# Maritime safety: monitoring, control and information for traffic, package Erika II (repeal. Directive 93/75/EEC)

2000/0325(COD) - 29/05/2001

The committee adopted the report by Dirk STERCKX (ELDR, B) amending the proposal under the codecision procedure (1st reading). While broadly approving the aims of the proposal, the committee felt that the territorial scope of the various measures was not always clear and should be extended further. As disasters did not always happen within territorial waters, it urged that, in maritime areas outside territorial waters, all ships sailing under EU flags and all ships calling at EU ports should be required to participate in a vessel traffic service. The report pointed out that Member States needed to ensure not only that coastal stations and port authorities could receive and use the information from transponders but also that they could relay that information by telematic means to the competent authorities in the other Member States. The committee wanted shorter deadlines for the installation of transponders for the various categories of vessels. It was also concerned that owners of older ships (built before 1 July 2002) should not be compelled to invest excessive amounts in order to comply with the requirement to fit voyage data recorders (black boxes). It therefore proposed that a simpler version be permitted, provided that the technical specifications were in accordance with the relevant IMO provisions. Concerning ports of refuge for ships in distress, the committee said that the Commission proposal did not go far enough, and adopted an amendment seeking to ensure that enough ports of refuge and also anchorages were made available. Moreover, Member States should make efforts to equip ports of refuge with tugs and ship repair infrastructures. However, as accommodating a ship in distress could entail considerable risks for a port, the committee called for ports to be compensated promptly for any costs or damage arising and for ships to be required to present evidence of solvency. It also said that Member States should be given a deadline for completing their plans for places of refuge. Regarding the prohibition on putting to sea, the committee specified that measures should be taken not only when there was a risk of pollution but also when human lives were endangered. Rather than introducing a general European ban on putting to sea in stormy weather, it would be better for local port authorities to make recommendations, taking account of the specific situation. The master of a ship should show that he had received the relevant information and should inform the port authorities of his decision on whether or not to leave or enter the port, stating the reasons. Lastly, Member States should ensure that powerful tugs were on standby along shipping channels when the weather was bad.