Press release

Twenty-five metre trucks: Commissioner "overstepped his authority", say MEPs

Committees: Committee on Transport and Tourism

Transport Commissioner Kallas's decision to tolerate the cross-border use of trucks longer than 18.75m (so-called "gigaliners"), faces a legal challenge by Parliament's Transport Committee. "The coordinators of the political groups unanimously felt that the Commissioner was acting outside his powers", said Transport Committee chair Brian Simpson (S&/D, UK), on Monday evening.

"No matter whether or not gigaliners are a good or bad idea, the problem is the process - the Commission is completely bypassing the European Parliament", said Mr Simpson. "Instead of bringing clarification to the matter, as he claims, the Commissioner's letter brings even more legal uncertainty", he added.

In 2010, Mr Kallas interpreted the same Directive 96/53, on the maximum weight and dimensions of lorries, to mean precisely the opposite, i.e. that such trucks must not cross the EU's internal borders.

"It's interesting that he chose to reinterpret the law rather than coming up with a new legislative proposal, although he knows that ecotrucks or megatrucks are a very controversial issue," said Simpson.

The Transport Committee will refer the matter to Parliament's President Martin Schulz, asking him to seek legal advice from Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee to determine whether the Commission has overstepped its authority and deprived Parliament of its rights.

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