

Air safety: third-country aircrafts using Community airports, SAFA programme

2002/0014(COD) - 10/09/2003

The committee adopted the report by Nelly MAES (Greens/EFA, B) broadly approving the Council's common position under the 2nd reading of the codecision procedure, subject to a few amendments. MEPs said that the yearly aggregated information report - to be published by the Commission and made available to the public - should contain information that is easy to understand and relevant to air travellers, in particular indicating whether "particular aircraft-types, operators or countries of registration or seat" are linked to possible safety risks. The committee also felt that the Council had weakened the Commission's powers regarding the action to be taken if a Member State decides to ban, or impose conditions on operation of, a particular third country operator, by stipulating that the Commission could merely "issue a recommendation" to the other Member States to extend these measures to the airports located in their territories. However, MEPs said that, in order to achieve a genuinely harmonised approach to air-traffic safety throughout the EU, the Commission should be empowered to "issue such recommendations and take such actions as it considers necessary", and, more importantly, should have the power to decide whether the measures should be extended to the whole Community. Lastly, the committee reinstated the deadline originally proposed by the Commission for implementation of the directive (2 years, rather than 3 as stipulated in the common position). To ensure that the legislation was properly monitored, it also insisted that the Commission's report on the application of the directive should be submitted to Parliament and the Council. The Council's proposed deadline for submission of the report was amended from 5 years to 4.