Vocational training on animal transport: focus on Control Posts

S. D’Albenzio, K. de Roest, B. Alessandrini
In the last two decades, Istituto G. Caporale has invested consistently on testing innovative training methods, developing learning programmes and validating training management models able to respond to the ever-changing and constantly increasing demand for veterinary training at international level, mainly focusing on official veterinary services.
Residential training
Laboratory training
In-country training
Web-based knowledge development initiatives

eLearning

Social networks
More than **35 million cattle, pigs, sheep and horses** are transported throughout Europe every year. Animal protection during transport is regulated by the Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, which significantly improved, from 2007 onwards, the number of injured, dehydrated and exhausted animals, as well as the number of animals that die during journey.
Vocational training on animal transport: background

Notably, 90% of these improvements were on long-distance and international animal transport. Conditions of transported animals have also improved because of better vehicles and higher AW awareness among transporters, farmers and other stakeholders involved in the practice, including the managers of Control Posts (CPs), where animals transported over very long journeys must stop and rest according to the Regulation 1/2005.
Vocational training on animal transport: background

In Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005:

- the word «training» appears 11 times
- the word «competence/s» appears 15 times

5. No person shall drive, or act as an attendant on a road vehicle transporting domestic Equidae or domestic animals of the bovine, ovine, caprine or porcine species or poultry unless he holds a certificate of competence pursuant to Article 17(2). The certificate of competence shall be made available to the competent authority when the animals are transported.

Article 16

Training of staff and equipment of the competent authority

The competent authority shall ensure that its staff are duly trained and equipped to check data recorded by:

- the recording equipment for road transport as provided for by Regulation (EEC) No 3821/85;

- the navigation system.

(5) except the handling of animals only to persons who have followed training courses on the relevant technical rules set out in Annex I.
Whereas:

...Poor welfare is often due to lack of education.

Therefore, training should be prerequisite for any person handling animals during transport and training should be provided only by organisations approved by the competent authorities...
Art. 6 (5)
Transporters shall entrust the handling of the animals to personnel who have received training on the relevant provisions of Annexes I and II

Art. 9
Operators of assembly centres ...shall in addition entrust the handling of animals only to personnel who have followed training courses on the relevant technical rules set out in Annex I
Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005

Art. 16
The **competent authority** shall ensure that its staff are duly training and equipped to check data recorded by recording equipment and navigation systems.

Art. 17
Training courses shall be available for personnel of transporters and assembly centres...

Annex IV
Is completely dedicated to training for road drivers and attendants as referred to in Art. 6 (5) and Art. 17(1)
In 2011 and 2012, the DG SANCO funded two grants aiming at improving the conditions of transported animals and of the Control Posts located at the cross roads of important flows of animals transported over long journeys in the EU, establishing a quality certification scheme for Control Posts and for long journey transport of animals.
DG SANCO project on High quality Control Posts

eLearning was a key component of the project: “Renovation and promoting high quality control posts in the European Union”, coordinated by Centro Ricerche Produzioni Animali S.p.A. (C.R.P.A.) of Reggio Emilia (I), with the technical support of eleven scientific partners belonging to nine EU Member States, where a significant number of the EU Control Posts are located.

www.controlpost.eu
**General aim**
Enforcement of animal welfare during transport

**Key concepts**
- Responsibility
- Common background
- Different perspectives for a positive synergy

**Barriers**
- High costs for traditional knowledge transfer at EU level
- Scarce availability of interested parties in full-time training
- Different linguistic skills

**Solution**
eLearning

**Why**
- Cost – efficiency (increased student enrollment would result in lower cost)
- Flexibility in time and location (cost effectiveness)
- Possible localisation in different languages
The production cycle

The eLearning content drafting phase was coordinated by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) and authored by SLU itself, and other scientific partners like FLI, IRTA, KULEUVEN, NAGREF and WUR.

The module design, development, implementation, delivery and evaluation were coordinated by Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell’Abruzzo e del Molise “G. Caporale” (IZSAM).
The project outcomes

**Four eLearning modules in eight languages** targeted to **transporters, CP staff, official veterinary inspectors, and all the stakeholders**. They are focused on the EU legislation, AW principles, AW assessment protocols, biosecurity measures, documentary checks, navigation systems, to improve the welfare of animals hosted in CPs and transported over long journeys.

**Total**

**32 asincronous courses in English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Arabic and Russian**
The project outcomes

The courses have **5 or 6 units** in total. Users can study the different topics selecting them in a free way according to their training needs.

In order to **assess** the acquired **knowledge**, students have to fill-in an **entry and a final test**. The platform allows users to send also private messages within the system. This can be done by accessing the **“messages” area**. Moreover, a **virtual forum** is foreseen to **enhance interaction** among participants and authors.

**At the end** of the course the platform **automatically** issues an **attendance certificate** to participants who successfully completed the eLearning activities.
At the conclusion of the production cycle, the modules were tested in April-June 2013, recruiting participants among EU Member States, with the purpose of assessing the learning contents, functionalities and utilities and design further improvements of the tools. During the testing phase, 22 classes were implemented and 92 participants from 9 countries were selected to evaluate the modules localised in English, French, German, Greek, Italian and Spanish.
The eLearning courses were delivered through an open source but customised Learning Management System (LMS) named Docebo. Four eTutors supported the participants at technical and content level, stimulating their involvement and motivation. Sixty-two out of ninety-two registered participants, completed the set training process. To access the platform, users log in by entering the credentials automatically provided by the platform. This platform, designed for learning objects delivery, as well as participants enrollment and interaction, does not require additional plugins. It’s tested on: Windows (Xp, Vista, 7), Linux and Mac OS.
The medium number of **study sessions** per participant were **7.2** (from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 28). *This information is related just to the ones who completed the learning process.* Another relevant figure concerns the time dedicated to the study: **on a total of 200 hours** spent on the platform by the entire group of beneficiaries, each one studied **about 3 hours**, exactly the time estimation done by the authors’ team during the design of the training contents. **Fourteen people** did not conclude the learning process. They **made 77 learning sessions in total** (medium figure **5.5 sessions each**) and dedicated to the study quite the same number of hours (3h) that participants who effectively completed the entire process devoted to this eLearning experience.
Customer satisfaction analysis

At the end of the learning path, learners were asked to fill in a test to assess their improvements and a customer satisfaction questionnaire.

This contains questions on previous experience in eLearning courses, general evaluation, problems met, quality of the training materials, sensations experienced during the study, interest in future eLearning initiatives, and application of the acquired knowledge to daily job.
Customer satisfaction analysis

Is this your first eLearning course?
- Yes: 56%
- No: 42%
- N.A.: 2%

In general terms, are you satisfied by this eLearning experience?
- Very Satisfied: 58%
- Satisfied: 16%
- Neutral: 6%
- Dissatisfied: 6%
- Very Dissatisfied: 3%

Do you think there are advantages in eLearning, if compared with face to face training sessions?
- Yes: 94%
- No: 6%

Achievement of the learning objectives
- No answer: 2%
- Unsatisfactory: 3%
- Fair: 31%
- Good: 45%
- Very good: 13%
- Excellent: 6%
Customer satisfaction analysis

Do you consider eLearning a good method for transferring basic knowledge to Official Veterinarians, Transport Companies and Control Post staff?

- Yes: 94%
- No: 2%
- No answers: 4%

Do you think you will apply to your job the new knowledge/skills acquired within this training course?

- Yes: 90%
- No: 8%
- No answer: 2%
Residential training under the BTSF Initiative

Since 2007, Istituto G. Caporale has put in place BTSF training courses since now attended by over 750 official veterinarians from Member States, Candidate and Third Countries.

In 2013 and 2014 14 courses will be implemented with the purpose of providing advanced knowledge and expertise on various AW issues: 2 of them are focused on animal welfare during transport.

The first edition will be held in Portoroz (Slovenia) & Trieste (I) from 24 to 27 September 2013, the second one in Poland from 24 to 27 June 2014.

http://www.sancotraining.izs.it
Conclusions

Law expects that **people are able to do**.

When you train people and **you want to deliver more than a certificate** ...

You have to go over, and try to obtain change: **people able to be, to behave, to share values and attitudes towards animals**.
Thank you for your attention!