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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT

Directorate B – Investment, Innovative & Sustainable Transport  
The Director

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Tristan Loraine  
GCAQE Spokesperson  
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**Subject: REPLIES - EUROPEAN OMBUDSMAN - 2022/1081(1)  
The European Commission's failure to reply to e-mails concerning cabin  
air quality in commercial transport aircraft**

Dear Captain Loraine,

Thank for your email of 16 March 2022, by which you conveyed the general concerns expressed by your association regarding the lack of interest by EASA/DG MOVE to present the state of play of Cabin Air Quality (CAQ) projects funded by the EU to the 2022 Aircraft Cabin Conference that you are organising. Commissioner Vălean asked me to reply to you on her behalf.

I would like to recall that my colleague Torsten Klimke had already replied to your invitation by email on 11 January 2022 and 22 February 2022. In his emails, Mr Klimke suggested to get in contact with EASA directly, as EASA is managing the next phase and the follow-up.

Further, some of the issues raised in your email have been reviewed in the context of our broader and comprehensive plan to address research issues covering all aspects of CAQ, notably the source of the potential contaminants, the toxicological and health risk assessment of exposure to the various identified chemical compounds, the means to monitor occurrences. This would eventually determine the relevant mitigation measures including warning systems.

In coordination with EASA, we remain committed to the research programme strategy as explained above to make an objective assessment of the risks of engine leakages and their impacts on CAQ.

Set against this context, the investigations implemented by DG MOVE and EASA are not poorly designed, biased nor influenced by industry. Should you have evidence of such malpractices, I invite you to contact the concerned services at EASA and DG MOVE without undue delay.

In accordance with Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 on the investigation and prevention of accidents and incidents in civil aviation, EASA maintains a complete repository of safety recommendations formulated by accident/incident investigation bodies and is bound to respond to the recommendations addressed to the Agency.

The Agency devotes a considerable amount of attention and effort to the topic of cabin air quality. EASA has taken concrete actions to better understand all the facets of this topic, including the health and safety aspects. So far, a causal link between exposure to cabin/cockpit air contaminants and reported health symptoms is not supported by scientific evidence to date. Therefore, EASA has not identified concerns that would justify to mandate general design changes or to amend products certification specifications. However, EASA continues to investigate the occurrences of cabin fume events linked to engine / auxiliary power unit oil leakage and their potential health and safety implications.

Finally and as referred in your email, the follow-up study under the leadership of EASA is now under way. EASA plans the organisation of several research workshops with Stakeholders centred on scientific developments in the area of cabin air quality (and contamination events), as follow-up to the event organised in January 2020 and attended by more than 90 participants. The objectives and results of the new project launched by EASA in December 2021 will be presented at these events.

You are most welcome to join and challenge this research community.

Yours faithfully,

Electronically signed

Herald RUIJTERS

c.c.: R. Smit (CAB-Valean), M. Hamdouch (DG MOVE), F. Cornelis (DG MOVE), L. Tytgat (EASA), T Klimke (DG MOVE), P. Peitl (DG MOVE)