

Sulphur content of marine fuels

2002/0259(COD) - 15/03/2005

The committee adopted the report by Satu HASSI (Greens/EFA, FIN) amending the Council's common position under the 2nd reading of the codecision procedure. It reinstated, sometimes in slightly modified form, the main demands adopted by the previous Parliament at 1st reading in 2003:

- the 1.5% sulphur limit should be applicable to marine fuels used throughout the European Community and not just in the Baltic, the North Sea and the English Channel - designated as SOx Emission Control Areas (SECAs) - or by passenger ships in regular service to or from Community ports;
- the 1.5% limit should apply in a first phase, starting 12 months after the directive enters into force, to be followed by a second phase (also applicable to passenger ships in regular service to or from Community ports) lowering the limit to 0.5% with effect from 1 January 2010;
- as the southern sea areas have not yet been designated as SECAs, they should be subject to a longer time-frame, with the first phase starting as from 1 January 2012 and the second phase from 1 January 2014;
- the limits would apply to all vessels of all flags, including vessels whose journey began outside the Community;
- in the first phase, Member States should ensure that, as from 19 May 2006 or 12 months after the entry into force of the directive, whichever is the earlier, marine fuels with a sulphur content not exceeding 1.5% by mass are made available in sufficient quantities to meet demand in all Community ports. The same requirement would apply in respect of marine fuel with the lower sulphur content (0.5%) from the starting date of the second phase (1 January 2010);
- in the case of passenger ships in regular service to or from any Community port, Member States would be responsible for enforcing the requirements at least in respect of vessels flying their flag and vessels of all flags while in their ports. They would also have to take "additional enforcement action in respect of other vessels in accordance with international maritime law";
- Member States should provide for effective penalties applicable to infringements of the monitoring and sampling provisions;
- the Commission should put forward proposals by 2008 to reduce other forms of air pollution from seagoing ships, including a proposal for an EU directive setting full quality standards for marine fuels along the lines of the 1998 directive on petrol and diesel fuels.