

Road transport: ecopoints for heavy vehicles transiting through Austria for 2004

2001/0310(COD) - 21/01/2003

The committee adopted the report by Luciano CAVERI (ELDR, I) amending the proposal under the codecision procedure (1st reading). The main amendments were as follows: - if the Commission's proposal on charging for the use of infrastructure has not entered into force by the end of 2004, measures to encourage the use of environmentally-friendly lorries in key areas of the Austrian Alps (notably the Brenner, the Tauern and the Pyhrn) must be phased in as follows (with the quotas to be based on the 2002 ecopoint quotas): in 2004: a quota system for older lorries (the EURO 0, 1 and 2 categories) and unrestricted transit for cleaner lorries (EURO 3); in 2005 and 2006: no transit for EURO 0 and 1 lorries; a quota system for EURO 2 lorries; and unrestricted transit for EURO 3 and the next generation of even cleaner EURO 4 lorries. After 2006 no quota system will be applied; - the title of the proposal should be changed to reflect the transitional nature of the system to be applied in 2004; - the committee added a new article specifying that the Commission's decisions must be consistent with a sustainable transport policy for the Alpine region as a whole, especially for sensitive areas such as the Brenner, the Mont Blanc, the Tauern, the Pyhrn and the Lyon to Turin route (Fréjus). However, given the need to find non-discriminatory solutions to reconcile various obligations deriving from the Treaties, e.g. the free movement of goods and services as well as protection of the environment, this policy must regulate traffic flows only in Alpine passes and other ecologically sensitive areas lying along trans-European corridors; - the proposal should accordingly be reworded to make it clear that the system will apply only to transit traffic through the Austrian Alps and not to Austria as a whole; - the countries affected by the Regulation must be required to include in their existing checking systems ways of determining whether actual nitrogen oxide (NO_x) emissions from heavy lorries correspond to the value authorised for Conformity of Production (COP) purposes or derived from type-approval; - finally, the committee stressed that the scope of the regulation must be extended in the course of enlargement to include the applicant countries, with the quotas being increased proportionally by each new Member State and by year.