Safety and health at work: exposure of workers to noise

1992/0449A(COD) - 23/12/1992

PURPOSE : proposal to protect workers from the risks of exposure to physical agents.

PROPOSED ACT : Council Directive.

CONTENT : The proposal aims to protect workers against risks to their health and safety, including the prevention of such risks, arising or likely to arise from exposure to physical agents. It lays down particular minimum requirements in this area.

The physical agents are defined as:

-audible acoustic fields;

-vibrations;

-electric or magnetic fields or combinations of these with a frequency equal to or less than 3,10(15) Hertz (wavelength of 100 nanometres or more.)

The directive will apply to activities where workers are likely to be exposed to these physical agents as a result of their work. The employer must then carry out an assessment of the risks resulting from exposure. Under the conditions laid down in the relevant Annexes, certain activities must be considered as presenting an increased risk and must be declared to the authority responsible. Each physical agent must be assessed, and where necessary, measured. The risk arising from exposure must be reduced to the lowest achievable level, with the aim of reducing exposure to below the threshold level referred to in the relevant Annex.

The proposal proceeds on the basis that minimum requirements in the field must establish the general principles of protection and the objectives to be achieved, whilst leaving open the detailed rules translating the safety levels in operational terms, to be adopted in order to comply with the provisions of the Directive.

The proposal makes provisions on personal protection, as well as worker information and training, consultation and participation of workers.