

Maritime safety: registration of persons sailing on board passenger ships

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The Committee has adopted the report by Mark WATTS (UK, PES) on the registration of persons sailing on passenger ships. The rapporteur welcomed the Commission proposal but had tabled amendments to ensure that the Channel, including the tunnel and other future "under sea" road and rail links involving journeys of more than 20 miles, would be within the scope of the directive. All these amendments were adopted. Said Mark WATTS (Kent East PSE): "This directive is a fitting tribute to those who lost their lives in the "Herald of free Enterprise", "Estonia" and other passenger ships. It will not only significantly contribute to the effective operation of search and rescue services but I submit will also change the very way in which ship owners and operators view passengers. No longer just a source of revenue, but real people with a name, age and gender, and a precious life that must be protected from commercial expediency".