



## SUSPECTED SMOKE/FUME EVENT?

### HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

1. **There are many sources of unusual/ unpleasant fumes (odours) in the cabin / flight deck. While many are harmless, oil, hydraulic and deicing fluids can contaminate the ventilation air that you breathe onboard and are toxic and hazardous and should not be ignored.** Small leakages of synthetic lubricants (oils) are recognized as the most common source of contaminated air. If oil/hydraulic fluid fumes contaminate the cabin air supply, you will likely notice an unusual/unpleasant smell, but most fume events do not include smoke/haze, so you likely won't see anything unusual.
2. **If you smell fumes, they may not necessarily smell like oil or hydraulic fluid. They may also smell like** dirty socks, chemicals, musty/mouldy, old cheese, wet dog, heated garbage and so on. Boeing has reported that some engine oil fumes have a characteristic "electrical smell," often mistaken for electrical faults.
3. **If you smell what you think may be oil/hydraulic fumes, quickly try to assess and rule out other in-cabin sources.** Cabin crew, tell the flight deck and describe the "what and where" of anything you smell and see, and report any symptoms.
4. **If contaminated air fumes or smells are present** prior to pushback, ask maintenance to check the aircraft prior to dispatch. If fumes are present during taxi, make sure the flight deck knows. If fumes are present in-flight, ask the flight deck to ensure the defect is properly recorded and that maintenance checks the aircraft immediately upon landing. (The pilots may initiate a diversion or return to base.)
5. **Treat the presence of fumes that seem to be coming from the air supply vents as a flight safety issue;** do not ignore such fumes, whether small and transient or strong and prolonged. They may impair your ability to operate and evacuate the aircraft, if required.
6. **Pilots, use oxygen without delay.** Impaired performance occurs much like hypoxia – without warning.
7. **Pilots, use QRM for "smoke/fumes - air-conditioning."** Consider the need to divert/land.
8. **REPORT it (within required time-frame):**

- Aircraft technical (captain)
- Airline-specific incident reporting form (pilots, cabin crew)
- Mandatory reporting programs to regulator (e.g., MOR, ASR, etc.)
- Other reporting systems (e.g., ASRS, ASAP)
- Report to your national AIB / Accident Investigation/ Transportation Safety Bureau.
- Keep a personal copy of the reports you send, the report numbers, and any related correspondence from the company.

**9. Pilots, check the well-being of entire crew.**

**10. Pilots and cabin crew, notify your union(s) of the event.**

**11. If you have symptoms, get medical attention immediately so that your symptoms are documented:**

- When you see a doctor, bring a copy of the chemical “safety data sheet” for the product you think/know you were exposed to. Some data sheets are posted on GCAQE website. If oil/hydraulic fluid/deicing fluid contaminated the engine/APU air, the fumes can also contain carbon monoxide gas (depending on temperature). More questions? Contact your union.  
<http://ashsd.afacwa.org/docs/SDSpage.htm> - safety data sheets
- Consider various suggested medical tests used by crew, scientists & their doctors – more info available on GCAQE website.
- If you think you were exposed to oil or hydraulic fluid fumes, also give your doctor a copy of the FAA-sponsored Health Care Providers’ Guide. Available at <http://www.ohrca.org/medical-protocols-for-crews-exposed-to-engine-oil-fumes-on-aircraft/>
- Keep a record of your symptoms in a journal and go to the doctor as necessary so that everything is documented. (You may develop new symptoms for weeks after your air quality event. If you are unsure what type of doctor you need to see, call your union for advice.)
- Take photos/video of any visible symptoms (rash, tremors, etc).
- If injured, then file a workers compensation claim.
- **REFER to medical suggestions page on GCAQE website, including potential medical tests document.**

**12. Further information available here:**

- GCAQE – [www.gcaqe.org](http://www.gcaqe.org) ; <http://www.gcaqe.org/healthinformation.html>
- Aerotoxic Association - [www.aerotoxic.org](http://www.aerotoxic.org)
- AFA-CWA, AFL-CIO - [http://ashsd.afacwa.org/?zone=/unionactive/view\\_article.cfm&HomeID=1396&page=HealthIssues](http://ashsd.afacwa.org/?zone=/unionactive/view_article.cfm&HomeID=1396&page=HealthIssues)

- AFA-CWA bulletin: “Answers to frequently asked questions: Onboard exposure to smoke/fumes” - <http://ashsd.afacwa.org/docs/genqanda1.pdf>
- Cabin air films
  - Cabin air feature film - A Dark Reflection (2015) <http://www.adarkreflection.com/>
  - Angel Without Wings (2011)- <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/angelwithoutwings>
  - Broken Wings (2011): <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/brokenwings>
  - Welcome Aboard Toxic Airlines (2007) - <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/toxicairlines>
  - Cabin air documentary (in development) – [www.aerotoxicfilm.com](http://www.aerotoxicfilm.com)
- ECA position statement - [https://www.eurocockpit.be/sites/default/files/ECA\\_Position\\_Paper\\_Cabin\\_Air\\_Contamination\\_12\\_0125\\_F\\_0.pdf](https://www.eurocockpit.be/sites/default/files/ECA_Position_Paper_Cabin_Air_Contamination_12_0125_F_0.pdf)
- GCAQE bulletin: “What your doctor needs to know” - <http://www.gcaqe.org/healthinformation.html>
- IFALPA safety bulletin - <http://www.ifalpa.org/downloads/Level1/Safety%20Bulletins/Medical/13SAB006%20-%20Cabin%20air%20quality.pdf>
- ITF cabin air safety bulletin - <http://www.itfglobal.org/en/transport-sectors/civil-aviation/in-focus/air-quality/>
- ITF video - <http://www.itfglobal.org/campaigns/cabin-air-quality.cfm>
- Susan Michaelis, PhD - [www.susanmichaelis.com](http://www.susanmichaelis.com)