

1990 No. 1242

ANIMALS

The Slaughter of Animals (Humane Conditions)
Regulations 1990

<i>Made - - - -</i>	<i>13th June 1990</i>
<i>Laid before Parliament</i>	<i>14th June 1990</i>
<i>Coming into force</i>	
<i>regulation 14(b)(ii)</i>	<i>5th July 1992</i>
<i>remainder</i>	<i>5th July 1990</i>

The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, in relation to England, and the Secretary of State, in relation to Wales, in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 38, 40(1)(b) and 45 of the Slaughterhouses Act 1974(a) and now vested in them(b), and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf, after consultation with such organisations as appear to them to represent the interests concerned in accordance with subsection (1) of the said section 38, hereby make the following Regulations:

PART I

Title and commencement

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Slaughter of Animals (Humane Conditions) Regulations 1990 and, except for Regulation 14(b)(ii), shall come into force on 5th July 1990.

(2) Regulation 14(b)(ii) of these Regulations shall come into force on 5th July 1992.

Interpretation

2.—(1) In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires,—

“the Act” means the Slaughterhouses Act 1974;

“animals” means cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and horses (including hinnies, asses and mules);

“appropriate Minister” means, in relation to England, the Minister, and in relation to Wales, the Secretary of State;

“casting pen” means a rotary pen capable of casting animals for slaughter;

“cattle”, except in the definition of “animals”, means bulls, cows, heifers and steers and calves which are too large to be restrained manually for slaughter on a cradle or table and, in the definition of “animals”, “cattle” means bulls, cows, heifers, steers and calves;

(a) 1974 c.3; section 38(5) was amended by sections 40(5) and 46(1) of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 (c.48) and section 45 contains a definition of “the Minister” relevant to the exercise of the statutory powers under which these Regulations are made.

(b) In the case of the Secretary of State, by virtue of S.I. 1978/272.

“contravention” in relation to any provision of these Regulations includes a failure to comply with that provision and “contravenes” shall be construed accordingly;

“knacker’s yard” means any building, premises or place used in connection with the business of killing animals whose flesh is not intended for sale for human consumption;

“lairage” means any premises or yard used for the confinement of animals awaiting slaughter in a slaughterhouse or knacker’s yard and, for the purposes of regulations 5, 6, 7, 8(1)(a), 13 (other than 13(1)(b)), 20 and 21 below, includes a field so used;

“occupier” means—

- (a) in relation to a knacker’s yard or to a lairage forming part of or used in connection with a knacker’s yard, the person holding a licence granted under section 1 of the Act in respect of that knacker’s yard;
- (b) in relation to a slaughterhouse provided by the local authority or to a lairage forming part of or used in connection with such a slaughterhouse, that local authority;
- (c) in relation to a port slaughterhouse or to a lairage forming part of or used in connection with such a slaughterhouse, the occupier of that slaughterhouse; and
- (d) in relation to any other slaughterhouse or to a lairage forming part of or used in connection with such a slaughterhouse, the person holding a licence granted under section 1 of the Act in respect of that slaughterhouse;

“port slaughterhouse” means a slaughterhouse forming part of a place at which imported animals are permitted to be landed under the Animal Health Act 1981(a);

“religious method” means, in relation to the slaughter of an animal, slaughter by the Jewish method referred to in section 36(3)(a) of the Act or by the Mohammedan method referred to in section 36(3)(b) of the Act;

“restraining pen” means a pen or compartment which is—

- (a) suitable for restraining cattle in an upright position while they are being slaughtered by the religious method;
- (b) constructed so as to permit one animal at a time to be confined in it without discomfort and so as to prevent any substantial movement of the animal forwards, backwards or sideways once it has been placed in position for slaughter; and
- (c) approved by the appropriate Minister under regulation 23(2) below;

“slaughterhall” means that part of a slaughterhouse or knacker’s yard in which animals are slaughtered or in which the dressing of any carcase is carried out;

“slaughterhouse” means any building, premises or place used in connection with the business of killing animals whose flesh is intended for sale for human consumption;

“sticking” means the severance of the major blood vessels in the neck or immediately anterior to the heart by means of a knife and “stick” and “stuck” shall be construed accordingly;

“stunning”, in relation to an animal, means rendering the animal instantaneously insensible to pain until death supervenes and includes anaesthesia by carbon dioxide gas, and “stun” and “stunned” shall be construed accordingly;

“stunning pen” means—

- (a) until 5th July 1992, a pen or compartment which is suitable for confining cattle while they are being stunned and which is constructed so that it—
 - (i) permits one animal at a time to be confined in it without discomfort, and
 - (ii) prevents any substantial movement forwards, backwards or sideways of an animal confined in it; and
- (b) after 5th July 1992, a pen or compartment which is suitable for confining cattle while they are being stunned and which is constructed so that it—
 - (i) permits one animal at a time to be confined in it without discomfort,
 - (ii) prevents any substantial movement forwards, backwards or sideways of an animal confined in it,

(a) 1981 c.22.

(iii) restricts the movement of the head of an animal confined in it so as to permit accurate stunning and allows the head of an animal to be released immediately after the animal has been stunned, and

(iv) allows unimpeded access to the forehead of an animal confined in it; "vehicle" means any vehicle (including a trailer of any description and the detachable body of a trailer) constructed or adapted for use on a road.

(2) Any provision of these Regulations which applies to an animal awaiting slaughter applies until the animal is dead.

PART II

Construction and equipment of slaughterhouses, knacker's yards and lairages

3. Where, at any time after 5th July 1990, any premises are constructed or adapted for use as a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard it shall be the duty of the occupier of those premises to ensure that facilities are provided there for the purpose of unloading animals out of vehicles directly into a lairage and that those facilities consist of a fixed ramp or other facilities which are of a height and design suitable for that purpose; and it shall be the duty of such person to ensure that any fixed ramps or other facilities which are so provided are fitted with side railings (or some other means of protection) designed and constructed so as to prevent animals from falling off them.

4.—(1) The occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard shall ensure that the premises are constructed and maintained so as to prevent any injury being caused to any animals confined there.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1) above, it shall be the duty of the occupier of a slaughterhouse, or of a knacker's yard where animals are held prior to slaughter, to ensure that—

- (a) the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard contains a suitable lairage which is—
 - (i) adequate in size and construction for the number of animals confined there,
 - (ii) constructed so as to provide shelter from the sun and adverse weather for every animal confined there,
 - (iii) constructed so as to enable it to be thoroughly cleansed,
 - (iv) provided with racks, mangers or other equipment for containing food and with drinking facilities which (in all cases) are suitable for the feeding and watering of all the animals confined in the lairage, are easily accessible to such animals, and where practicable, are fixed, and
 - (v) adequately ventilated and adequately lighted for the proper conduct of all the operations carried on there;
- (b) there are no sharp edges or protrusions in the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard with which any animals may come into contact;
- (c) the walls of the slaughterhall are constructed, and the floor of the slaughterhall is channelled, so as to enable any blood and waste matter to be effectively swilled away;
- (d) the slaughterhall is adequately lighted for the proper conduct of all operations carried on there; and
- (e) the place in the slaughterhall at which any sheep, goats or calves are slaughtered is sited so as to minimise the amount of handling that is necessary to move such animals from any lairage or holding pen in which they are confined to that place.

PART III

Conditions to be observed in connection with the confinement and treatment of animals awaiting slaughter

5. It shall be the duty of the occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard or lairage to ensure that no animals are unloaded from a vehicle in the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard or lairage in such a way as to cause unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress to such animals.

6. No person shall—

- (a) cause unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress to any animal which is awaiting slaughter in a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard or which is confined in a lairage; or
- (b) permit any such pain or distress of which he knows or may reasonably be expected to know.

7. The occupier of a lairage shall ensure that—

- (a) a sufficient quantity of clean drinking water is provided for an animal on its arrival at the lairage and at all times thereafter; and
- (b) a sufficient quantity of wholesome food is provided for an animal on its arrival at the lairage and twice daily thereafter, except that no animal need be fed within 12 hours of the time at which it is slaughtered.

8.—(1) The occupier of a lairage shall ensure that—

- (a) animals confined in the lairage have—
 - (i) sufficient space to stand up, lie down and turn around, and
 - (ii) easy access to the food and water provided for them,
- (b) subject to paragraph (2) below, an adequate quantity of suitable bedding is provided for animals confined in the lairage from one day to the next; and
- (c) the lairage, and the equipment contained in it, is kept clean and in good repair at all times.

(2) The provisions of paragraph (1)(b) above shall not apply in the case of animals kept on a slatted or mesh floor in a lairage.

9.—(1) The occupier of a lairage shall ensure that within the lairage—

- (a) animals of one species are kept in separate pens from animals of another species;
- (b) fractious animals are kept in separate pens from other animals and separate from each other; and
- (c) horned cattle are kept apart from each other and from other cattle (except that they need not be kept apart from horned or other cattle with which they have been reared).

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(b) above "fractious animals" are animals which are likely to injure other animals.

10. No person shall deposit any fodder in a lairage otherwise than in the racks, mangers or other suitable equipment.

11. No person shall keep in a field any animal awaiting slaughter if the weather or the condition of the field is likely to cause unnecessary distress to the animal.

12. The occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard shall ensure that—

- (a) no blood or other refuse from the slaughterhall is deposited in or allowed to flow into a lairage; and
- (b) as far as is practicable, the blood and the refuse is removed from the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard in such a way that animals awaiting slaughter cannot see or smell such blood or refuse.

13.—(1) No person shall, in a slaughterhouse, knacker's yard or lairage,—

- (a) hit, prod, or handle an animal in a manner which is likely to cause it any unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress;
- (b) lead or drive any animal over any ground or floor the nature or condition of which is likely to cause the animal to slip or fall;
- (c) lift or drag an animal by the head, feet, tail or by any other part of its body in a manner which is likely to cause the animal any unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress;
- (d) lift a sheep off the ground by its fleece;
- (e) subject to paragraph (2) below, use any instrument which is capable of inflicting an electric shock to control any animal.

(2) The prohibition in paragraph (1)(e) above shall not apply to the use of an instrument mentioned in that paragraph on the hindquarters of any cattle or adult pigs which are refusing to move forward when there is space for them to do so.

PART IV

Conditions to be observed in connection with the stunning and slaughter of animals

14. The occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard shall ensure that—

- (a) a mechanically operated instrument for stunning animals is kept, in good working order, in the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard (in addition to any other instrument or equipment used for stunning or slaughtering animals there) and is available for immediate use in an emergency;
- (b) any electrical equipment used for stunning an animal in the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard—
 - (i) is set to deliver a current which is sufficient to render the animal instantaneously insensible to pain, and
 - (ii) contains a device which will prevent it from delivering a current below that which it has been set to deliver;
- (c) cattle are not placed in a stunning or restraining pen in the slaughterhouse or in a stunning pen in the knacker's yard unless—
 - (i) in the case of an animal which is to be stunned prior to slaughter, the person who is to carry out the stunning is ready to do so immediately the animal is placed in the pen, or
 - (ii) in the case of an animal which is to be slaughtered in a slaughterhouse by a religious method, the person who is to carry out the slaughter is ready to make the incision immediately the animal is placed in the pen;
- (d) an animal is not shackled or hoisted in the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard until it has been effectively stunned or, in the case of an animal which is to be slaughtered in a slaughterhouse by a religious method, until the appropriate period referred to in regulation 25(2) has elapsed and only if it is unconscious; and
- (e) where an animal to which regulation 23 does not apply is to be slaughtered in a slaughterhouse by a religious method on a cradle or table, only one animal is placed on such cradle or table at any one time.

15.—(1) Subject to paragraph (3) below, no person shall stun any cattle in a slaughterhouse unless at the time they are stunned they are confined in a stunning pen or in a restraining pen which (in either case) is in good working order.

(2) No person shall stun any cattle in a knacker's yard unless at the time they are stunned they are either confined in a stunning pen which is in good working order or their heads are securely fastened in such a position as to enable them to be stunned without the infliction of unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress.

(3) The provisions of paragraph (1) above shall not apply to any animal slaughtered in accordance with regulation 21(b) or (d) below.

16.—(1) No person shall in a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard—

- (a) stun any cattle with a mechanically operated instrument applied to the back of the head or stun any other animal in this manner except when access to the front of the head is prevented by the animal's horns;
- (b) use any electric tongs on an animal except for the purpose of stunning the animal on the application of such tongs; or
- (c) give any electrical stimulation to, or carry out any dressing procedure on, an animal which has been stuck before a period of—
 - (i) 20 seconds in the case of sheep, goats and pigs, and
 - (ii) 30 seconds in the case of cattle,has elapsed after it has been stuck.

(2) In paragraphs (1)(a) and (1)(c)(ii) above, "cattle" means bulls, cows, heifers, steers and calves.

17.—(1) The occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard shall ensure that no person uses any instrument for stunning or slaughtering any animal in the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard unless that person's ability and physical condition at the time enable him to use it without inflicting any unnecessary pain on the animal.

(2) No person shall stun or slaughter any animal in a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard unless he—

- (a) uses such instruments or appliances;
- (b) adopts such methods; and
- (c) takes such other precautions,

as may be necessary to ensure that the animal is not caused any unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress.

18.—(1) The occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard shall ensure that animals which have been stunned there are stuck without delay.

(2) Any person engaged in the slaughter of animals in a slaughterhouse or in a knacker's yard shall ensure that—

- (a) no animal is stunned unless it is possible for it to be stuck afterwards without delay;
- (b) after any animals have been stunned they are stuck without delay; and
- (c) subject to paragraph (3) below, if that person is responsible for the stunning, shackling, hoisting and sticking of any animals, or for any of those operations, such operations are carried out by him consecutively in respect of one animal before being so carried out by him in respect of another animal.

(3) In paragraph (2)(c) above, "stunning" does not include the anaesthetising of pigs by carbon dioxide gas.

19. The occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard shall ensure that animals which have been stunned or slaughtered there—

- (a) are not dragged over any other animals; and
- (b) are not left in a position where they can be trampled on by other animals.

20. No person shall stick any animal in a slaughterhouse, knacker's yard or lairage within sight of any other animal.

21. The occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard or lairage (as the case may be) shall ensure that—

- (a) any animal in the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard or lairage which is in pain because of injury or any other cause is slaughtered without delay and before any other animals which are awaiting slaughter there;

- (b) any animal which is confined in the lairage and which would suffer pain if moved from there is slaughtered in that lairage;
- (c) any animal in the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard or lairage which is too young to take solid food is slaughtered without delay after its arrival there;
- (d) any animal which, because of injury or any other cause, cannot be unloaded from a vehicle on its arrival at the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard or lairage without being caused pain or suffering is slaughtered forthwith on the vehicle by a mechanically operated instrument; and
- (e) any sick or disabled animal in the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard or lairage is kept apart from all other animals pending its slaughter.

22. No person shall install a casting pen in any slaughterhouse save that, until 5th July 1992, a person may, with the consent of the appropriate Minister, replace a casting pen of the Weinberg, Dyne or North British Rotary type or such other type as may have been approved by the appropriate Minister before 5th July 1990 under regulation 17 of the Slaughter of Animals (Prevention of Cruelty) Regulations 1958(a) with a casting pen of any such type.

23.—(1) No person shall slaughter any cattle in a slaughterhouse by a religious method other than in an upright position in a restraining pen which has been approved by the appropriate Minister and which the appropriate Minister is satisfied has been installed in such a manner as to ensure that it will operate efficiently save that, until 5th July 1992, in slaughterhouses operating before 5th July 1990, a casting pen of the Weinberg, Dyne or North British Rotary type or such other type as may have been approved by the appropriate Minister before 5th July 1990 under regulation 17 of the Slaughter of Animals (Prevention of Cruelty) Regulations 1958 may continue to be used for such slaughter.

(2) The appropriate Minister may, for the purposes of paragraph (1) above, give his approval to a restraining pen but he shall not give any such approval unless he is satisfied that the pen is of such a size and design, and is capable of being operated, so as to protect an animal from injury or unnecessary distress while confined in it or while entering it and, in particular, unless he is satisfied that the pen—

- (a) contains an effective means of restraining any animal confined in it (including a suitable head restraint for that purpose); and
- (b) contains a means of support which will take the weight of an animal during and following slaughter in it.

24. The occupier of a slaughterhouse in which there is a restraining pen shall ensure that—

- (a) the means of restraining and supporting an animal confined in such a pen described in regulation 23(2)(a) and (b) above are used in respect of any animal confined in it;
- (b) the pen is kept in good working order; and
- (c) if it has been modified after it has been approved by the appropriate Minister, the pen is not used again until a fresh approval is given by the appropriate Minister.

25.—(1) Any person engaged in slaughtering any animals in a slaughterhouse by a religious method shall—

- (a) ensure that each animal is slaughtered by the severance, by rapid, uninterrupted movements of a knife, of both its carotid arteries and both its jugular veins; and
- (b) before each animal is slaughtered, inspect the knife to be used and ensure that it is not used unless it is undamaged and of sufficient size and sharpness to be capable of being used to slaughter the animal in the manner described in subparagraph (a) above.

(2) No person shall move an animal which is being slaughtered in a slaughterhouse by a religious method before it is unconscious and in any case not before a period of not less than—

(a) S.I. 1958/2166; in the case of the Secretary of State by virtue of S.I. 1978/272.

- (a) 20 seconds in the case of sheep and goats, and
 - (b) 30 seconds in the case of cattle,
- has elapsed after it has been slaughtered in the manner described in paragraph (1)(a) above.

(3) In paragraph (2)(b) above, "cattle" means bulls, cows, heifers, steers and calves.

26. Any licence granted by a local authority (otherwise than by way of renewal of an existing licence) to any person under section 39(1) of the Act shall, unless that person has worked as a slaughterman for at least 3 months and has satisfied a local authority or, in the case of the slaughter of animals by the Jewish method, the Rabbinical Commission, of his ability to slaughter animals with the infliction of as little pain and suffering as possible, be granted subject to a condition that he shall not slaughter any animal except under the supervision of a person holding a licence in force under that section which is not subject to a similar condition.

PART V

Additional provisions for knacker's yards

27. The occupier of a knacker's yard shall ensure that any animal delivered to the knacker's yard, or to any lairage used in connection with that yard, is—

- (a) kept on those premises until it has been slaughtered; and
- (b) slaughtered as soon as practicable after it has been delivered there and in any event within 48 hours from the time of such delivery.

28. No person shall use for any work a horse which has been delivered to a knacker's yard.

PART VI

Additional provisions for horses

29.—(1) The occupier of a lairage in which any horses are confined shall ensure that—

- (a) the lairage—
 - (i) is divided into pens or stalls by means of permanently fixed partitions, and
 - (ii) contains at least one loose box,which pens or stalls and loose box are constructed so as to minimise the danger of any horse injuring itself or any other animal confined in the lairage;
- (b) horses confined there are not caused any injury or unnecessary distress by reason of—
 - (i) being kept in a loose-box which is overcrowded,
 - (ii) being kept in a loose-box with other horses of a different size or age, or
 - (iii) any other cause; and
- (c) a horse of one of the following descriptions is kept in a separate pen, stall or loose-box from any other horse in the lairage, that is to say—
 - (i) a stallion,
 - (ii) a cryptorchid,
 - (iii) a heavily pregnant female,
 - (iv) a female with a foal at foot,
 - (v) a horse whose hind feet are shod.

(2) The occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard in which any horses are slaughtered shall ensure that a separate room or bay is provided there for use for the slaughter of horses.

30.—(1) Subject to paragraph (3) below, no person shall slaughter a horse in a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard except in a room or a bay which has been provided for the slaughter of horses by the occupier of the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard in accordance with regulation 29(2) above.

(2) Subject to paragraph (3) below, no person shall slaughter a horse in a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard—

- (a) in a room or a bay in which there are the remains of a horse or other animal; or
- (b) within the sight of any other horse.

(3) The provisions of paragraphs (1) and (2) above shall not apply in the case of a horse slaughtered (other than by being stuck) in accordance with the provisions of regulation 21(b) or (d) above.

PART VII

Notices, records and returns

31. The occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard in which horses are slaughtered shall notify the local authority which has granted a licence in respect of those premises under section 1 of the Act of every place where horses intended for slaughter there are kept by him or on his behalf.

32.—(1) Subject to regulation 35 below, the occupier of a slaughterhouse in which horses are slaughtered shall keep a record of all horses or carcasses of horses received into the slaughterhouse showing—

- (a) the date on which each horse or carcass was received into the slaughterhouse and the date on which each horse was slaughtered; and
- (b) the name and address of the person on whose behalf the horse was slaughtered or from whom the horse or carcass (as the case may be) has been received by the occupier of the slaughterhouse.

(2) The occupier of a slaughterhouse (other than a local authority) or knacker's yard in which horses are slaughtered shall, during the month of January in each year, render to the local authority of the area in which the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard is situated a return showing the total number of horses slaughtered during the year ending on the immediately preceding thirty first day of December.

33. Subject to regulation 35 below, the occupier of a knacker's yard shall keep a record of all animals and carcasses of animals received into the yard showing—

- (a) the type or a description of each animal or carcass received;
- (b) the date on which the animal or carcass was received into the knacker's yard and the date on which the animal was slaughtered; and
- (c) the name and address of the person from whom the animal or carcass was purchased or received by the occupier of the yard.

34. Every record required to be kept by an occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard under regulations 32 and 33 above shall be retained by him at the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard to which it relates for a period of 12 months from the date of the transaction to which it relates and he shall, on demand made at any reasonable time by an authorised officer of the appropriate Minister or of the local authority of the area in which the slaughterhouse or knacker's yard is situated, produce such record and allow a copy of it or an extract from it to be taken.

35. Where, under any bye-law made by a local authority, the occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard keeps a record of animals brought into those premises and of the manner in which such animals and the various parts of such animals are disposed of, the retention by the occupier of that record shall, as respects the particulars mentioned in it, be taken as compliance with the provisions of regulations 32 and 33 above.

PART VIII

Offences and penalties

36.—(1) If any person contravenes any of the provisions of these Regulations he shall be guilty of an offence except that such a person shall not be guilty of an offence in respect of any such contravention if he proves that by reason of an accident or other emergency the contravention was necessary for preventing injury or suffering to any person or animal.

(2) Any person guilty of an offence against these Regulations shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or to both.

(3) Where any person convicted of an offence in respect of any contravention of any provision of these Regulations (including any person convicted of an offence by virtue of the provisions of section 44(1) of the Magistrates' Courts Act 1980(a)) is the holder of a licence granted under section 1 of the Act in respect of the premises where the offence was committed, the court may, in addition to any other punishment, cancel the licence.

Revocation

37. The Slaughter of Animals (Prevention of Cruelty) Regulations 1958(b), the Slaughter of Animals (Prevention of Cruelty) (Amendment) Regulations 1959(c) and the Slaughter of Animals (Prevention of Cruelty) (Amendment) Regulations 1984(d) are revoked.

In Witness whereof the Official Seal of the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is hereunto affixed on 13th June 1990.



John Selwyn Gummer
Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

12th June 1990

David Hunt
Secretary of State for Wales

(a) 1980 c.43.
(b) S.I. 1958/2166.
(c) S.I. 1959/1493.
(d) S.I. 1984/1311.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations revoke and re-enact, with certain amendments, the provisions of the Slaughter of Animals (Prevention of Cruelty) Regulations 1958 (as amended).

The Regulations continue to contain requirements relating to—

(1) the construction and the equipment of slaughterhouses, knackers' yards and lairages (Part II);

(2) conditions to be observed in connection with the confinement and treatment of animals awaiting slaughter in a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard (Part III);

(3) conditions to be observed in connection with the stunning and slaughter of animals in a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard (Parts IV and V);

(4) additional conditions to be observed in connection with the slaughter of horses in a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard (Part VI);

(5) records to be kept by the occupier of a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard (Part VII); and

(6) offences and penalties (Part VIII).

The changes of substance made by these Regulations are the inclusion of—

(1) a requirement that, after 5th July 1992, a stunning pen used for the purpose of the Regulations must be constructed so that it restricts the movement of the head of an animal confined in it so as to permit accurate stunning (regulations 2(1) and 15);

(2) a requirement that, after 5th July 1990, fixed ramps (or other suitable facilities) for unloading animals out of vehicles must be provided in any premises which are constructed or adapted for use as a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard (regulation 3);

(3) a requirement that sufficient space must be provided for animals confined in a lairage so as to allow them to stand up, lie down and turn around (regulation 8);

(4) restrictions on the methods of handling animals including a prohibition on the hitting, prodding or handling of animals in a manner likely to cause them unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress (regulation 13);

(5) a requirement that any electrical equipment used for stunning an animal is set to deliver a current which is sufficient to render it instantaneously insensible to pain and that such equipment must contain a device to prevent it from delivering a current below that which it has been set to deliver (regulation 14(b));

(6) a prohibition on the stunning of any cattle with a mechanically operated instrument applied to the back of the head and on the stunning of any other animal in this way (except when access to the front of the head is prevented by the animals' horns) (regulation 16(1)(a));

(7) requirements to prevent delays occurring between the stunning and the subsequent sticking of animals (regulation 18);

(8) a prohibition on the religious slaughter of any cattle other than in an upright position in a restraining pen approved by the appropriate Minister (the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food or the Secretary of State for Wales) except that, until 5th July 1992, in slaughterhouses operating before 5th July 1990, certain specified casting pens and pens of other types which have been approved by the appropriate Minister under the 1958 Regulations may continue to be used for such slaughter (regulation 23); and

(9) new requirements relating to slaughter by religious methods (regulation 25).