

# Legal framework for dangerous goods transport

## Heading the right way

*The EU Commission wants to update the Carriage of Dangerous Goods Directives, combine them in a legal framework and supplement them with requirements for inland waterway vessels. EU Decisions 2005/263, 2005/903, 2005/180 and 2005/777 on national exceptions will also be integrated into this framework, which should make 2,000 pages of legal texts redundant.*



**8% of all cargoes consist of dangerous goods**

Every year, 110 billion tonne-kilometres of freight are transported in the European Union: 58% by road, 25% by rail and 17% by inland waterway. No less than 8% of these cargoes consist of dangerous goods, so it's high time to tighten up the

messy EU regulations, simplify them and adapt them to today's requirements. With this step, the rules of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) on cross-border dangerous goods transport will be incorporated into Community law and extended to transport within member states.

### **Realistic**

The German Christian Democrat MEP Renate Sommer believes there

are "realistic" prospects of the EP plenary session achieving complete agreement with the transport ministers at the first reading. If she is right, the new law could even be passed by the end of this year. In any case, the EP Transport Committee has unanimously accepted the Council's amendments of the draft text. There were also numerous amendment motions from the MEPs.

The Rapporteur on this subject, Boguslaw Liberadzki, advocated leaving the Member States room for additional national decisions. The Polish Social Democrat has in mind

*"2,000 pages of legal texts will be dispensed with"*

here special rules on environmental protection and bans or restrictions on the transportation of certain high-risk goods. The Austrian Green MEP, Evelin Lichtenberger, called for the transportation of dangerous goods to be made "more transparent", claiming that many truckers are often unaware of what they are carrying in their trucks.

She also argues that greater protection should be provided for human health and the environment, by making the provision of infor-

mation about the nature of the emergency measures to be taken in the event of an accident compulsory, depending on the dangerous goods category concerned. Such information would be useful not just for drivers, but also for emergency teams. Lichtenberger therefore claimed that special EU labels for dangerous goods are needed – but her proposal met with opposition. Recognised international markings already exist for this purpose, said Marjeta Jager, Director of Transport Security at the EU Commission Directorate-General for Energy and Transport. She also pointed out that this subject is on the agenda for the autumn conference of the ECE. The transport policy spokesman for the Christian Democrat-Conservative fraction, Georg Jarzembowski from Hamburg, urged consideration for special dangerous goods provisions for the Channel Tunnel.

Dieter Wahl ■



### IRU OPPOSED TO DECISION-MAKING POWERS OVER HAULIERS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

*The International Road Transport Union (IRU) is far from delighted with the plans. It rejects the concession proposed by the Commission to Member States which would enable them to prescribe modes of transport and routes for the conveyance of dangerous goods, arguing that this would undermine competition and penalise the truck sector and those branches of industry which produce or use dangerous goods.*