

Air transport: slots at Community airports and competition (amend. Regulation (EEC) No 95/93)

2001/0140(COD) - 01/04/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

Ulrich STOCKMANN (PES, D) saw his recommendation for second reading on common rules for the allocation of slots on Community airports adopted without amendment. Council had incorporated in its common position Parliament's key amendments from first reading. Plans to relax the application of slot allocation rules following the war in Iraq and the outbreak of SARS were warmly welcomed. The proposals seek to improve the current slot system in terms of its clarity and transparency. Particular attention has been paid to reinforcing the independent status of the slots co-ordinator, and ensuring that the co-ordination committee was also free from undue influence. A possibility of sanctions was provided for and the division of tasks between the co-ordinator, co-ordination committee and Member States was also clarified to ensure the proper handling of complaints. MEPs welcomed the fact that Council has accepted the basic objective to improve the technical functioning of the slot allocation system. A broadening of the definition of "new entrant" was accepted as well as a provision giving a greater priority to new entrants in the allocation of slots from the "slot pool". Finally, the "use-it-or-lose-it" rule, which requires air carriers to use 80% of their slots in one scheduling season in order to receive them again for the next season, was adapted in the sense that unforeseeable circumstances, on which an air carrier has no influence, were also incorporated.