

## II

(Preparatory Acts)

## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

**Opinion on the Proposal for a Council Decision approving certain amendments to the agreement for cooperation in dealing with pollution of the North Sea by oil and other harmful substances, as signed in Bonn on 13 September 1983**

(92/C.287/01)

On 5 May 1992 the Council decided to consult the Economic and Social Committee, under Article 130S of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, on the abovementioned proposal.

The Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, which was responsible for preparing the Committee's work on the subject, adopted its Opinion on 2 June 1992. The Rapporteur was Mr Gafo Fernández.

At its 298th Plenary Session (meeting of 1 July 1992) the Economic and Social Committee adopted the following Opinion.

1. The Committee approves this Commission initiative to bring up to date and improve the technical and preventive aspects of the Agreement initially signed in 1984.
2. The eight years which have elapsed since the initial Agreement was signed demonstrate the need to complement corrective activities with measures to improve information and prevention systems. This new philosophy is in line with the Community's environmental objectives laid down in Article 130R of the EEC Treaty.
3. The Committee is pleased to see this preventive philosophy extended to both the objectives of the Agreement and practical aspects, such as greater cooperation between the Contracting Parties and the regular exchange of technical and surveillance data.
4. Although the signatories to the Agreement (Contracting Parties) are states, the oil and marine transport industries should also be involved in the implementation of the Agreements. The Agreements already provide mechanisms for cooperation on the prevention and handling of spills of oil and other dangerous substances, and on financing these activities and the consequent civil liabilities. However, it is essential that these sectors be more intensively involved, with more activities in the field of prevention and exchanges of technical information and data.
5. The Committee welcomes the definition of the Contracting Parties' surveillance duties in their exclusive zones of responsibility and the conclusion of agreements with other contracting parties to these ends.
6. The Committee also welcomes the change in the demarcation zone of the Skagerrak, which rectifies an error in the initial agreement.

7. Finally, the Committee would like to draw attention to the need to accelerate and promote the implementation of the Agreements. The present

amendments, approved in September 1989, will have taken three years to be ratified by the Contracting Parties.

Done at Brussels, 1 July 1992.

*The Chairman  
of the Economic and Social Committee*

Michael GEUENICH

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**Opinion on the proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to lifts<sup>(1)</sup>**

(92/C 287/02)

On 4 March 1992 the Council decided to consult the Economic and Social Committee, under Article 100A of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, on the abovementioned proposal.

The Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, which was responsible for preparing the Committee's work on the subject, adopted its Opinion on 10 June 1992. The Rapporteur was Mr Pearson.

At its 298th Plenary Session (meeting of 1 July 1992) the Economic and Social Committee adopted unanimously the following Opinion.

## 1. Introduction

1.1. The Committee particularly welcomes the proposals to replace Directive 84/529/EEC<sup>(2)</sup> — and as twice amended — as it has, since 27 February 1976, consistently called for a Directive in which provision is made for total harmonization.

1.2. The Committee further notes with satisfaction that the new Directive is based on the 'new approach' system, whereby the anomalies created between Community and national requirements will be eliminated: these requirements will be mandatory and not voluntary as hitherto.

1.3. As the title shows, the new proposals include all types of lifts which are accessible to people; they do, however, apply only to new lifts installed in permanent buildings.

1.4. The Committee notes the assurance of the Commission that with the repeal of Directive 84/529/EEC, there will be no reduction in safety standards. The Committee however thinks that a CEN harmonized standard would be of advantage; it should serve as a basis and point of reference for manufacturers within the Member States: it would include minimum detailed safety requirements for the protection of users.

## 2. General comments

2.1. The Committee welcomes the proposed Directive which sets clear improved standards for new lifts.

2.2. The Committee believes that the Commission should review and upgrade the safety requirements for existing lifts, setting a common harmonized standard. Analysis of accident records should be involved in such a review.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 62, 11. 3. 1992, p. 4.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 300, 19. 11. 1984.