Air transport: slots at Community airports and competition (amend. Regulation (EEC) No 95/93)

2001/0140(COD) - 19/02/2004 - Council position

The Council accepted the Commission's basic objective which is to improve the technical functioning of the slot allocation system. In this regard the common position inter alia : - includes important amendments and additions to the definitions to clarify the terms used in the Regulation; - provides for a reinforcement of the independent status of the slot coordinator and the coordination committee; - provides for sanctions when slots are used in an abusive manner. Regarding aspects of the Commission proposal that could affect market access arrangements, the Council accepted some, but not all, of the changes proposed by the Commission. A broadening of the definition of "new entrant" was accepted, as well as a provision giving greater priority to new entrants in the allocation of slots from the "slot pool". However, other provisions proposed by the Commission, notably on slot exchanges and the prohibition of trading, were not taken on board by the Council. In not incorporating these provisions, the Council was primarily concerned that the whole issue of market access should be considered in the wider context of a more thorough revision of the slot allocation rules, which could be the subject of a separate Commission proposal in the future. The Council followed to a large degree the concerns underlying the Parliament's first reading opinion. In total 32 of the 52 amendments proposed by the Parliament were accepted in full, in part or in principle.