

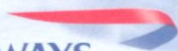
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# Cabin Crew News

*The Supplement*  
Meet The Inflight Service  
Operations Team

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BRITISH AIRWAYS



## Dimmed Lights

When patrolling the cabin please be aware that passenger legs/hand baggage or other floor debris could cause a trip/slip hazard, so please take extra care when the lights are dimmed. Cabin Crew should also ensure their personal belongings are stowed to prevent unnecessary accidents.

## B747-400 - Doors 3

A number of crew have highlighted the importance of keeping the overhead lockers, where SEP equipment is stowed, free from passenger baggage.

## Footwear FCO 4127a

Cabin Crew should exercise discretion in their choice of footwear. Flat shoes should be worn during take-off, landing and emergency situations to allow you to carry out your duties and avoid personal injury or damage to the slides.

## B747/B777 Cabin Crew Seats For Take Off/Landing Announcement

SCCMs - a reminder - please make this announcement before giving the 6\*/6P signal to the Flight Crew.

## B777 Lower Lobe Rest Entrance Hatch

When the LLAR is in use, the hatch must be secured open using the two turn catches otherwise, if closed, the air supply to the unit ceases. NB: this is a different procedure from the hatch to the OHAR rest area.

## Medical

### Fumes in the Cabin

Following a small number of recent incidents in which oily smells have been detected in the aircraft cabin, it is recognised that there is understandable concern about the possible toxicity of these fumes.

The preferred oil on the 757/767 fleets is Mobil Jet Oil II. This contains synthetic hydrocarbons and additives, including an organophosphate known as Tricresyl Phosphate (TCP) which acts as a high pressure lubricant. Engine lubricating oil contains around 3% TCP.

TCP is a toxic mixture that can cause a wide array of transitory or permanent neurological dysfunctions when swallowed. However, there have been no recorded cases of neurological harm in humans following dermal or inhalation exposure. This means that the substance can be potentially harmful if swallowed in large enough quantity, but is not harmful if absorbed through the skin or breathed in.

The term organophosphate encompasses a variety of chemical compounds that have a similar structure. Small differences in this structure alter the chemical properties of the compound and will thus alter any associated health affects. Exposure to large doses of some organophosphates by skin contact, inhalation or by swallowing, may cause adverse effects on the nervous system. However, not every organophosphate compound will cause these problems, including those used in jet engine oil.

A report commissioned by British Airways Health Services from the Medical Toxicology Unit at Guy's Hospital states that "the majority of cases of tricresyl phosphate poisoning have been associated with the swallowing of contaminated food or drink, not with occupational exposure. The most frequent occupational exposures occur during manufacture, packaging, shipping and storage, not at the point of product use, and reports of occupational intoxication are rare". The report quotes documented exposures dating back as far as 1943 and all the exposures are to high concentrations greatly in excess of the amount present in jet oil.

Also of note is a Canadian study published in 1998 by the Department of Health Care and Epidemiology in the University of British Columbia. Following complaints from crew of health effects thought to be related to oil odour on BAe 146-200 aircraft, the components of cabin air, including TCP were measured. This study was unable to detect any TCP during in-flight measurements and was in fact unable to detect any health effects associated with the oil odour. Another study of cabin air quality on Boeing aircraft, by Harvard University in the USA, also failed to detect any TCP during in-flight measurements.

British Airways commissioned a study by an independent specialist on indoor air quality, BRE, to investigate this issue in 2001. The BRE specialists found that the concentrations of all oil compounds detected in cabin air on the B757 were each less than 100 parts per billion, which is well below the toxicological threshold for humans.

The human body has its own defence mechanisms which protect against harm from certain levels of hazardous substances. However, if these levels are exceeded, it is possible for health to be affected either immediately (acute effects), or a long time after the first exposure (chronic or delayed effects). Many factors may affect the way in which an individual responds to the substances to which they are exposed in the workplace, such as state of health or well-being, or individual sensitivity to a particular substance. The human senses, particularly the sense of smell, are generally very effective in detecting potentially hazardous substances at a level well below that which causes harm (the major exception carbon monoxide, which is odourless and colourless). The fact that a hazardous substance can be smelt does not necessarily imply that it is of sufficient concentration to cause harm. For most volatile organic compounds, the concentration level for detection by a normal healthy human is around 1,000 times less than the concentration level which is likely to harm health. And, as already noted, there have been no cases of human harm recorded from exposure to inhalation of these compounds.

It is recognised that individuals vary in their sensitivity to smells and tastes; what is hardly detectable by one individual can be seriously unpleasant for another. Nonetheless, the fact that a smell is detected and may be highly unpleasant does not imply that any harm is being done to that individual's health.

British Airways takes all these incidents seriously and continues to work with external agencies such as the CAA to bring about a satisfactory resolution.

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