

Boeing Settles Toxic Cabin Air Case

Former flight attendant Terry Williams has won a settlement of an undisclosed amount after suing Boeing, alleging that the manufacturer employs faulty engineering, which allows toxic fumes into the cabin and harm people inside. Williams' lawsuit claimed that fumes in engine bleed air pumped into aircraft cabins can cause tremors, severe headaches, and memory loss. The Association of Flight Attendants-CWA believes that the bleed air can contain carbon monoxide, tricresyl phosphates and other contaminants. Settlement aside, Boeing contends that cabin air is safe and that independent research shows that it meets applicable health and safety standards. The FAA has also chimed in on the subject.

FAA funds were used to produce a guide for health care providers treating airline workers exposed to aircraft bleed air contaminants. According to the document itself, the FAA Office of Aerospace Medicine sponsored the project, and "it neither endorses nor rejects the findings of this research." The research states that bleed air "may sometimes be contaminated with pyrolyzed engine oil and/or hydraulic fluid." It also says "airline workers and passengers may develop acute and/or chronic health effects and seek attention from health care providers." The document (PDF) cites mechanical failures, maintenance irregularities and faulty designs as potential sources for bleed air contamination. According to the guide, health effects due to exposure to contaminated bleed air "are difficult to document." In a statement to CNN, the FAA said "the concerns are reasonable and are being investigated."

http://www.avweb.com/avwebflash/news/bleed_air_toxic_lawsuit_terry_williams_boeing_205519-1.html