



**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Thursday 30 July 2015

**GCAQE calls on all aviation crew members and passengers to contribute to a vital blood test being developed to prove exposure to contaminated air on aircraft.**

London, England.

The Global Cabin Air Quality Executive (GCAQE), established in 2006, is the leading organisation representing air crew (pilots, cabin crew and engineers) and offshore oil workers, that deals specifically with contaminated air issues and cabin air quality. The GCAQE represents over 30 organisations, and over three quarters of a million workers around the world.

The breathing air supplied to all passengers and crews on every pressurised aircraft in the world, with the notable exception of the advanced Boeing 787, originates in the aircraft engines and is provided unfiltered to the aircraft cabin. This design flaw enables synthetic jet engine oils to contaminate the breathing air.

For six decades, the airline industry has known that these fumes can make people sick, but they have not installed filters or warning systems in aircraft despite numerous air accident investigation agencies calling for such systems to be fitted. The toxins in the oil can cause very serious and long-lasting symptoms, including memory loss, fatigue, tingling in the hands and feet, headaches, breathing difficulties, and muscle pain.

Dedicated scientists at the University of Washington in Seattle, under the leadership of Professor Furlong, are developing a blood test specific to the hazardous organophosphates used in jet engine oils. Crews and passengers need this test. If you breathe toxic fumes during a flight and you get sick, you need to be able to prove it. The industry needs to be pushed to change the design and operation of these systems.

The research team in Seattle urgently need our help – small donations from thousands of crews and passengers will enable the team to finish their work sooner and provide a blood test that will benefit people who fly on aircraft all around the world.

Please visit [gcaqe.org/bloodtest](http://gcaqe.org/bloodtest) and make a donation to help make air travel safer. However small your donation, it will assist the research team in reaching their goal. 100% of donations go directly to the research.

Co-Chairman of the GCAQE, and British Citizen Award winner, Captain Tristan Loraine BCAi, stated: "The airline industry knows from swab tests of the cabin walls and air monitoring studies that passengers and crews are being exposed to hazardous chemicals but nothing is done to prevent these exposures. Similar to smoking, the thalidomide disaster or the Asbestos scandal, the industry knew long before the people,

what the risks were. This blood test will allow anyone who flies to prove they were exposed on the aircraft. ”

Dr. Susan Michaelis, Head of Research for the GCAQE who has written a PhD on the issue stated: “The industry was warned of the health risks of exposing crews and passengers to contaminated air as far back as 1954. Its only with the smoking ban in the late 1980s that the public finally realised the air they were inhaling could be contaminated. Pilots and passengers have been impaired and incapacitated in flight, yet the aviation industry allows the problem to continue through a well-orchestrated campaign of denial.”

The High Court of Australia upheld a ruling in 2010, that inhaling heated oil fumes was harmful and this blood test will help make air travel safer for everyone – please support this vital research.

Additional information on the issue is available at:

[www.gcaqe.org](http://www.gcaqe.org)  
[www.aerotoxicfilm.com](http://www.aerotoxicfilm.com)  
[www.aerotoxic.org](http://www.aerotoxic.org)  
[www.adarkreflection.com](http://www.adarkreflection.com)

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#### **Notes to editors:**

- An educational film and brochure on this issue are available at: [www.gcaqe.org](http://www.gcaqe.org)
- To date this research has been funded by a large selection of unions around the world and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).
- 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.
- The documentary Angel Without Wings covers some of the early development of this blood test research.
- **PASSENGERS ARE NEVER TOLD WHEN THEY ARE EXPOSED.**