Safety and health of workers: protection against risk from explosive atmospheres

1995/0235(COD) - 06/05/1999 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

At second reading under codecision procedure, the European Parliament adopted the recommendation by Bartho Pronk (PPE,NL), which amends the Council common position on minimum requirements for improving the safety and health protection of workers potentially at risk from explosive atmospheres, notably in the following areas: - explicitly setting out employers' general obligations in this area; - requiring that, further to the provisions made in the common position, the explosion protection document shall also demonstrate that the workplace and work equipment, including warning devices, are designed, operated and maintained with due regard for safety and that arrangements have been made for the safe use of work equipment; - requiring the Commission to draw up a vademecum setting out guidelines for possible ways of complying with the minimum requirements contained in the directive; - requiring Member States to ensure that measures are taken to inform undertakings likely to be affected by the proposed directive (particularly SMEs) of its provisions and that the proposed vademecum is widely distributed; - providing that, if an explosive atmosphere contains several types of flammable and/or combustible gases, vapours, mists or dusts, protective measures shall be appropriate to the greatest potential hazard; - providing that, where equipment and protective systems can give rise to a spread of additional risks in the event of a power failure, it must be possible to maintain them in a safe state of operation independently of the rest of the installation; - providing that manual override must be possible in order to shut down the equipment and protective systems incorporated within automatic processes which deviate from the intended operating conditions, provided that this does not compromise safety and only workers competent to do so take such action; - providing that, when the emergency shutdown system is actuated, accumulated energy must be dissipated as quickly and as safely as possible or isolated so that it no longer constitutes a hazard.