

Safety on the Community's railways (Railway Safety Directive)

2006/0272(COD) - 01/10/2007

The Council reached a general approach on a draft directive on the safety of the Community's railways.

The proposal on amending the Safety Directive is part of a set of proposals adopted in December 2006 which aim to improve cross-acceptance of railway vehicles in the Community.

Supporting the principle of cross-acceptance, the Council agreed on three main changes to the Commission proposal:

- 1) the Council transfers all provisions on authorisation of railway vehicles from the safety directive to the interoperability directive. The former deals with new or upgraded parts of the Community rail system and the latter concerns vehicles already in use. As a result, all provisions on authorisation are incorporated in a single legislative act;
- 2) the text agreed by the Council specifies the roles and responsibilities of the actors involved in railway operations. In order to enable railway undertakings to identify who is responsible for the wagons connected to its trains, the Council introduces the obligation that to each wagon "a keeper" must be assigned. Moreover, this keeper needs to be registered as such in a National Vehicle Register;
- 3) the Council proposes to set up a certification system for maintenance. The certificates issued will be valid in the whole Community and guarantee that the certified entity meets the maintenance requirements of this directive for any vehicle of which it is responsible.

The European Parliament's first-reading opinion is scheduled for adoption in November 2007.