



Markus Tressel MdB (Member of the German Bundestag)

Speaker for Tourism Policy
of the BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN (ALLIANCE '90/THE GREENS) faction in the German Bundestag

19 September 2011

Platz der Republik 1, 11011 Berlin
☎ (030) 227 – 73204, 📠 (030) 227 – 76206
✉ markus.tressel.ma02@bundestag.de

Hearing on the Subject of Contaminated Air in Airplanes

Non-public hearing on Wednesday, 21 September

Incidents of contaminated cabin air in airplanes have been reported repeatedly in the recent past. At worst, there is the imminent threat of symptoms similar to Parkinson's disease occurring. Hence a chronic health risk cannot be excluded. That is why the Bündnis90/Die Grünen (Alliance '90/The Greens) faction in the German Bundestag has moved for holding a hearing in the Tourism Committee of the German Bundestag.

Markus Tressel, the Speaker for Tourism Policy of the Greens faction in the German Bundestag, declares: "The statements known to us made by the Federal Government and the airlines do not indicate a great sense of responsibility. Not only are they responsible for the crew; they also bear the obligation of enlightening the passengers, informing them about possible health risks and looking after them in the wake of (severe) disturbances or providing care in this respect. The handling of events with contaminated cabin air has been simply insufficient up to now."

The cause of the problems here is a technical construction developed in the 1960s, which has gained acceptance more and more since that time. The air for the air conditioning system is drawn from the compressors of the aircraft engines. That's why it is referred to as "bleed air." By means of this bleed air, oil vapors can enter the breathing air of human beings. Such an event is referred to as a "fume event." With Lufthansa, for instance, a "fume event" transpires every 2000th flight. That means one event a day – for Lufthansa alone.

Dr. Susan Michaelis, among others, has been dealing with this issue on a scientific basis. Dr. Michaelis has been invited by the Greens faction to attend the non-public hearing.

Markus Tressel: "We have written to the major German airlines in September 2010 to initiate a dialogue with them. The only airline that replied was Germanwings. We know today: Problems with contaminated cabin air do exist – with all the airlines. There are options, though, which could be quickly implemented: 1) installing filter systems; 2) deploying oils that are free of neurotoxins; and 3) taking measurements in the cabin. Nothing of the kind has been done up to now."

The hearing being held is to make a contribution to the job of lifting the fog in airplane cabins. A dialogue with experts representing various approaches constitutes a step toward more transparency, information and exchange.

PRESS RELEASE



Markus Tressel MdB (Member of the German Bundestag)

Speaker for Tourism Policy
of the BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN (ALLIANCE '90/THE GREENS) faction in the German Bundestag

Platz der Republik 1, 11011 Berlin
☎ (030) 227 – 73204, 📠 (030) 227 – 76206
✉ markus.tressel.ma02@bundestag.de

Background

Expert Discussion on the Issue of “Contaminated Cabin Air”

The following participants have been invited:

- Tim van Beveren, journalist, Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR)
- Dr. Andreas Bezold, Airbus expert for air & thermal engineering
- Prof. Dr. Jürgen Bünger, Institute for Preventative and Occupational Medicine of the German Social Accident Insurance, Ruhr University Bochum
- Jörg Handweg, Board Member of the Cockpit Pilots' Association
- Dr. Susan Michaelis, Head of Research, Global Cabin Air Quality Executive (GCAQE)
- Matthias von Randow, Chief Executive Officer of the Association of German Air Transport Industry (Bundesverband der Deutschen Luftverkehrswirtschaft, BDL)

Owing to a lack of consensus among the factions of the German Bundestag, the hearing, unfortunately, will be non-public. We will gladly inform you in greater detail about the findings and provide you with further discussion papers:

Sören Sturm

Office of Markus Tressel, MdB (Member of the German Bundestag)

Platz der Republik 1, 11011 Berlin
Telephone: (030) 227 – 73204, Fax: (030) 227 – 76206
E-mail: markus.tressel.ma02@bundestag.de

Previous parliamentary initiatives

- Minor interpellation (BT-Drs. 17/5155),
 - Response by the German Federal Government (BT-Drs. 17/5371)
- Written interpellations: no. 160/January 2011, no. 59 and 87 October 2010
- Minor interpellation (BT-Drs. 17/2916),
 - Response by the German Federal Government (BT-Drs. 17/3105)
- Interpellation to the Research Section of the German Bundestag (21/05/2010)
- Report of the German Federal Government in the Tourism Committee on 21/04/2010
- Minor interpellation (BT-Drs. 16/12388),
 - Response by the German Federal Government (BT-Drs. 16/12578)
- Minor interpellation (BT-Drs. 16/12023),
 - Response by the German Federal Government (BT-Drs. 16/12179)

PRESS RELEASE