

Safety and health at work: work equipment (2nd amend. direct. 89/655/EEC, in the context direct. 89/391/EEC)

1998/0327(COD) - 23/03/2001 - Council position

The Council accepted the 16 amendments included, in whole or in part, by the Commission in its amended proposal, if not literally then at least in spirit. The Council, in its common position, has respected the objectives put forward by the Commission and supported by the Parliament, while introducing a number of amendments to the proposal. The common position, is in accordance with the objectives of Article 137 (2) of the Treaty in the area covered, since it is designated to introduce minimum requirements to improve the health and safety of workers. It also sets out the requirements relating to quite specific situations at work, namely the use of work equipment allowing access to and use of work stations at a height. It aims to cover all sectors of activity, and includes a clear obligation to select equipment which offers adequate protection against the risks of falls from a height, and also where appropriate, for the specific and appropriate training of workers. Ladders, scaffolding and ropes are the equipment most commonly used to carry out temporary works at a height, and the common position sets out the way in which this equipment may be used by workers under the safest conditions. Lastly, the common position allows Member States a transitional period to take account of practical problems of implementation which may be encountered by small and medium-sized enterprises in particular. The Council feels that overall the text of the common position is in line with the basic objectives of the Commission's amended proposal. It also believes that it has taken account of the essential features of the objectives pursued by the European Parliament in its proposed amendments.