

Industrial pollution: reduction of emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOC)

1996/0276(SYN) - 16/06/1998 - Council position

The Council common position has incorporated all or part of ten of Parliament's proposed amendments which had been included in the Commission's amended proposal. In particular, these amendments aimed to: - add to the text a definition of 'solvent input', - establish an information system under the report procedure, - provide a more exact definition of dry-cleaning, - make the requirements for fugitive emission limit values binding, unless operators can prove that it is technically and economically impossible to respect these limits and that they are using the best available technique, - add to the points to be included in the exchange of information the health risks of occupational exposure, - redefine 'coating activity' to include an explicit reference to trailers (Annex I), - include a total emission limit value for some leather coating activities (Annex IIA), - extend the deadline for transposing the directive to two years. Some of the amendments accepted by the Commission have not been incorporated in the common position. These concern: - the zero threshold for the vehicle refinishing sector (the Council considers that a threshold of 500 kg per year is more appropriate at this stage), - the option for Member States to exempt plants from carrying out solvent management plans if they operate in accordance with the best available technique as stipulated in the sectoral agreement. The Council has changed the amended proposal in the following respects: - definitions: all the definitions have been put together in a single article, - requirements: the common position allows Member States the option, under certain conditions, to grant exceptions to the fugitive emission value where it is technically and economically not feasible not to exceed them (the concept of a guide value has been abandoned), - national plans: the potential field of application for the plan option is restricted to existing installations and excludes surface and dry cleaning sectors and activities using risk phrase substances; the plan must be accompanied by a range of supplementary elements to help the Commission to evaluate the objectives to be achieved, - monitoring and compliance with emission limit values: a clear distinction has been made between monitoring and compliance with emission limit values, - non-compliance: the prohibition on operating an installation which does not comply with the provisions of the directive has been replaced by 'suspension' of operation, - information systems and reporting: the Commission is to report to Parliament and the Council on implementation of the directive, - committee: a specific consultative committee has been set up to assist the Commission in implementing the national plans, - thresholds and emission controls (Annex IIA): the Council has made certain changes, the most important being: . all sectors: introduction of a new column for total emission limit values, . sector 1 (headset, web offset printing) and 3 (other rotogravure): deletion of the guide values for fugitive emission values, . increase of total emission limit values for the footwear, rubber conversion, vegetable oil, extraction and pharmaceutical product manufacturing sectors.