

Community's railways: safety, licensing, levying of charges, certification. 2nd package

2002/0022(COD) - 01/10/2003

The committee adopted the report by Dirk STERCKX (ELDR, B) amending the Council's common position under the 2nd reading of the codecision procedure. It reinstated a number of amendments adopted by Parliament at 1st reading: - amended definitions of "accident" and "safety"; - the Commission should ensure that the Member States keep the introduction of new national rules to a minimum and should encourage the adoption of rules at European level; - a single European safety certificate should be established three years, rather than five years, after the directive entry's into force; - the provisions on training and certification should also apply to staff who do not accompany trains but who perform vital safety tasks (e.g. signalmen and stationmasters); - Member States should ensure that train drivers and other staff performing vital safety tasks have an adequate command of the codes, vocabulary and language necessary for operational communications on the routes operated and for the procedures used; - two years after the directive's entry into force, the Commission should give a mandate to the Agency to prepare for moving to a single language regime for operational communications for rail services crossing linguistic borders, such as already exists in the shipping and aviation sectors; - a mandatory recording device (black box), similar to those used on planes, should be installed on trains. The committee also adopted a new amendment providing for basic training requirements for train drivers and staff accompanying trains to be drawn up by the European Railway Agency with the involvement of the social partners. Certification granted in one Member State to drivers and accompanying staff on the basis of those rules should be valid throughout the EU. Where additional national certification is required, the additional requirements for train drivers should be laid down by the European social partners. Lastly, the committee wanted shorter deadlines for the introduction of the common safety targets and methods.