Noise-related operating restrictions at Community airports

2001/0282(COD) - 15/02/2008 - Follow-up document

The Commission presented a report on the application of Directive 2002/30/EC on the establishment of rules and procedures with regard to the introduction of noise-related operating restrictions at Community airports.

This report assesses changes in the Community noise climate since 2002, and determines to what extent the Directive's regulatory framework has contributed to those changes. First of all, the report addresses the issues of the interpretation and the effects of the Directive. Next, the restrictions on marginally compliant chapter 3 aircraft are described, based on a cumulative margin (as defined in the Directive) of 5 dB(A) ("Minus 5" aircraft), as well as restrictions on aircraft with a cumulative margin of 8 dB(A) or more, night time restrictions and the use of noise budgets, including the effects these different restrictions may have on traffic.

Finally, the report focuses on the impact of operating restrictions introduced and it contains a chapter on the marginally compliant aeroplanes using Community airports.

The main conclusions of the report are as follows:

- the Directive established a harmonised structure for a balanced approach and it has been useful in ensuring that all interests are taken into account when restrictions are considered;
- however, the Directive has only been used in the case of a limited number of airports; some stakeholders are of the opinion that it is not sufficiently clear and some Member States already had similar provisions under national law prior to the entry into force of the Directive;
- moreover, its impact in respect of marginally compliant aircraft is limited because the number of these aircraft is comparatively small due to their natural replacement;
- more generally, the number of people affected by noise, particularly at night, has increased since the Directive came into force, due to a general increase in the number of movements, in spite of the possibility to introduce partial restrictions;
- it is predicted that the number of people affected by noise will continue to grow although the situation may differ between airports;
- for that reason the Commission intends to examine ways of clarifying the provisions of Directive 2002/30/EC and its scope;
- it will also consider whether changes in the current Directive, such as the definition of marginally compliant aircraft, are needed. In doing so, it will take account of the outcome of the estimates described above, predicting that the growth in the number of people affected by noise could be reduced by a more stringent definition of marginally compliant aircraft;
- in 2009, the Commission will assess the implementation of Directive 2002/49/EC regarding the assessment and the management of noise in areas surrounding airports, and will submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council.

The Commission is looking forward to receiving reactions from stakeholders in the next 3 months and aims to include them in the envisaged examination of the Directive.