Beat: Politics

Rules to ensure Eurotunnel safety and cooperation

EU-UK relations

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USPA NEWS - Channel railway safety to be maintained by UK and France

France to negotiate common rules applicable to the Channel Tunnel

Parliament supports legislation that aims to ensure the tunnel railway connecting continental Europe and the UK continues to operate safely and efficiently.

MEPs endorsed on Thursday two proposals concerning the Channel Tunnel with the goal to maintain the same set of rules governing the whole railway tunnel once the UK has the status of a third country.

The legislation will empower France to negotiate a new international agreement with the UK and maintain the Intergovernmental Commission as the main safety authority for the Eurotunnel.

Additionally, the regulations on the safety and interoperability arrangements will allow, as amended by the Parliament, negotiations between France and the UK to begin without delay.

The decision empowering France to negotiate an agreement supplementing its existing bilateral Treaty with the UK concerning the operation of the Channel Fixed Link was endorsed with 687 votes in favour, three against and four abstentions.

The regulation on application of railway safety and interoperability rules within the Channel Fixed Link was adopted with 687 votes in favour, four against and four abstentions.

Next steps

The amendments adopted by the Parliament correspond to the Council´s position. The Council will now have to formally adopt its first reading position. The regulation will enter into force the day after its publication in the Official Journal of the EU.

Background

If nothing is agreed, as of 1 January 2021, national safety authorities in the UK and France would have authority over their own half of the tunnel. EU regulations would no longer apply to the part of the tunnel that is under the UK´s jurisdiction.

The Parliament voted on the proposals under urgent procedure.

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