Maritime safety: accelerated phasing-in of double-hull or equivalent design requirements for single-hull oil tankers. Recast

2011/0243(COD) - 12/12/2011

The Council agreed a **general approach** on a recast of the 2002 Regulation on the phasing-in of double-hull requirements for single-hull oil tankers. The recast improves clarity by bringing together in a single text the amendments made to the regulation over time; the only change to the rules currently in force concerns the procedure for updating the references in the regulation to the relevant regulations and resolutions adopted by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

The Council and the European Parliament will delegate to the Commission the power to align the numbering of those references with any renumbering of the IMO rules. This procedure, introduced by the Lisbon Treaty, is to replace the current one under which decisions on amendments to those references are taken by a committee composed of experts from both the Commission and the Member States.

The Council deemed it sufficient to limit the scope of possible amendments to renumbering **since single-hull oil tankers will be phased out in the near future** and it is therefore unlikely that the IMO will modify the content of the relevant rules.

The Regulation to be recast prohibits the transporting to or from EU ports of heavy grades of oil in single-hull oil tankers and lays down an accelerated phasing-in scheme for the application of the double-hull or equivalent design requirements of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships to single-hull oil tankers, with 2015 as the final deadline.

To recall, that Regulation was adopted in 2002 as a response to shipping accidents involving oil tankers and to the ensuing pollution of the Union's waters and coastlines. Its main objective is to enhance safety and to prevent pollution in maritime transport by making oil tankers safer.

The European Parliament, whose approval is also required for the adoption of the recast, has not yet determined its position.