Control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances. Seveso II

1994/0014(SYN) - 16/07/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

In adopting the recommendation for second reading by Mr David BOWE (PSE, UK), Parliament approved the common position of the Council with a series of amendments aimed at strengthening the safety of citizens in the face of dangers posed by the concentration of hazardous substances. The amendments deal, in particular, with: - limiting cross-border consequences of accidents, through the introduction of information exchange and warning systems based on harmonization of national principles and practices, - calling on the Commission to evaluate the risks engendered by the transmission of dangerous substances through pipelines and their storage and to prepare a Communication setting out the case for action in this area (though without including it in the Directive), -including waste land-fill in the scope of the Directive, - reducing differences in the arrangements for the inspection of establishments producing dangerous substances by laying down harmonized levels of protection; in this connection, the original safety report should be constantly updated in order to avert major-accident hazards ; - drawing up measures for risk-management in the event of 'almost major accident', i.e. a major accident avoided owing to an intervention, whether or not planned in advance, or owing to a chance coincidence'; - in order to provide greater protection from major-accident hazards for centres of population and natural areas of particular interest or sensitivity, providing for land-use policies which ensure adequate separation between establishments presenting hazards; - in relation to the safety report, laying down time-limits for the information of the competent authorities for new establishments (between four and eight months before commencing construction or operation) and for existing establishments (within two years of the entry into force of the Directive); - prohibiting the use of an establishment or storage facility if there are serious deficiencies in its design, construction or operation which would give rise to a significant risk of a major accident; - providing for more stringent measures relating to the system of inspections for establishments. At the same time, Parliament called on the Commission to establish appropriate relations with the specialized agencies of international bodies, especially the OECD, to ensure that world standards for the control of major-accident hazards are agreed upon.