

Air transport: common rules for civil aviation security

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The committee adopted the report by Jacqueline FOSTER (EPP-ED, UK) approving the proposal under the codecision procedure (1st reading), subject to a few amendments. The committee felt that airports and airlines should not be required to pay for the increased security needed in their industry following the tragic events of 11 September 2001 and said that it was up to governments to shoulder the costs of aviation security on the ground that threats against the latter constitute a threat against the state. Member States were urged to coordinate their efforts in order to draw up a comprehensive policy for financing the highest possible level of security for air travel. Other points raised in the report included a call for the "peer review" inspections by teams of government inspectors across the EU to be unannounced and for airlines operating in the airports concerned to have the right to see the inspection reports. The report also said that background screening of personnel should be carried out by national authorities. Lastly, the committee felt that the short deadline for implementing the new measures (20 days after the regulation was published) might not always be feasible. It therefore adopted an amendment allowing for derogations for implementing structural modifications to airports and/or terminals, such as separating screened and unscreened passengers.