

Air transport: common rules for civil aviation security

2001/0234(COD) - 10/10/2001 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to establish common rules in the field of civil aviation security. **CONTENT** : in light of the 11 September attacks in the USA, air transport must respond to the threat which it may face as a symbol of freedom of movement and trade in order to restore public confidence and to help keep businesses operating. It is against this background to this decision, taken the day after the attacks by the Heads of State and Government, the President of the European Parliament, the President of the Commission and the High Representative responsible for the common foreign and security policy, the European Union must take urgent decisions to respond to the new challenges facing it. For its part, the Council asked the Ministers of Transport to evaluate the measures taken to ensure air transport security and any additional measures which should be taken. As requested by the European Council on 21 September 2001, the Community will therefore give itself to ensure civil aviation security through the following rules. The common measures will be based on the rules set out in Document 30 of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) and will aim at the increased control of both international and domestic flights. They will chiefly be concerned with: - control of access to sensitive areas of airports and aircraft; - control of passengers and their hand luggage; - control of monitoring of hold luggage; - training of ground staff; - definition of specifications for the equipment for the above controls; - classification of weapons and other items which it is prohibited to bring on to aircraft or into the sensitive areas of airports. There may be exceptional cases, however, where the common measures are not fully suitable for dealing with a particular threat on certain flights. The Member States must therefore be able to take additional measures to deal with such events. It should be pointed out that the Community can only legislate for the territory for which it is competent. It therefore cannot impose measures to be taken in third country airports for flights which land at Community airports or overfly the Member States. It will therefore be necessary to establish bilateral and multilateral arrangements necessary to guarantee civil aviation security throughout the world. Lastly, the Commission will immediately set up a peer review of the effective and uniform application of air security measures. It will also propose measures to ensure the protection of European Union citizens throughout the world by means of appropriate bilateral or multilateral arrangements.