Driving licences, system of harmonized codes (amend. Directive 91/439/EEC)

1996/0040(SYN) - 04/09/1996

In presenting his report Mr G. Farassino (ELDR, I), while approving the Commission’s proposal, introduced a number of amendments aimed at clarifying certain references to the harmonised codes. He also wanted to see the management committee replaced by a technical committee that would play a more flexible, consultative role. He called on the Commission to set up a working group charged with putting in place a European penalty points driving licence system, with a view to a legislative proposal being submitted by 31 March 1997. This would mean extending the directive on the mutual recognition of licences to cover cases where the licences were suspended or withdrawn. Commissioner Kinnock supported the proposals for adopting and revising the harmonised codes and for introducing a set of sub-codes. However, he could not accept that part of Amendment No 5 that related to a universal code nor the deadlines for the definition of sub-codes; he also rejected Amendments Nos 4 and 7, which exceeded the scope of the proposal and were bound to encounter problems of a constitutional nature, since the mutual recognition of restrictions on the use of the driving licence implied a certain level of judicial cooperation between Member States, something that currently came under the third pillar of the Maastricht Treaty. Finally, he rejected Amendment No 3 as being inappropriate and Amendment No 6, relating to the committee, as it failed to comply with the decision on comitology.