



## MEPs look forward to greener watercraft

Committees: Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

**The Internal Market Committee voted overwhelmingly on Thursday to make watercraft safer and greener, with tougher exhaust emission limits. It also called for misleading names of boat design categories to be scrapped in order to give consumers clearer information.**

The report, adopted by 30 votes to one, backs the Commission's proposal to update EU rules on the safety and environmental performance of recreational craft and personal watercraft – vessels between 2.5 and 24 meters in length, such as motor boats, sailing yachts and water scooters.

### Exhaust emissions

MEPs note the industry's efforts to comply early with the new emission limits and call for a shorter transition period than the one proposed by the Commission, with full working rules in place by the end of 2014 for most engines.

They agree that a longer transition period (three years after the new rules are incorporated into national law) should stay untouched, as it would apply to certain type of engine manufactured by SMEs.

The committee asks the Commission to review the emission limits five years after they are adopted in the member states to see if they can be further reduced. It also calls on the Commission to consider encouraging regular technical checks to ensure that the vessels comply with the safety requirements at all times.

### Design categories

Speaking before the vote the rapporteur, Malcolm Harbour (ECR, UK), emphasised that to make watercraft greener and safer, the design categories of the vessels should also be looked at. Presenting the impact assessment carried out at the Internal Market Committee's request, he said that "sometimes boats can be wrongly categorised and consumers may be misled".

The resolution eliminates the titles of boat-design categories ("ocean", "offshore", "inshore", "sheltered waters") on the grounds that they are misleading for users. It says the only appropriate criteria are the essential environmental conditions for navigation, namely wind force and wave height, rather than the area or type of navigation.

The committee will decide later whether to open informal negotiations with the Council with a view to reaching agreement at first reading on this new directive.

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