

Access to the groundhandling market at Community airports

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The rapporteur, Mr SEAL (PSE, UK), expressed his disappointment in having to recommend the rejection of the common position. In his opinion, passengers should have a wider choice of services available to them and, furthermore, this opportunity should be compatible with safety standards; it was for this reason that he was opposed to any form of free 'deregulation'. He considered the Council's proposal to be inadequate and incomplete and was moreover indignant at the Council's strategy, which had rejected any informal meeting. Commissioner Kinnock took the view that groundhandling services, an area in which national companies often held a monopoly, were not in keeping with the standards currently in force. It was the Commission's aim to ensure that carriers were able to choose their suppliers. In responding to the fears that had been expressed concerning the loss of jobs, the Commissioner thought that the exemptions provided would allow the market to adapt gradually to the new arrangements. He also declared that the Commission could accept Amendments Nos 27, 31, 34, 37, 38, 40, 42, 43 and 45 in full and was prepared to accept, either in part or with modifications, Amendments Nos 1, 7 to 9, 11, 15, 17, 20, 21, 30, 33, 36 and 39. However, it would reject Amendments Nos 2 to 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 22 to 26, 28, 29, 32, 35, 41 and 44, as they restricted or failed to comply with the aims of the Directive.