

Safety rules and standards for passenger ships

2002/0075(COD) - 04/12/2002 - Modified legislative proposal

Most of the amendments proposed by the European Parliament are clarifications and improvements to the current text of the Commission proposal. Others offered added value to the proposal, strengthening some of its aspects, while one amendment has been justified by the Parliament on grounds of subsidiarity. All these amendments have been incorporated into the present amended proposal. They mainly concern the following areas: - an addition in the recitals clarifying that the timetable for the introduction of specific stability requirements to existing ro-ro ships, provided in the new article 6a.2, should not affect the present enforcement of the specific stability requirements by the Member States parties to the Stockholm Agreement; - the addition of two new definitions in article 2 of the Directive. The first clarifies the term "ro-ro passenger ship" in line with the SOLAS definition as appearing in the Annex I of the Directive and the second the term "age" of a ship in line with existing Community legislation; - an adjustment to the definition of "persons with reduced mobility" in order to make it shorter and more specific to transport of passengers by sea; - clarifications to the new article 6a concerning specific stability requirements for domestic ro-ro passenger ships, in order to provide direct reference to the relevant articles of the new Directive on specific stability requirements for ro-ro passenger ships; - the deletion of the provision on the harmonisation of stability requirements for domestic ro-ro passenger ships operating close to the coast (classes C and D ships) built prior to 1/10/2004, which are presently covered by national requirements equivalent to SOLAS. The European Parliament stressed the fact that the present arrangements have the advantage of taking into account the local character in the operation of these ships. This position was accepted by the Commission in a spirit of political compromise; - an addition in the new article 6b, on accessibility and safety requirement on board passenger ships for persons with reduced mobility, in order to specify that these requirement apply to public transport means. Adjustments are also introduced in the same article as to the dates by which the member States will have to report to the Commission on the implementation of these measures; - improvements to the text of the new Annex III (guidelines) with a specific reference to the IMO recommendation for elderly and disabled persons and some additions to the text in favour of passengers with sensory disabilities; - a modification in the implementation date of the Directive which shall 18 months from the entry into force of the Directive.