Civil aviation: common rules, European Aviation Safety Agency

2000/0246(COD) - 21/03/2002

The committee adopted the report by Ingo SCHMITT (EPP-ED, D) amending the Council's common position under the codecision procedure (2nd reading). In the hope of avoiding a conciliation process, MEPs tabled a number of compromise amendments agreed with the Council and the Commission on key issues rather than simply retabling amendments adopted by Parliament at 1st reading. One of the amendments stipulated that the Agency should be independent, which had been one of Parliament's key concerns from the very outset. Other amendments were aimed at strengthening the position of the Executive Director. The committee also wanted to ensure that Agency officials would be given the necessary powers to examine relevant records and data and enter any premises or means of transport when carrying out inspections to monitor the application of the regulation by national aviation authorities. Another amendment restated Parliament's position that exemptions to the regulation could be granted by Member States only on condition that the level of safety would not be adversely affected as a result. Lastly, the committee called for the transition period during which Member States could continue to issue certificates and approvals to be 42 months rather than 5 years as provided for in the common position. This amounted to another compromise, given that Parliament had demanded at first reading that the transition period should be 2 years only.