

Assessment and management of environmental noise

2000/0194(COD) - 04/12/2000

The committee adopted the report by Alexander de ROO (Greens/EFA, NL) amending the proposal under the codecision procedure (1st reading). It called for stricter limits on aircraft noise around airports, saying that by 2006 the average noise level over a 24-hour period should not exceed 65 dB(A), while at night the figure should be 55 dB(A). However, even the latter level at night meant that 12% of people around airports would still have their sleep disturbed, and the committee therefore wanted even tougher standards to be introduced later: 56 dB(A) and 45 dB(A) by 2012, and 49 dB(A) and 40 dB(A) by 2020. The committee also felt that the noise limits should apply to military, as well as civil, aircraft. Moreover, as the Commission proposal did not seek to set common European-wide noise limits like those being suggested by the committee for aircraft noise, the report tabled another important amendment asking the Commission to submit proposals for daughter directives laying down binding quality standards for other sources of noise emissions such as commercial vehicles (including engines, tyres and noise from travelling on uneven road surfaces), motorcycles and rail vehicles. Lastly, the committee felt that the principle of the polluter (i.e. noise-maker) pays should also apply in this field of Community action and that there must be an opportunity to respond to serious complaints from the public about noise levels.