

Sulphur content of marine fuels

2002/0259(COD) - 17/05/2005 - Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading

The 13 amendments adopted by the Parliament were all part of a compromise package agreed with the Council. They do not change the fuel sulphur limits agreed in the Common Position. The Commission can accept all of the amendments in full.

The Commission accepts the following amendments concerning recitals on: minor rewording of the environmental and health justifications for directive; deletion of unnecessary text in relation to national emissions ceilings; calling for more efforts to be made to find international solutions); indicating the directive is the first step in an ongoing process and strengthening existing text on the availability of low sulphur fuel.

With regard to the substantive provisions, the Commission accepts the following amendments:

- clarifying the entry into force date for the North Sea SO_x Emission Control Area;
- reflecting International Maritime Organization (IMO) requirements to help ensure the availability of compliant fuel;
- exempting ships which use shore-side electricity from the 0.1% fuel sulphur limit at berth;
- requiring continuous emissions reductions and monitoring for ships using exhaust gas cleaning as an alternative means of compliance;
- requiring the Commission review in 2008 to consider proposals to designate new IMO SO_x Emission Control Areas in EU seas, and to reduce the sulphur limit in these areas down to a possible 0.5%, taking into account technological developments and a cost-effectiveness analysis; and
- stating that with its review, the Commission may consider submitting proposals on economic instruments as alternative or complementary measures.