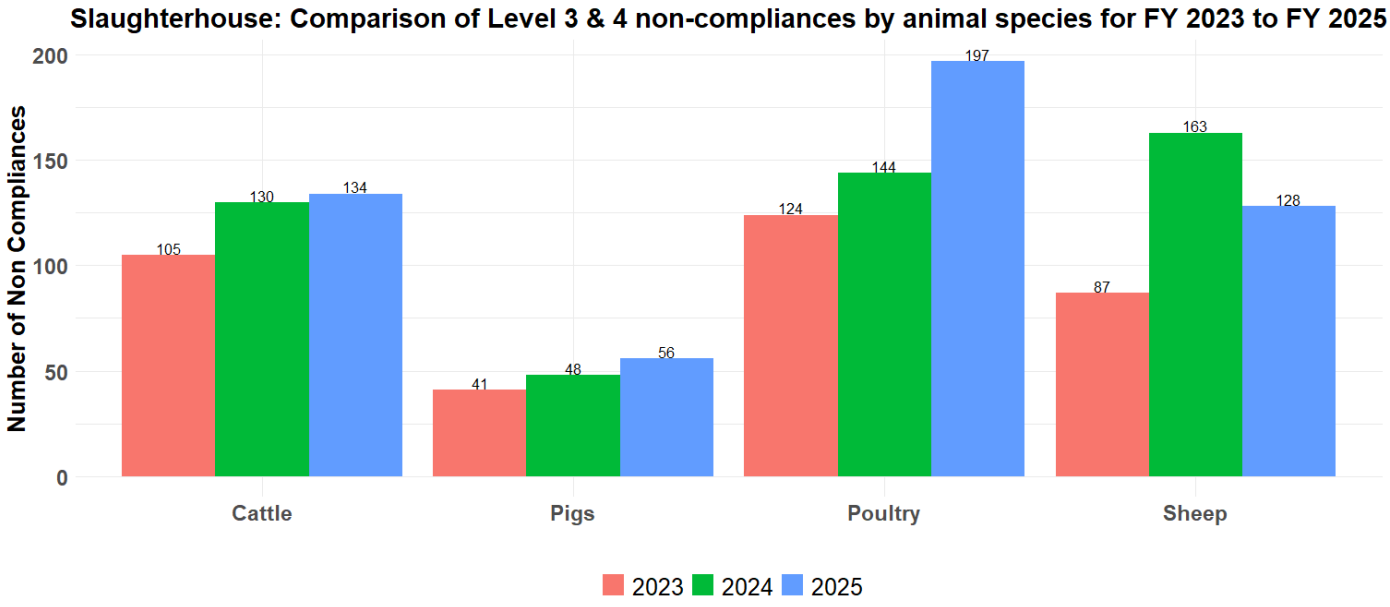


Figure 8 illustrates the comparative change in the breach numbers for FY 2023, FY 2024 and FY 2025 by process points per animal species in slaughterhouses.

For example, for cattle, lairage numbers have increased from 28 in FY 2024 to 53 in FY 2025 (89% increase).

The poultry numbers increased in all categories aside from movement. In FY 2025, poultry counts peaked at 60 for Management (131% increase since last year) and 67 for stunning (148% increase since last year).

For sheep, breaches are highest in lairage, with counts increasing from 37 in FY 2023 to 57 in FY 2024 and 54 in FY 2025.

Fig 8: Comparison of FY 2023 and FY 2024 slaughterhouse breaches by animal species.

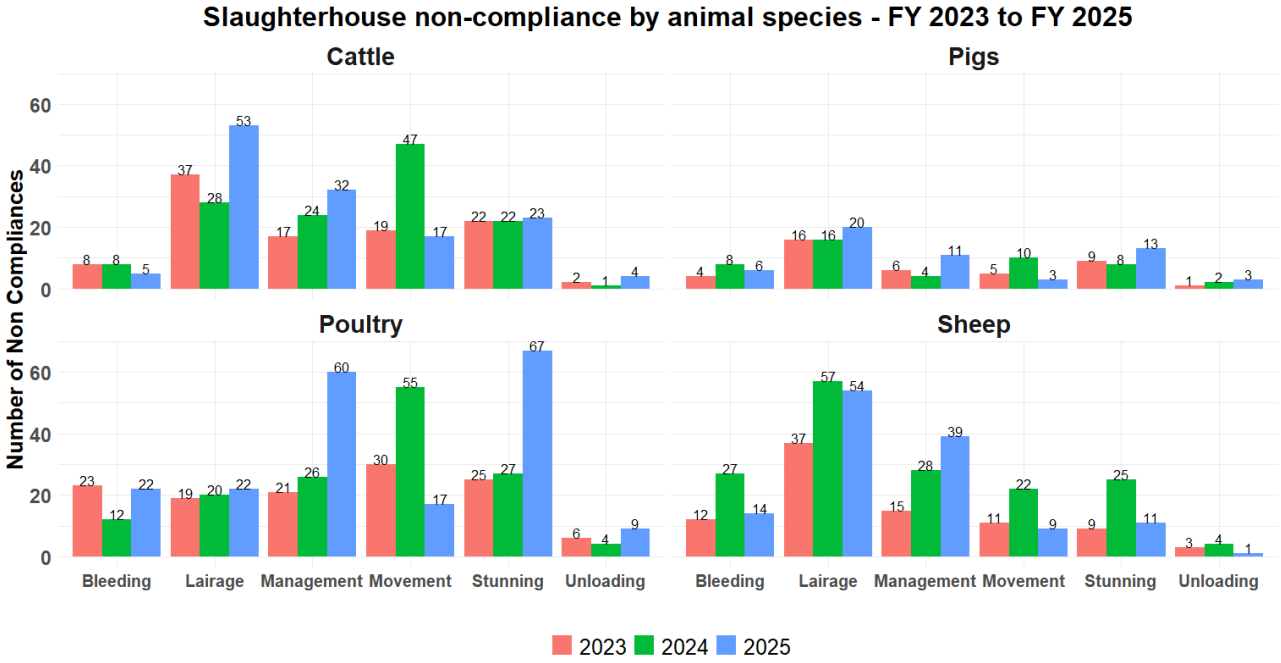
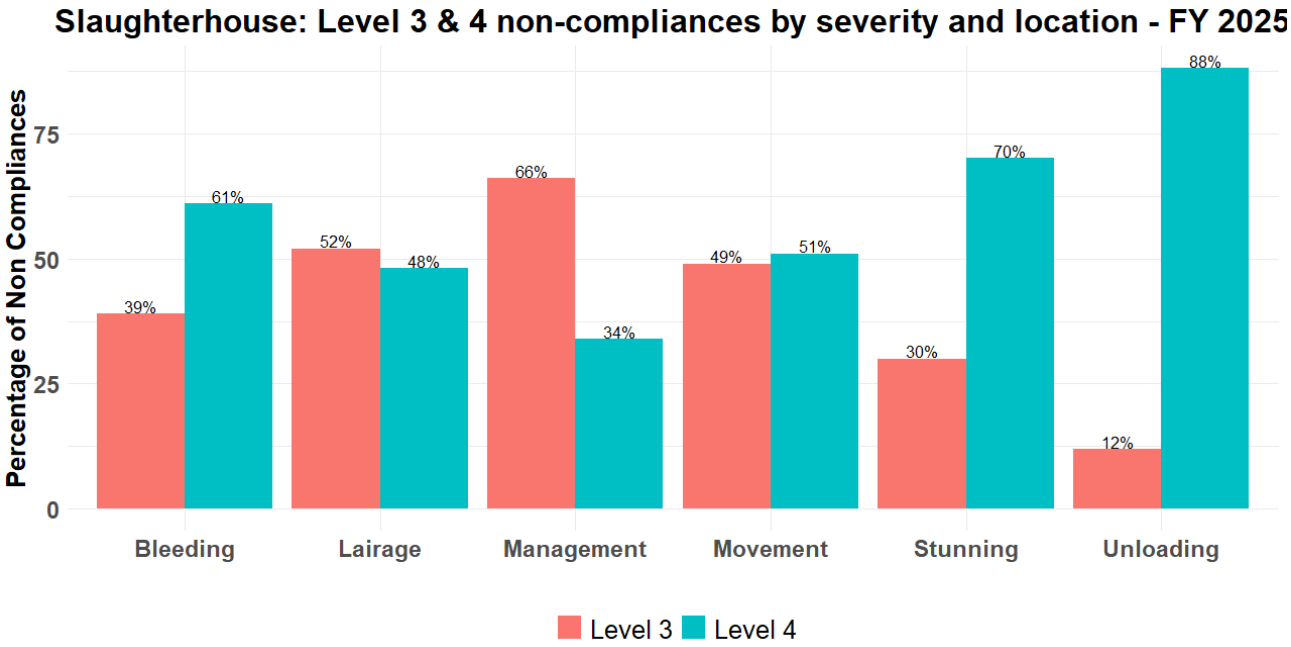


Figure 9 shows the distribution of Level 3 and Level 4 slaughterhouse breaches by process point in FY 2025, expressed as percentage split between the two severities.

Stunning and unloading are the points where the majority of breaches were Level 4. At stunning, 70% of breaches are Level 4, compared with 30% Level 3. This pattern is even more stark at unloading, where 88% of breaches are Level 4 and only 12% are Level 3, indicating that most issues identified at unloading are of higher severity.

Overall, the chart shows that while some process points, such as lairage and management, are associated with a higher share of lower severity breaches, other stages, particularly stunning, unloading, and bleeding are disproportionately associated with Level 4 breaches in FY 2025.

Fig 9: Slaughterhouse breaches by process point – FY 2025.



Section 3: Analysis of transport and on-farm breaches

Figure 10 shows the number of breaches recorded regarding on-farm and transport between FY 2023 and FY 2025. Overall, total transport numbers increased from 3,413 in FY 2024 to 3,829 in FY 2025, representing a 12% increase, while on-farm numbers decreased from 1,051 in FY 2024 to 940 in FY 2025, a 11% decrease, though that is still higher than the 734 on-farm breaches in 2023.

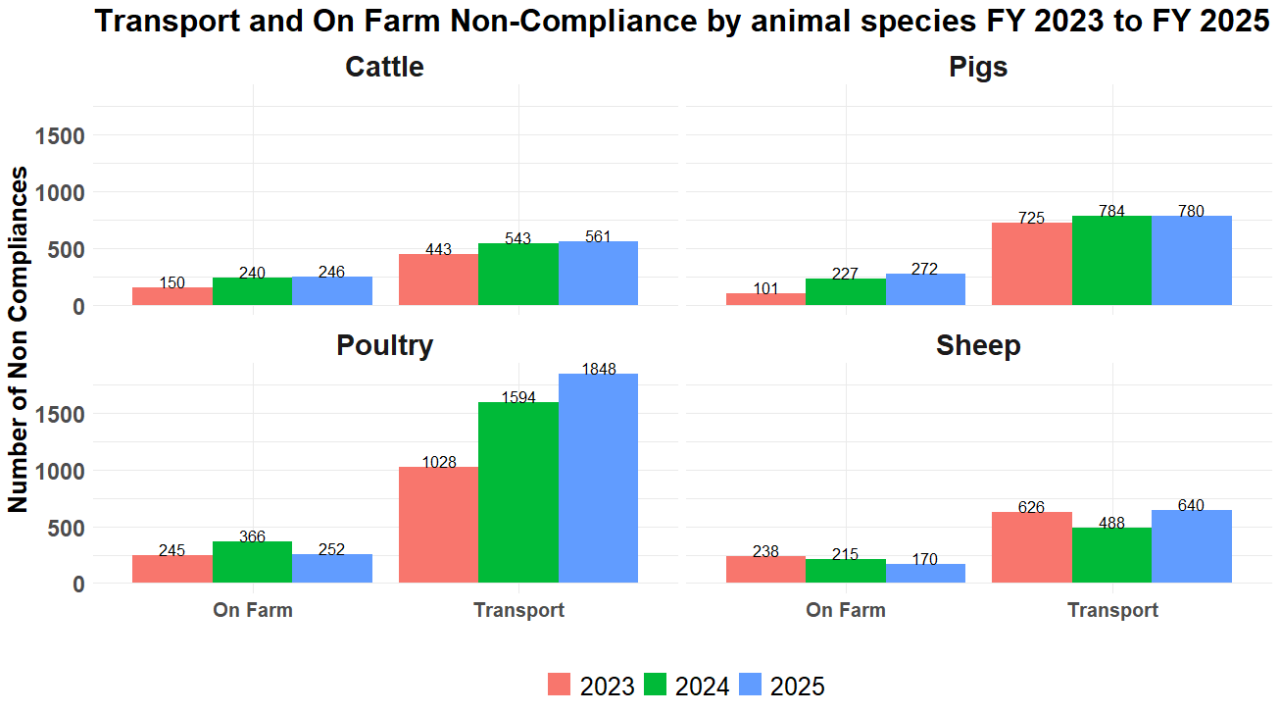
For cattle, on-farm breaches increased last year from 150 in FY 2023 to around 240 in FY 2024 (a 60% increase). They increased again to 246 in FY 2025, representing a further 2.5% increase. Additionally, transport related cattle breaches also increased from 543 in FY 2024 to 561 in FY 2025, an increase of approximately 3%.

For pigs, on-farm breaches increased steadily from 101 in FY 2023 to 227 in FY 2024 (a 125% increase), and further to 272 in FY 2025 (an additional 20% increase).

For poultry, on-farm breaches decreased from 366 in FY 2024 to 252 in FY 2025, representing a 31% decrease. However, transport related poultry breaches rose sharply and consistently across all three years, increasing from 1,028 in FY 2023 to 1,594 in FY 2024, and further to 1,848 in FY 2025.

For sheep, on-farm breaches declined from 238 in FY 2023 to 215 in FY 2024, and further to 170 in FY 2025. In contrast, transport related sheep breaches increased from 488 in FY 2024 to 640 in FY 2025. However, the net increase over the three-year period is only 14, or approximately 2%.

Fig 10: breaches in transport and on-farm by animal species.



Transport related breaches

Table 4 summarises the top 25 transport related breaches across FY 2023 to FY 2025. Trapping remains the most frequent breach for the last two years, increasing from 857 in FY 2023 to 1,239 in FY 2025, representing a 37% increase between FY 2023 and FY 2024 and a further 6% increase in FY 2025. In contrast, Dead on Arrival (DOA) breaches declined sharply over the period, falling from 1,056 in FY 2023 to 581 in FY 2025, an overall 45% reduction, with the largest decrease occurring between FY 2024 and FY 2025 (37% decrease).

Several DOA-related sub-categories show divergent trends. While 'DOA - multiple deaths' declined consistently (from 101 in FY 2023 to 54 in FY 2025), 'DOA - suspected cold/heat stress' increased markedly, rising from 67 in FY 2023 to 172 in FY 2025, including a 69% increase between FY 2024 and FY 2025. New categories also became prominent in FY 2025, notably 'DOA - cause unknown' with 447 breaches. Lameness Score of 3 increased by 31%, while Lameness Score of 4 decreased by 5%.

Finally, the 'Other' category (the sum of all the remaining minor categories except the top twenty-five of FY 2025) increased substantially over the period, rising from 63 in FY 2023 to 182 in FY 2025.

Table 4: Major causes of transport breaches - FY 2023 to 2025

Sr. No.	Reason Type	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	Change 23-24	Change 24-25
1	Trapping	857	1172	1239	37%	6%
2	Dead On Arrival (DOA)	1056	926	581	-12%	-37%
3	Dead On Arrival (DOA) - Cause unknown	0	0	447	*NA*	*NA*
4	Incoordination/unable to walk/ unable to stand	237	245	241	3%	-2%
5	Late stages of pregnancy - Identified at PM	243	203	175	-16%	-14%
6	Dead On Arrival (DOA) - suspected cold/ heat stress	67	102	172	52%	69%
7	Bruising	0	55	105	*NA*	91%
8	Broken limbs	0	93	103	*NA*	11%
9	Broken Leg	65	54	81	-17%	50%
10	Lameness Score of 3	32	59	77	84%	31%
11	Open wounds	0	56	64	*NA*	14%
12	Dead On Arrival (DOA) - Multiple deaths	101	57	54	-44%	-5%
13	Crates/modules poorly maintained	18	22	45	22%	105%
14	Lameness Score of 4	18	44	42	144%	-5%
15	Broken horns	0	33	40	*NA*	21%
16	Prolapse	0	21	31	*NA*	48%
17	Trapped necks	0	0	27	*NA*	*NA*
18	Late stages of pregnancy - Identified at AM	30	29	22	-3%	-24%
19	Dislocation	0	11	20	*NA*	82%
20	Trapped wings	0	0	20	*NA*	*NA*
21	Reckless movement of animals or crates/ modules causing stress or injury	3	1	18	-67%	1700%
22	Lameness Score of 2	29	15	15	-48%	0%
23	Overstocking	0	8	12	*NA*	50%
24	Pododermatitis	0	46	12	*NA*	-74%
25	Heat stress	3	2	10	-33%	400%
26	Other	63	173	182	175%	5%

On-farm related breaches

Table 5 summarises the top on-Farm-related breaches across FY 2023 to FY 2025.

Among the highest, trapping decreased from 126 breaches in FY 2024 to 102 in FY 2025, representing a 19% reduction. Similarly, late stages of pregnancy (identified at PM) declined slightly from 95 to 86 (9% decrease), while DOA fell marginally from 87 to 84, a 3% reduction.

In contrast, Prolapse rose from 35 to 43 (23% increase), 'DOA - suspected cold/heat stress' rose from 10 in FY 2024 to 37 in FY 2025 (270% increase), and for lameness‐related categories, including Lameness Score of 4, which increased by 67%, and Lameness Score of 5, which rose from 4 to 11.

Finally, the 'Other' category (the sum of all the remaining minor categories except the top 25 of FY 2025) decreased over the period, falling from 127 in FY 2023 to 104 in FY 2025.

Table 5: Major causes of on-farm breaches – FY 2023 to 2025

Sr. No.	Reason Type	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	Change 23-24	Change 24-25
1	Trapping	0	126	102	*NA*	-19%
2	Late stages of pregnancy - Identified at PM	0	95	86	*NA*	-9%
3	Dead On Arrival (DOA)	0	87	84	*NA*	-3%
4	Incoordination/unable to walk/ unable to stand	0	115	75	*NA*	-35%
5	Pododermatitis	115	131	61	14%	-53%
6	Dead On Arrival (DOA) - Cause unknown	0	0	54	*NA*	*NA*
7	Prolapse	31	35	43	13%	23%
8	Bruising	77	37	39	-52%	5%
9	Tail bites	31	36	38	16%	6%
10	Dead On Arrival (DOA) - suspected cold/ heat stress	0	10	37	*NA*	270%
11	Open wounds	76	62	36	-18%	-42%
12	Lameness Score of 3	24	42	30	75%	-29%
13	Lameness Score of 4	6	18	30	200%	67%
14	Broken Leg	0	21	19	*NA*	-10%
15	Mastitis	84	28	15	-67%	-46%
16	Hernias	17	9	14	-47%	56%
17	Abscesses	8	11	13	38%	18%
18	Broken horns	27	8	13	-70%	62%
19	Late stages of pregnancy - Identified at AM	0	13	13	*NA*	0%
20	Lameness Score of 2	12	18	11	50%	-39%
21	Lameness Score of 5	3	4	11	33%	175%
22	Broken limbs	61	8	9	-87%	12%
23	Eye trauma	3	3	8	0%	167%
24	Overgrown/Ingrown horn	10	6	7	-40%	17%
25	Arthritis	22	8	5	-64%	-38%
26	Other	127	122	100	-4%	-18%

On-farm and transport related breaches

It should be noted that some of the categories are similar in nature but recorded separately or have changed slightly. For example, there are four 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 on-farm and transport data individually. It therefore makes sense to review them collectively, with some categories collated to present a clearer picture. This is shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Major causes of on-farm and transport breaches – FY 2023 to 2025

Sr. No.	Reason Type	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	Change 23-24	Change 24-25
1	Dead On Arrival (all types)	1224	1197	1433	-2%	20%
2	Trapping	857	1298	1402	51%	8%
3	Lameness/incoordination (all types)	365	563	541	54%	-4%
4	Late stages of pregnancy (all types)	273	340	296	25%	-13%
5	Bruising	77	92	144	19%	57%
6	Broken limbs	61	101	112	66%	11%
7	Broken Leg	65	75	100	15%	33%
8	Open wounds	76	118	100	55%	-15%
9	Prolapse	31	56	74	81%	32%
10	Pododermatitis	115	177	73	54%	-59%
11	Broken horns	27	41	53	52%	29%
12	Crates/modules poorly maintained	18	29	46	61%	59%
13	Tail bites	31	60	41	94%	-32%
14	Dislocation	2	13	20	550%	54%
15	Abscesses	8	16	18	100%	12%
16	Reckless movement of animals or crates/ modules causing stress or injury	3	2	18	-33%	800%
17	Eye trauma	3	7	16	133%	129%
18	Hernias	17	15	16	-12%	7%
19	Mastitis	84	34	16	-60%	-53%
20	Overgrown/Ingrown horn	10	18	16	80%	-11%
21	Arthritis	22	10	12	-55%	20%
22	Overstocking	2	9	12	350%	33%
23	Emaciation	5	12	10	140%	-17%
24	Eye infection	16	6	10	-62%	67%
25	Heat stress	3	2	10	-33%	400%
26	Other	161	189	199	17%	5%

Other* - the sum of all the remaining minor categories in FY 2023, FY 2024 and FY 2025.

Total throughput and breaches

Table 7 shows that, over the period 2021-22 to 2025–26, animal throughput remains broadly stable, with only small year-to-year fluctuations.

In contrast, the number of animals processed not in compliance with welfare shows a sustained improvement. Affected animals in slaughterhouse decreased from 51,132 to 33,679, representing an overall reduction of 34%. Between the last two years 2024-25 to 2025-26, animals affected decreased from 33,920 to 33,679 (0.7% decrease).

This improvement is reflected in the affected rate per million animals, which falls from 49.4 to 32.5 (a 34% reduction overall) across the period. The rate declines by 11.2% in 2023-24 and 25.1% in 2024-25. Between the last two years 2024-25 to 2025-26, affected rate per million falls slightly from 32.8 to 32.5 (0.8% decrease).

Table 7: Throughput Numbers & Animals Affected in Slaughterhouse - FY 2021-2025

Year	Throughput (Billions)	Animal Affected	Affected Rate per Million
2021-22	1.0361	51,132	49.4
2022-23	1.0133	49,898	49.2
2023-24	1.0091	44,105	43.7
2024-25	1.0355	33,920	32.8
2025-26	1.0363	33,679	32.5

Table 8 summarises animal welfare incidents across species, distinguishing between slaughterhouse and on‑farm and transport stages. Poultry accounts for the largest throughput and consequently shows the highest absolute number of affected animals. Sheep and cattle have much lower throughput but show comparatively higher affected rates per million at slaughterhouses, especially sheep (42 per million). However, their on‑farm and transport affected rates remain lower than poultry and pigs. The total affected rate for pigs for on-farm and transport is highest on-farm and transport affected rate per million (1826) for any specie.

Table 8: Animal affected rate by location & species type - FY 2025-26

	Poultry	Sheep	Cattle	Pigs
Throughput	1,014,388,371	11,599,237	8,499,962	1,819,434
Slaughterhouse*				
Total Incidents **	78	28	39	13
Affected Animal ***	33,063	486	99	28

	Poultry	Sheep	Cattle	Pigs
Affected Rate Per Million	33	42	12	15
On-Farm & Transport**				
Total Incidents	2,099	715	808	1,052
Affected Animal	590,255	1,922	956	3,322
Affected Rate Per Million	582	166	112	1,826

* Slaughterhouse affected animal only include cases of Level 4 (Critical) breaches.

** The total incidents row relates to the number of breaches where there was at least 1 listed as number of animals directly affected.

*** Three animals had NA listed for species for a breach where there was no clean drinking water, so do not appear in this table.

**** On-farm & transport affected animals include cases of both Level 3 (Major) and Level 4 (Critical) breaches.