

## LETTERS

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## FLIGHT INTERNATIONAL

We welcome your letters on any aspect of the aerospace industry.

Please write to: The Editor, Flight International, Quadrant House, The Quadrant, Sutton, Surrey SM2 5AS, UK. Or email [flight.international@flightglobal.com](mailto:flight.international@flightglobal.com)

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### Toxic answers still needed

The Cranfield study on which you reported, "Cranfield toxic study clears cabin air" (*Flight International*, 17-23 May) did a great job in answering the question can a neurotoxin like trichresyl phosphate (TCP) leak from the engines into the aircraft cabin air?

The answer, in an emphatic affirmative, is based on good scientific methodology. However, the research team then obfuscated the issue by giving a needless "opinion" that the level of TCP measured was "acceptable".

Perhaps they were referring to the extant standard for exposure to TCP (OSHA TWA 0.1 mg/m<sup>3</sup> of air), which was designed in the 1940s and 1950s for industrial workers. This standard cannot be applied to pilots, who are required to perform complex cognitive tasks requiring short-term memory, judgement, reaction time, neuromuscular co-ordination, and orientation.

#### SAFETY

### Ignore the ash bluster

The Grímsvötn volcano in Iceland has joined its sister Eyjafjalajökull in making a monkey of the highly regulated aviation industry in Europe.

As a pilot I trust my life, and that of my passengers, to the science of aeronautics and engineering. This science assumes that the aircraft's operating environment remains broadly consistent and has never allowed for flight through volcanic ash.

Airline executives Michael O'Leary and Willie Walsh have been pleased to report the absence of ash over Scotland following a single test flight each.

They seem to have forgotten about probability or Murphy's Law. Sending 100 aircraft up might result in one aircraft finding ash, sending 500 up might result in one aircraft finding ash and suffering engine failure into the bargain. This scenario will remain hypothetical as there will never be 100 test flights, let alone 500.

We will be better served, in the cause of safety, by trusting the science and the scientists and ignoring the bluster and bravado of this new Irish double act.

**Colin Starkey**  
Bath, Somerset, UK



Grímsvötn: confounding industry

Such high-level cognitive tasks are highly vulnerable to chemical insult, and may be compromised by neurotoxins at a fraction of the level deemed "acceptable". So the concern about cabin air quality, for the crews and passengers alike, remains.

**Dr Bhupli Singh**  
Royal Australian Air Force Institute of Aviation Medicine  
Edinburgh, South Australia

### Aerion hasn't got away yet

Aside from calling Aerion's planned supersonic business jet an SST instead of an SBJ, I'd also



Aerion's SBJ: still progressing

like to point out that listing this programme under the banner "The ones that got away" (*Flight International*, 17-23 May) is more than a bit misleading.

While the SBJ awaits an airframer to build it, the programme has made steady incremental advances (including NASA Boeing F-15B testing last summer and

later this year) and the company remains adequately financed for continuing operations.

Moreover, the technology behind the SBJ, natural laminar flow, is attracting new interest from OEMs for subsonic applications, as you have also reported. Such consultancy contracts could in turn benefit the planned SBJ.

**Adam Konowe**  
Vice President - Public Relations  
Aerion, Reno, Nevada, USA

### Starship was not a star

I disagree profoundly with several of your choices and even more some of your omissions, not to mention at least one major error, in "The ultimate jet set" (*Flight International*, 24-30 May).

Among your choices you feature the Beech Starship, a catastrophic project for the manufacturer and yet you classify the Piaggio P180 Avanti as a sort of also-ran even though it has proved itself commercially and technologically able to do what the Starship could not.

Among your more serious omissions is the Gulfstream I turboprop that was more or less the parent of all dedicated business aircraft.

Regarding your errors, the Mystère 20 was not based on Mirage IV wings (the Mirage IV was a delta-winged strategic nuclear bomber) but on the Mystère IV fighter aircraft. Launched as you say as the Mystère 20, the aircraft floundered until Marcel Dassault struck a deal with PanAm and the aircraft appeared in the USA as the Falcon 20 and met with ongoing success.

**Richard Chandlees**  
Vovray en Bourmes, France

### The three degrees

Written: "The difference between air temperature and dew point is less than 3°C (37°F)." Correction: a temperature of 3°C certainly corresponds to approximately 37°F, but a temperature difference of 3°C equals 5.4°F.

**Lars Sellberg**  
Täby, Sweden



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### Boeing success, epic task for paraplegic microflight pilot, new at Gatwick

#### INDIA CONFIRMS C-17 BUY

Lose some win some for Boeing Defense in a fast-growing market.  
Paulo\_Archie\_GP

#### PARAPLEGIC FLIGHT

Oman Air sponsors paraplegic microflight pilot flying the Kangaroo route: an epic quest.  
Douglas Holland

#### GATWICK MOVEMENTS

Today's first newcomer was Adria A320 S5-AAT (0191 ex CS-TNB) in retro scheme, arriving over 2h late on this morning's scheduled service from Ljubljana.  
John Dyer