

Railway transport: certification of train crews and drivers. 3rd package

2004/0048(COD) - 19/04/2005

The committee adopted the report by Gilles SAVARY (PES, FR) amending the proposal under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure. The committee modified and restructured the Commission's timetable for introducing certification requirements. Although it left the first stage unchanged, it proposed a total of four stages rather than three as laid down in the proposal:

- the second stage would take effect from 1 January 2007 and would apply to drivers "who drive locomotives and trains for which the right of access to the Community's rail network derives from Directive 91/440/EEC or who drive passenger trains operated pursuant to cross-border cooperation arrangements concluded between undertakings";
- the third stage would take effect from 1 January 2009 and would apply to crew members (i.e. staff who are not drivers);
- the fourth stage would take effect from 1 January 2010 and would apply to drivers who do not work across borders.

However, MEPs also introduced a clause whereby any Member State would be able to request that a cost-benefit analysis be carried out by the European Railway Agency into the application of the directive to train drivers and train crews operating exclusively on the territory of that Member State . If it proved that the costs of applying the directive to such train drivers and train crews outweighed the benefits, the Commission could decide that they should be exempted for up to 10 years from the certification requirements laid down for the third and fourth stages.

Other amendments clarified the definitions of "train driver" and "train crew" and modified the rules on periodic checks for drivers. In particular, the committee felt that such checks should be limited to examinations of physical fitness and should not cover knowledge of lines and rolling stock.

Lastly, although the proposal stipulated that the harmonised complementary certificate would become invalid on cessation of employment, MEPs wanted train drivers to be able to retain a certified duplicate as evidence of their professional experience if they apply for a new job.