

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BEFORE THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

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| In re: |) | |
| |) | |
| Charles A. Carter d/b/a |) | A.Q. Docket No. 09-0024 |
| C.C. Horses Transport; and |) | |
| Jeremy Pollitt d/b/a |) | |
| Wildcat Trucking, |) | Decision and Order as to |
| |) | only JEREMY POLLITT |
| Respondents |) | by Reason of Default |

1. The Complaint, filed on November 17, 2008, alleges, among other things, that Jeremy Pollitt, doing business as Wildcat Trucking (one of the two respondents), an owner/shipper of horses (9 C.F.R. § 88.1), failed to comply with the Commercial Transportation of Equines for Slaughter Act (7 U.S.C. § 1901 note) and the regulations promulgated thereunder (9 C.F.R. § 88.1 *et seq.*). The Complainant seeks \$7,200.00 in civil penalties (9 C.F.R. § 88.6) for Jeremy Pollitt’s failures to comply on about December 16, 2004, and on or about March 30, 2005.

Parties and Counsel

2. The Complainant is the Administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, United States Department of Agriculture (frequently herein “APHIS” or “Complainant”). APHIS is represented by Thomas N. Bolick, Esq., Office of the General Counsel (Regulatory Division), United States Department of Agriculture, South Building Room 2319, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250.

3. The Respondent, Jeremy Pollitt, doing business as Wildcat Trucking (frequently herein “Respondent Pollitt” or “Respondent”) has failed to appear.

Procedural History

4. APHIS’ Motion for Adoption of Proposed Default Decision and Order (as to only Respondent Jeremy Pollitt, doing business as Wildcat Trucking), filed February 18, 2009, is before me. Respondent Pollitt was served on February 28, 2009 with a copy of that Motion and a copy of the Proposed Default Decision and Order and failed to respond.

5. Regarding service of the Complaint, on December 18, 2008, Respondent Pollitt was served¹ with a copy of the Complaint, together with a copy of the Hearing Clerk’s notice letter and a copy of the Rules of Practice. *See* 7 C.F.R. §1.130 *et seq.* The Respondent’s answer was due to be filed within 20 days after service, according to section 1.136(a) of the Rules of Practice. 7 C.F.R. § 1.136(a). The time for filing an answer to the Complaint expired on January 7, 2009. Respondent Pollitt failed to file an answer, so he is in default, pursuant to section 1.136(c) of the Rules of Practice. 7 C.F.R. § 1.136(c).

6. Respondent Pollitt was informed in the Complaint and the letter accompanying the Complaint that an answer should be filed with the Hearing Clerk within 20 days after service of the complaint, and that failure to file an answer within 20 days after service of the complaint constitutes an admission of the allegations in the complaint and waiver of a hearing. Respondent Pollitt never did file an answer to the Complaint. Failure to file an

¹ First, the certified mailing was returned, marked by the United States Postal Service “RETURN TO SENDER” “Unclaimed”. *See* 7007 0710 0001 3858 8298. Remailing by ordinary mail accomplishes service. 7 C.F.R. § 1.147(c)(1).

answer within the time provided under 7 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) shall be deemed an admission of the allegations in the complaint. 7 C.F.R. § 1.136(c). Failure to file an answer constitutes a waiver of hearing. 7 C.F.R. § 1.139. Accordingly, the material facts alleged in the Complaint, which are admitted by the Respondent's default, are adopted and set forth herein as Findings of Fact. This Decision and Order, therefore, is issued pursuant to section 1.139 of the Rules of Practice. 7 C.F.R. § 1.139. [*See also* 7 C.F.R. § 380.1 *et seq.*]

Findings of Fact and Conclusions

7. Respondent Jeremy Pollitt, doing business as Wildcat Trucking, is the owner of a company that commercially transports horses to slaughter and was, at all times material to this Decision, a commercial buyer and seller of slaughter horses who commercially transported horses for slaughter.

8. Respondent Pollitt was an owner/shipper of horses within the meaning of 9 C.F.R. § 88.1. The Secretary of Agriculture has jurisdiction over Respondent Pollitt and the subject matter involved herein.

9. Respondent Pollitt's last known mailing address was 7708 3rd Street, Wellington, Colorado 80549, according to APHIS's Motion filed on February 18, 2009. Respondent Pollitt's delivery address is PO Box 483, Wellington, Colorado 80549, according to the Domestic Return Receipt [7007 0710 0001 3858 8298] returned to the Hearing Clerk by the United States Postal Service on December 17, 2008.

10. Respondent Pollitt is responsible not only for what he himself did or failed to do in violation of the Commercial Transportation of Equines for Slaughter Act and Regulations, but also for what others did or failed to do on his behalf in the commercial transportation of

horses for slaughter, as his agents, in violation of the Act and Regulations. Respondent Pollitt is responsible for errors and omissions of those who acted as agents on his behalf in the commercial transportation of horses for slaughter, such as truck drivers.

11. On or about December 16, 2004, Respondent Pollitt shipped 41 horses in commercial transportation from Loveland, Colorado, to Cavel International in Dekalb, Illinois for slaughter but did not properly fill out the required owner-shipper certificate, VS Form 10-13. The form had the following deficiencies: (1) the receiver's address was not properly completed, in violation of 9 C.F.R. § 88.4(a)(3)(ii); and (2) the name of the auction/market where the horses were sold was not listed, in violation of 9 C.F.R. § 88.4(a)(3)(iii).

12. (a) On or about March 30, 2005, Respondent Pollitt shipped a load of 52 horses in commercial transportation from Billings, Montana, to Cavel International in Dekalb, Illinois for slaughter but did not properly fill out the required owner-shipper certificate, VS Form 10-13. The form had the following deficiencies: (1) the receiver's address was not properly completed, in violation of 9 C.F.R. § 88.4(a)(3)(ii); (2) there was no description of the conveyance used to transport the horses and the license plate number of the conveyance was not listed, in violation of 9 C.F.R. § 88.4(a)(3)(iv); and (3) the date and time when the horses were loaded onto the conveyance were not properly listed, in violation of 9 C.F.R. § 88.4(a)(3)(ix).

(b) On or about March 30, 2005, Respondent Pollitt shipped a load of 52 horses in commercial transportation from Billings, Montana, to Cavel International in Dekalb, Illinois for slaughter. Respondent Pollitt and/or his driver unloaded the horses in Harlan, Iowa, and

reloaded them sometime later for commercial transportation to Cavel International in Dekalb, Illinois for slaughter, but did not prepare a second owner-shipper certificate, VS Form 10-13, showing that date, time, and location that the horses initially were offloaded, in violation of 9 C.F.R. § 88.4(b)(4).

(c) On or about March 30, 2005, Respondent Pollitt shipped a load of 52 horses in commercial transportation from Billings, Montana, to Cavel International in Dekalb, Illinois for slaughter. Respondent Pollitt's driver stated that horses fought each other constantly during said transportation. Respondent Pollitt thus failed to completely segregate each aggressive horse on the conveyance so that no aggressive horse could come into contact with any other horse on the conveyance, in violation of 9 C.F.R. § 88.3(a)(2).

(d) On or about March 30, 2005, Respondent Pollitt shipped a load of 52 horses in commercial transportation from Billings, Montana, to Cavel International in Dekalb, Illinois for slaughter. Respondent Pollitt's driver stated that horses fought each other constantly during said transportation. Respondent Pollitt thus failed to handle the horses as expeditiously and carefully as possible in a manner that did not cause them unnecessary discomfort, stress, physical harm or trauma, in violation of 9 C.F.R. § 88.4(c).

13. During the two shipments detailed in paragraphs 11 and 12, Respondent Pollitt, doing business as Wildcat Trucking, failed to comply with the Commercial Transportation of Equines for Slaughter Act (7 U.S.C. § 1901 note) and the regulations promulgated thereunder (9 C.F.R. § 88 *et seq.*). The maximum civil penalty per violation is \$5,000.00, and each equine transported in violation of the regulations will be considered a separate

violation. Civil penalties totaling \$7,200.00 are warranted and appropriate in accordance with 9 C.F.R. § 88.6 and based on APHIS's unopposed Motion filed February 18, 2009.

Order

14. Respondent Jeremy Pollitt, doing business as Wildcat Trucking, an owner/shipper, is assessed civil penalties totaling **\$7,200.00** (seven thousand two hundred dollars), which he shall pay by certified check(s), cashier's check(s), or money order(s), made payable to the order of "**Treasurer of the United States.**" Respondent Pollitt shall include with his payments any change in mailing address (from those shown in paragraph 9) or other contact information.

15 Respondent Pollitt shall reference **A.Q. Docket No. 09-0024** on his certified check(s), cashier's check(s), or money order(s). Payments of the civil penalties shall be sent to, and received by, APHIS, at the following address:

United States Department of Agriculture
APHIS, Accounts Receivable
P.O. Box 3334
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403

within sixty (60) days from the effective date of this Order. The provisions of this Order shall be effective on the tenth day after this Decision and Order becomes final. *See* paragraph 16 to determine when this Decision and Order becomes final.

Finality

16. This Decision and Order shall be final without further proceedings 35 days after service unless an appeal to the Judicial Officer is filed with the Hearing Clerk within 30

days after service, pursuant to section 1.145 of the Rules of Practice (7 C.F.R. § 1.145, see attached Appendix A).

Copies of this Decision and Order shall be served by the Hearing Clerk upon each of the parties (including the other respondent). Respondent Pollitt's copies shall be sent to both addresses in paragraph 9.

Done at Washington, D.C.
this 8th day of April 2009

Jill S. Clifton
Administrative Law Judge

Hearing Clerk's Office
U.S. Department of Agriculture
South Bldg Room 1031
1400 Independence Ave SW
Washington DC 20250-9203
202-720-4443
Fax: 202-720-9776

APPENDIX A**7 C.F.R.:****TITLE 7—AGRICULTURE****SUBTITLE A—OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE****PART 1—ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS**

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SUBPART H—RULES OF PRACTICE GOVERNING FORMAL**ADJUDICATORY PROCEEDINGS INSTITUTED BY THE SECRETARY UNDER****VARIOUS STATUTES**

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§ 1.145 Appeal to Judicial Officer.

(a) *Filing of petition.* Within 30 days after receiving service of the Judge's decision, if the decision is a written decision, or within 30 days after issuance of the Judge's decision, if the decision is an oral decision, a party who disagrees with the decision, any part of the decision, or any ruling by the Judge or who alleges any deprivation of rights, may appeal the decision to the Judicial Officer by filing an appeal petition with the Hearing Clerk. As provided in § 1.141(h)(2), objections regarding evidence or a limitation regarding examination or cross-examination or other ruling made before the Judge may be relied upon in an appeal. Each issue set forth in the appeal petition and the arguments regarding each issue shall be separately numbered; shall be plainly and concisely stated; and shall contain detailed citations to the record, statutes, regulations, or authorities being relied upon in support of each argument. A brief may be filed in support of the appeal simultaneously with the appeal petition.

(b) *Response to appeal petition.* Within 20 days after the service of a copy of an appeal petition and any brief in support thereof, filed by a party to the proceeding, any other party may file with the Hearing Clerk a response in support of or in opposition to the appeal and in such response any relevant issue, not presented in the appeal petition, may be raised.

(c) *Transmittal of record.* Whenever an appeal of a Judge's decision is filed and a response thereto has been filed or time for filing a response has expired, the Hearing Clerk shall transmit to the Judicial Officer the record of the proceeding. Such record shall include: the pleadings; motions and requests filed and rulings thereon; the transcript or recording of the testimony taken at the hearing, together with the exhibits filed in connection therewith; any documents or papers filed in connection with a pre-hearing conference; such proposed findings of fact, conclusions, and orders, and briefs in support thereof, as may have been filed in connection with the proceeding; the Judge's decision; such exceptions, statements of objections and briefs in support thereof as may have been filed in the proceeding; and the

appeal petition, and such briefs in support thereof and responses thereto as may have been filed in the proceeding.

(d) *Oral argument.* A party bringing an appeal may request, within the prescribed time for filing such appeal, an opportunity for oral argument before the Judicial Officer. Within the time allowed for filing a response, appellee may file a request in writing for opportunity for such an oral argument. Failure to make such request in writing, within the prescribed time period, shall be deemed a waiver of oral argument. The Judicial Officer may grant, refuse, or limit any request for oral argument. Oral argument shall not be transcribed unless so ordered in advance by the Judicial Officer for good cause shown upon request of a party or upon the Judicial Officer's own motion.

(e) *Scope of argument.* Argument to be heard on appeal, whether oral or on brief, shall be limited to the issues raised in the appeal or in the response to the appeal, except that if the Judicial Officer determines that additional issues should be argued, the parties shall be given reasonable notice of such determination, so as to permit preparation of adequate arguments on all issues to be argued.

(f) *Notice of argument; postponement.* The Hearing Clerk shall advise all parties of the time and place at which oral argument will be heard. A request for postponement of the argument must be made by motion filed a reasonable amount of time in advance of the date fixed for argument.

(g) *Order of argument.* The appellant is entitled to open and conclude the argument.

(h) *Submission on briefs.* By agreement of the parties, an appeal may be submitted for decision on the briefs, but the Judicial Officer may direct that the appeal be argued orally.

(i) *Decision of the [J]udicial [O]fficer on appeal.* As soon as practicable after the receipt of the record from the Hearing Clerk, or, in case oral argument was had, as soon as practicable thereafter, the Judicial Officer, upon the basis of and after due consideration of the record and any matter of which official notice is taken, shall rule on the appeal. If the Judicial Officer decides that no change or modification of the Judge's decision is warranted, the Judicial Officer may adopt the Judge's decision as the final order in the proceeding, preserving any right of the party bringing the appeal to seek judicial review of such decision in the proper forum. A final order issued by the Judicial Officer shall be filed with the Hearing Clerk. Such order may be regarded by the respondent as final for purposes of judicial review without filing a petition for rehearing, reargument, or reconsideration of the decision of the Judicial Officer.

[42 FR 743, Jan. 4, 1977, as amended at 60 FR 8456, Feb. 14, 1995; 68 FR 6341, Feb. 7, 2003]