



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oregon airline captain wins major workers' compensation case in relation to contaminated air on aircraft.

London, England.

On the 31st of July 2020, the State of Oregon (USA) Workers' Compensation Board ruled in favour of Captain Andrew Myers. Andrew Myers had been a Jet Blue Captain who was exposed chronically to contaminated air on the Airbus aircraft he flew followed by an acute oil fume event in early 2017.

The 'Opinion and Order' from the Oregon Compensation Board as well as the final reply from his attorney Glen Lasken can be seen on the GCAQE News page at:

<https://www.gcaqe.org/news>

This is an historic ruling in the USA and has global implications for the aviation industry. The long held industry position of denial in relation to contaminated air on aircraft has been firmly discredited.

Captain Myers and his family, supported by his legal team headed up by Oregon based Workers' Compensation attorney Glen Lasken showed persistent determination in their fight for justice.

Lasken commented:

"It's the first case in the US to establish that the fumes that injured Myers are dangerous, though Myers is far from alone in his injuries. It's a pretty ground breaking case. It's a big victory for airline staff and passengers."

GCAQE Spokesperson Captain Tristan Loraine stated:

"The US Senate aviation sub committee was briefed on this problem in the early 1990s by the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) and here we are today, nearly thirty years later, still waiting for aircraft to be fitted with effective filtration and detection systems. The cans of synthetic jet engine oils and hydraulic fluids that passengers and crews are being exposed to on aircraft clearly state: 'do not breathe mist or vapour from heated product; risk of cancer; suspected of damaging fertility.' The industry's continued procrastination on this issue is not acceptable."

Lasken further commented:

"My hope is that this case and others that will inevitably follow, will compel the airline industry to be more concerned about the quality of the air being breathed by crew and passengers alike."

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Notes to editors:

- An educational film explaining these issues is available at:
<https://vimeo.com/222807037>
- Cabin breathing air on all aircraft apart from the Boeing 787 is taken directly from the engines and provided unfiltered to the aircraft. This is known as 'Bleed Air'.
- Bleed air is known to become contaminated with engine oils and/or hydraulic fluids. These are hazardous especially to the unborn.
- Contaminated bleed air events have been recognised as occurring since the 1950s.
- No aircraft currently flying has any form of detection system fitted to warn when these events occur.
- Flight safety is being compromised by contaminated air events.
- Crew and passengers have been reporting short and long-term health effects as a consequence of exposure to contaminated air.
- Contaminated air events are not rare and known to be under reported.
- Passengers are never told about the risks or these exposures.
- The aviation industry has and continues to fail to adequately address this issue.
- This US ruling comes 10 years after the High Court of Australia upheld a ruling that inhaling heated engine oil fumes were harmful (Joanne Turner case) and twenty one years after the Compensation Court of New South Wales in Australia ruled, on 28 April 1999 in the Alysia Chew case. Alysia Chew had flown for Ansett and East West Airlines and had been exposed to fumes on the BAe 146 between January 1992 and October 1993. The New South Wales Compensation Court reviewed her claim that she was: "exposed to fumes, toxic substances and other irritants whilst carrying out her duties as a flight attendant" and ruled she had: "Suffered injury arising out of and in the course of her employment".
- The GCAQE was established in 2006 and is the leading group in the world representing airline employees in relation to the issue of contaminated air on aircraft.