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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

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11 October 1978

DOCUMENT 348/78

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and  
Transport

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the  
Council (Doc. 252/78) for a decision concerning the memorandum of  
understanding of 2 March 1978 between certain maritime authorities on the  
maintenance of standards on merchant ships .

Rapporteur: Mr L. IBRÜGGER

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By letter of 25 July 1978 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 84(2) of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision concerning the Memorandum of Understanding of 2 March 1978 between certain maritime authorities on the maintenance of standards on merchant ships.

The President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection for their opinions.

The Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport appointed Mr L. Ibrügger rapporteur on 22 September 1978.

At the same meeting the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport considered the draft report and unanimously adopted the motion for resolution and the explanatory statement.

Present : Lord Bruce of Donington, chairman; Mr Ibrügger, rapporteur; Mr Delmotte, Mr Fuchs, Mr Johnston, Mrs Kellett-Bowman, Mr Ligios, Mr Noé, Mr Osborn, Mr Schyns and Mr Seefeld.

The opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection is attached.

By letter of 27 September 1978, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs waived its right to give an opinion.

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The Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision concerning the Memorandum of Understanding of 2 March 1978 between certain maritime authorities on the maintenance of standards on merchant ships

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council<sup>1</sup>,
  - having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 84(2) (Doc.252/78),
  - having regard to the report from the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport and the opinion from the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection (Doc. 348/78),
  - gravely concerned by accidents and collisions at sea,
  - noting that the proposed decision forms part of a series of Commission proposals which have or which are to be made with the intention of preventing accidents to shipping and consequential pollution;
- 
1. Approves the proposed decision as being one of the measures necessary to improve safety at sea;
  2. Asks the competent authorities of the Parties to the Memorandum of Understanding of 2 March 1978 to submit a report to the Commission as soon as possible on the degree of success achieved by them in observing the standards laid down in that Understanding during the first year of its operation.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ No. C 176, 25.7.1978, p. 8

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. The purpose of the present proposal is to extend the Memorandum of Understanding of 2 March 1978 between certain maritime authorities on the maintenance of standards of merchant ships to all countries of the Community.
2. The present parties to this Understanding are Belgium, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. At the moment, therefore, the Understanding only extends to the North Sea ports and to French ports in the Mediterranean. If the three remaining Community countries become parties to the Understanding, it will become operative for Irish ports and for Italian ports.
3. The purpose of the Understanding is basically to apply common standards relating to crew conditions, certificates of competency and accident prevention. These standards are to be found in various international conventions on minimum standards on sea-going ships, and the Understanding is intended to apply these standards to all ships of whatever nationality using the ports of the signatory countries.
4. It is obviously desirable that this Understanding should operate at a Community level. The Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport welcome the fact that the Commission is requesting that it should be allowed to participate as an organisation in the work of the maritime authorities who are parties to the Understanding. Basically the Understanding represents an extension of port state control in certain areas on a harmonised basis. As the Commission point out in the explanatory memorandum, to be effective the Memorandum of Understanding will need to be reinforced by some harmonisation at Community level of the national laws relating to the control of vessels in Community ports. Your Committee welcome the fact that the Commission intends to introduce a proposal to this effect before 1 October 1978.
5. The present proposal will receive further consideration in the overall context of your Committee's forthcoming report on accidents to shipping, but in the meantime your Committee have no hesitation in commending the present proposal to the European Parliament as a part of the measures necessary to improve shipping safety in Community waters.

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH AND CONSUMER  
PROTECTION

Letter from the chairman of the committee to Lord Bruce of Donington,  
chairman of the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and  
Transport

25 September 1978

Dear Mr Chairman,

At its meeting of 25 September 1978 the Committee on the Environment,  
Public Health and Consumer Protection considered the proposal for a Council  
decision on the memorandum of understanding of 2 March 1978 between certain  
maritime authorities on the maintenance of standards on merchant ships  
(COM(78) 319 final - Doc. 252/78).

It sees this measure as a further definite step in the right direction.  
It considers it vital that minimum standards be set for merchant ships and  
actually enforced in the waters and ports of the whole Community, whatever  
flag the ship may fly, in order to reduce to a minimum the risk of accident  
arising from the transport of cargoes of all descriptions, with a view both  
to effective environmental management and to the protection of the health  
of crew members.

In anticipation of the opinion to be delivered in the near future on  
general shipping regulations (see Mr Fellermaier's motion for a resolution  
on the subject (Doc. 51/78), the committee approved this proposal for a  
decision, under which Ireland and Italy can become full parties to the  
memorandum signed on 2 March 1978 in The Hague.

(sgd) KROUWEL-VLAM

Present : Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, chairman; Lord Bethell, vice-chairman; Mr Ajello,  
Mr Edwards, Lord Kennet, Mr Lamberts, Mr Noè, Mr W. Müller, Mrs Squarcialupi.

