

Sulphur content of marine fuels

2002/0259(COD) - 01/08/2003 - Modified legislative proposal

The amendments accepted by the Commission concern: - new and amended recitals which help clarify and justify the objectives of the directive; - the introduction of a new recital requiring consideration of the special characteristics of outermost regions (French overseas departments, Azores, Madeira and the Canaries) - the exemption of these regions from having to ban the sale of high sulphur diesel oil provided local air quality standards are met; - the deletion of certain paragraphs from the existing directive, removing the possibility for Member States to apply for a derogation from the sulphur limit for inland gas oil; - bringing forward a number of the directive's provisions, to be implemented 6 months after entry into force; this also adds text requiring bunker delivery notes to be signed by a representative of the receiving ship. - bringing forward the deadline for transposition of the directive from 12 months to 6 months. - changing the title of the article on "Sampling and Analysis" to become "Monitoring & Penalties". Another amendment requires fuel oil samples to be taken while being delivered for use on board ships. In addition, another amendment is adopted which requires Member States to lay down rules on effective penalties which are proportionate and dissuasive; - correcting an oversight, adding the word "oil" after "heavy fuel"; - clarifying the definition of ships at berth; - introducing a new recital stating that ship emissions contribute to global warming, ozone formation and eutrophication. Some of the amendments seek to strengthen the proposal considerably - principally through tighter fuel sulphur limits in a second phase. The Commission believes it is premature to define tighter limits at this stage, so these amendments are not acceptable. Other amendments introduce new text on the development of abatement technology and economic instruments as an alternative or complement to regulation on fuel sulphur content. These amendments are acceptable in principle.