

Energy efficiency: requirements for ballasts for fluorescent lighting

1999/0127(COD) - 16/06/1999 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to achieve cost-effective energy savings in fluorescent lighting. **CONTENT:** The objective of the proposed Directive is to achieve cost-effective energy savings in fluorescent lighting, which would not otherwise be achieved with other measures. The proposed Directive covers only newly produced ballasts, which are responsible for large electricity consumption and present a large potential for energy savings. In order to minimise the impact on manufacturers, a gradual approach is proposed. Manufacturers will have to phase out progressively in time production of low efficiency ballasts - or just refrain from marketing them in the EU. There will be a relatively long transition period before the entry into force of the proposed efficiency levels. An energy classification system has been developed by the EU manufacturers association, CELMA, in collaboration with the Commission. The proposed efficiency levels are based on the CELMA classification scheme. There are no EU manufacturers who cannot meet the first efficiency level. The first level of the proposal is envisaged to phase out class D ('high loss') ballasts and to come into force one year after the adoption of the Directive (assuming adoption by 1.1.2001, it will come into force on 01.01.2002). A one-year transition period is judged consistent with the small investments and adaptations needed to meet the first step. After three years (01.01.2005), a second efficiency step is envisaged to come into force, by which class C ('conventional') ballasts will be phased out. As these ballasts represent the bulk of the actual market, considerable time has been allowed for this step. In particular, taking into account that manufacturers agreed to such a step in early 1996, this represents a long transition period. The third and final step of the proposal will then be implemented after a further three years (01.01.2008) and will be based on the then present market situation, in particular on the price of electronic ballasts (classes A1, A2, and A3) and the most efficient magnetic ballast on the market (class B1). As the market might change considerably in response to the introduction of the first two levels, it is proposed to analyse the technical and market situation again at the time of the entry into force of the second level. The proposal is part of an overall strategy to improve the energy efficiency of electrical equipment and follows on from the 'Boilers' and 'Refrigerators' Directives and the negotiated agreements for TVs, VCRs and washine machines. Other equipment such as electric motors, electric water heaters, etc. will be the subject of future initiatives.