

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0137/00

by Gerhard Hager (NI)
to the Commission

Subject: Rescue flight contracts with the main association of Austrian social insurance institutions

Current practice in Austria with regard to rescue flights is giving cause for considerable concern regarding its conformity with EU legislation. Although authorisation from the civil aviation authorities is needed to carry out secondary flights, that is to say transport flights between hospitals, it emerges that companies operating such flights, which have now been transferred away from the Austrian Ministry of the Interior, do not hold such authorisation. In addition, the main association of Austrian social security institutions has simply concluded an indefinite contract with the Federal Ministry of the Interior and another private body under which they alone can benefit from direct settlement of flight costs through social insurance.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above?
2. Does the Commission take the view that the main association of Austrian social insurance institutions is required to issue a Europe-wide invitation to tender for such contracts under the relevant European legislation, in particular Directives 92/50/EEC¹ and 89/665/EEC²
3. If so what steps will the Commission now take in response to this infringement of EU legislation?
4. If not, what is the Commission's justification for this view?
5. Does the Commission consider that the exempting of firms with government links from civil aviation authorisation requirements constitutes an inadmissible distortion of competition?
6. If so, what steps will the Commission take?
7. If not, what is the Commission's justification for this view?

¹ OJ L 209, of 24.7.1992, p. 1

² OJ L 395, of 30.12.1989, p. 33