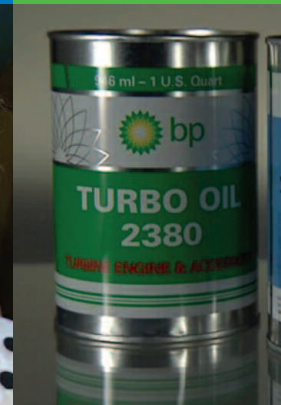
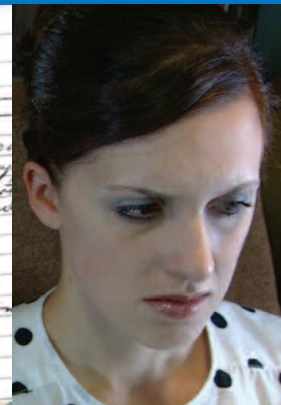


# AIRCRAFT AIR QUALITY: CONTAMINATION CAN AFFECT YOUR HEALTH

Guidelines for cabin crew

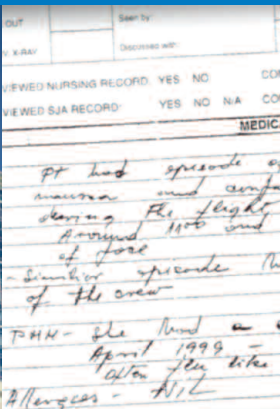
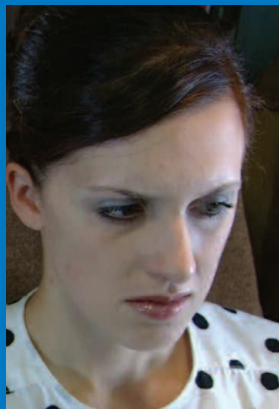


OUT	Seen by	Date	Day	CL	Letter / Fax	From	To
V. K. Ravi	Discussed with	08/08/12					
VIEWED NURSING RECORD:	YES NO	COMMENTS:					
VIEWED SJA RECORD:	YES NO NA	COMMENTS:					
MEDICAL NOTES							
<p>PT had episode of the same throat issue noticed and confusion after that. It happened during the flight - Post Medford - Pt around 10:30 and lasted about 1 hour of time - Similar episode had another member of the crew</p> <p>PAN - She had a similar problem from April 1999 - 4x after few like symptoms Allergies - Nil</p>							



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### BE AWARE OF THE PROBLEM

Cabin crew have long reported health problems after exposure to chemicals. These chemicals enter the cabin via the aircraft ventilation system. The aircraft's air supply is bled off the engines. Engines sometimes leak toxic oil. Other chemicals include hydraulic fluid, de-icing fluid, ozone and exhaust. The problem is not limited to a single airline or aircraft type. Fumes can be a problem on the ground or during and after take-off.

### RECOGNISE WHEN THERE IS A PROBLEM

Usually people notice an unusual odour such as dirty socks, wet dog, musty/mouldy, chemical, electrical, oily, etc. You may also see smoke or a haze, but this is rare. In some cases, you may not smell or see anything, but you may still feel sick. In most cases, there is only an odour. The odour might be apparent in some locations of the aircraft, but not in others.

### RECOGNISE THE SYMPTOMS

These are symptoms which you might have inflight:

- \* headache
- \* metallic taste
- \* cough
- \* irritated eyes/nose/throat
- \* dizziness
- \* nausea
- \* weakness
- \* muscle pain

They might continue for a few days or weeks, and put you at risk of more serious symptoms if you are exposed again.

Sometimes the symptoms can be chronic, including memory loss, fatigue, tingling in the hands and feet, problems with balance, headaches, breathing difficulties, tremors and muscle pain.

### TAKE ACTION IF YOU SUSPECT CONTAMINATED AIR



**STEP 1:** Can you smell something unusual? Are passengers showing symptoms? Are cabin crew showing symptoms? If the answer is yes to any of these questions, and even if an oil fume problem is not visible, report the incident to the pilot in command.



**STEP 2:** Document and file a safety report. A written record is essential to ensure that the maintenance department investigates and monitors should the problem occur again on the same aircraft.



**STEP 3:** If you have symptoms, follow the procedure for filing a sick claim with your company. Keep a copy of all paperwork for your records. You must also keep a record of the flight number, registration numbers and date and time of the incident.

Even if you do not need medical help, always write it up. A written record can help if you get exposed again, or if someone else on your trip gets sick. Send a copy of your written record to your union.



### STEP 4: Take the symptoms seriously!

They can persist, or return after another incident. Get medical attention as soon as possible. Keep a symptom diary and take photos of any visible symptoms such as a rash. Make sure that you keep a record with your doctor.

### What does your doctor need to know?

- *What is the suspected problem?*  
Engine oil or hydraulic fluid contaminated the aircraft air supply system.
- *What engine oils does your company use?*  
You can get this information from your union health and safety rep, or ask your airline. But the health hazards associated with inhalation are often not described.
- *Have you been exposed?*  
There is no definitive blood test yet. Ask your doctor to check the level of PChE in your blood. Exposure to TCPs (phosphates added to all aviation engine oils) can cause a depression in PChE levels. Ask your doctor if testing your

*serum C-reactive protein is a suitable test. You can also have a blood test to detect whether you have been exposed to carbon monoxide, but CO clears from your body relatively quickly. Have medical tests which show damage to your body which might be consistent with exposure to oil fumes or hydraulic fluid.*



### STEP 5: Contact your union health and safety representative. He/she will be able to give you further advice, and put you in contact with other union members who have also been exposed to contaminated air.

Find out what has helped them. Get their support. Your union will also support you if you are not well enough to return to work. Do not let yourself be bullied into taking a trip if you are not well.



### STEP 6: Get more information about air quality from the International Transport Workers' Federation at:

[www.cabinairquality.org](http://www.cabinairquality.org)