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Class directive, art. 20: a win-win-win situation for the maritime industry.

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The European Marine Equipment Council (EMEC), which represents more than 1250 companies across Europe in the marine equipment sector, welcomes yesterday's vote of the European Parliament on the Commission's Draft Classification Societies' Directive.

The European Parliament adopted Mr. De Grandes Pascual MEP report, following the recommendations from the EP Tran Committee and improving significantly the Commission's proposal. The European Parliament decided that class rules and regulations, as well as their implementation, shall be progressively harmonised. All marine equipment produced in Europe or installed on ship classified by European recognised organisations shall be based in the future on equivalent high standards.

The text adopted yesterday provides also for the obligation for recognised organisations to introduce mutual recognition of certificates based on equivalent standards. To protect environment and safety, the most demanding and rigorous models shall be adopted as reference. If the vote of the European Parliament will be confirmed by the Council, European recognised organisations will progressively improve their standards for the evaluation of ships and marine equipment. This will contribute altogether to a great improvement of safety at sea and to the competitiveness of the marine equipment industry: only the most efficient manufacturers and service providers will succeed in this market.

EMEC's chairman, Pim Van Gulpen, stated today:

"We strongly welcome yesterday's vote from the European Parliament on the Draft Class Directive. The European Marine Equipment industry supports the efforts of the EU to improve the efficiency of the classification system, which is in the interest of the whole maritime cluster but – first and foremost – of the whole European society. We believe that this Classification Societies Directive will set the base for a dramatic enhancement of the performance of fleets in terms of security and safety, and will stimulate - at the same time - European maritime industry to maintain its position of excellence on a global level. The European Marine Equipment Industry has been waiting for long time for a reform in the classification system which could conjugate efficiency and improved safety. We believe that the Draft Class Directive, as voted by the European Parliament yesterday, is the most appropriate answer."

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Definition of Marine Equipment

The term 'marine equipment' refers to all products and services supplied for the building, conversion, and maintenance of ships (seagoing and inland). This includes technical services in the field of engineering, installation and commissioning, and ship maintenance (including repair).

EMEC – European Marine Equipment Council

The European Marine Equipment Council (EMEC), which represents the European marine equipment industry, consists of 13 European trade associations from Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (two), Italy, Norway, Poland, Spain, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

The undertakings active in this important field, the majority of which are SMEs, are world leaders in many of the activities described in the definition above. They are responsible for 262,000 jobs directly and 436,000 indirectly, qualifying as the most important employer in the maritime industry. They generate a turnover of 26 billion Euro, 12 billion of which relate to the export market, contributing to European economic growth.

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