

Occupational safety and health: risks related to chemical agents (14th particular Directive, Directive 89/391/EEC)

1993/0459(SYN) - 20/04/1994 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In adopting the report by Mr McCubbin, Parliament approved the proposal for a directive with the following amendments: - the requirements of the directive were to apply to all chemical agents introduced into the workplace, - preventive measures were strengthened to protect the health and safety of workers (competent persons to be called in whenever a risk was detected; the safety document should identify all risks resulting from the intrinsic properties of the chemical agents, whether alone or in combination ; workers and workers' representatives to be kept informed of the content of this safety document and of any amendment made to it; provision of training and information to workers subject to exposure; provision of adequate protective equipment; maximum possible restriction in the quantity of chemical agents to which a worker may be exposed; strengthening of measures for evacuation and rescue; etc.); - occupational exposure levels were to become "occupational exposure limits" and "biological limit values". These limit values would be fixed after consultation with the appropriate advisory committee and were to be established on the basis of reference values and technical and feasibility factors. Workers and their representatives were to be kept informed of these limit values, which would be reviewed by the Commission every 5 years; - in the Annex, Parliament included a number of detailed measures which related in particular to the following: . where there was a serious risk to the worker, compulsory medical supervision should be provided and the worker concerned should be kept fully informed of the risk, . where the chemical agent could be adequately identified, its use could be authorized, . during the movement of certain hazardous substances, the latter should be properly labelled, . more-stringent limit values could be applied in some cases for women of child-bearing age. Finally, Parliament added a new Annex relating to measurement methods, which should make it possible to obtain representative results for workplace exposure.