

Hidden dangers to flying ...



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OP Poison in the air?

“In Commons debates on 28th June and 28th July 2000 Paul Tyler drew attention to increasing concern about the evidence of leakage of toxic OP fumes into the aircraft cabin environment, all over the world.

Excessive levels of chemical contamination can affect two aspects of aircraft operations: the operational environment and the working and travelling environment; a fact apparent to airline operators, to aircrew and to every airline passenger . . .”

.... Environment Minister Michael Meacher wrote to Paul Tyler, responding to his speeches and questions on this issue, announced that the Government would commission a comprehensive study of evidence of health risks to air passengers, taking into account Australian and other experience.

November 2000: 22nd November The Lords sub-committee on the aircraft cabin environment reported on their investigation into air safety issues. The report pointed out that there were hidden dangers to flying, and Paul Tyler renewed his demand that the UK Government press for an EU and world wide initiative to raise safety standards. Commenting, Mr Tyler said:

"I am especially concerned at the accumulating weight of evidence that the escape of toxic organophosphate (Of) vapour, from faulty engine lubricant mechanisms, could cause major problems. It is bad enough that passengers can be exposed to this risk, but the consequences for the safety of the aircraft of pilots and crews are affected is alarming. The neurological effects on pilots and crews from low level exposure to these dangerous poisons are potentially disastrous. International action is long overdue."

December 2000; a preliminary response from Michael Meacher, Environment Minister, indicated continuing Government concern at evidence of risk from toxic fumes in aircraft, and a determination to continue monitoring incidents from all over the world:

These events are of great concern and, with the CAA we are closely monitoring the investigations being carried out in this area.

We are well aware of claims being made world-wide that health is being compromised and are actively reviewing the available data in this area." (source)

