

Trans-European road network : minimum safety requirements for tunnels

2002/0309(COD) - 26/02/2004 - Council position

The Council states that it supports the aim and scope of the Commission's proposal, in view of its commitment to improve the safety of tunnels throughout the Union. However, it felt that that the automatic classification system as proposed by the Commission would be too rigid for an optimal and cost effective application of the Directive to the large variety in tunnels such as they exist on the territory of the Union. Therefore, Council opted for a more fine-tuned and pragmatic system, whereby each individual safety requirement for a tunnel is based on one or more relevant parameters. Amendments of the European Parliament: - amendments concerning the administrative structure - Council was not able to accept all those relating to Administrative Authority, Inspection Entity, Tunnel Manager and Safety Officer, since the Council felt that it was undesirable to unravel the 'package' as regards the administrative structure, - amendments concerning disabled persons: the Council fully agreed with the need for specific consideration which should be given to disabled persons within the context of the Directive. It therefore accepted, with some changes in the wording, certain amendments, and included a specific recital 12 devoted to disabled persons, - amendments concerning the technical Annexes I, II and III: the Council was able to accept a great number of these, either in full, in part or in spirit. The Council acknowledged that this was due to a large extent to Parliament's agreement to use the more flexible approach also advocated by the Council: namely, to introduce a system whereby each individual safety requirement for a tunnel is based on one or more relevant parameters of the tunnel in question, -other amendments: A new recital highlighting the importance of road user behaviour for tunnel safety, was accepted. Regarding the financing for structural adjustments to tunnels through the TEN-budget, Council felt that, in view of the ongoing legislative process on the proposed Decision on the revision of guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network, on the one hand, and the proposed Directive on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures, on the other, it was not appropriate to incorporate this element in this Directive. The amendment referring to the implementation of comparable safety standards for tunnels outside the scope of this Directive, was accepted.