

STRANGE ODOURS ON BOARD THE NEW A330NEO

The subject blew up in the Portuguese media in the middle of last June and has not yet ended. According to press reports, over the last four months, flight attendants, pilots and even some passengers have complained of nausea, dizziness and fainting on TAP Air Portugal's brand new Airbus A330NEO. The symptoms are sporadic and seem to be linked to what are described as 'olfactory events'. For the 12 cases, the Portuguese National Civil Aviation Authority (ANAC) and the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) have opened investigations. On at least one occasion, Portuguese media reports state that pilots have been forced to wear oxygen masks due to smoke, while on other occasions flight attendants have fainted or felt very tired while on duty on the A330NEO.



<https://www.paddleyourownkanoo.com/2019/07/17/tap-air-portugal-admits-odour-events-on-new-airbus-a330neos-that-have-sickened-cabin-crew-and-pilots/#.XTrHW JLgdU>

At this point, if we are not dealing with the notorious "fume events" we have talked about several times (1), we must refer to two elements: the engines or the air conditioning system; in fact, since it is not a matter of ingestion of food but only of breathing air circulating on board, we can only think of these two factors. Certainly it is unusual that a brand new aircraft which, as such, cannot complain about components or maintenance problems, present similar problems to those repeatedly complained of by passengers and airline staff when strange and unusual odours develop inside the cabin.

But there is also another peculiarity that contributes to complicate the research on the causes: Delta Airlines, the Brazilian AZUL, Air Mauritius and Air Senegal in short, all the airlines that have already put the same aircraft on line have not complained, at least so far, any inconvenience.

On the subject some observers in the industry assume that the cause of the nausea and dizziness is not related to the air system of the aircraft (bleed air), but to the novelty of the interior design, the fabrics and adhesives used for the assembly of the cabins. Others suggest that this may be hypoxia or lack of sufficient oxygen in the cabin. The Portuguese Airline Pilots Association (APPLA) has warned that it is carrying out independent analysis and testing to get to the bottom of what is causing these problems.

A statement provided by aerospace giant Airbus disproves any link between the smells and discomfort of the crew or passengers. "The manufacturer (Airbus) ensures that the smell and disease are not directly related to each other and however both Airbus and TAP deny that there is a detrimental effect on the health of the crew and passengers", said a representative to the Portuguese newspaper *Diario de Noticias*. Monitoring equipment has been installed on board aircraft in an attempt to identify exactly what is happening. The airline shared the complete test results with the staff to maintain a fully open and transparent attitude to the situation. The National Union of Civil Aviation Flight Staff (SNPVAC), which represents many members of the TAP cabin crew, has stated that they could organise a strike unless measures are taken to remedy the situation 'in a very short time'. TAP Air Portugal has already taken delivery of six brand new A330NEOs and was the launch customer of the aircraft in November 2018.

The Airbus A330neo (the acronym "neo" means "New Engine Option") is a wide-body aircraft designed and built by Airbus. On July 14, 2014 the aircraft was presented at the Farnborough Airshow, and on that occasion it was announced a consumption of 14% per passenger less than the standard version of the A330, thanks to an innovative engine produced by Rolls-Royce, the Trent 7000. The aircraft is derived from the 200 and 300 versions of the A330 family. The -800 version has a range of 7,500 nml (13,890 km) with a total of 257 passengers while the -900 version has a range of 6,550 nml (12,131 km) with a total of 287 passengers. The 900 model made its first flight on October 19, 2017 and received EASA certification on September 26, 2018. The first model was delivered to TAP Portugal on 26 November 2018 and entered service two days later. As of June 30, 2019, 16 out of 248 carnet orders had been delivered to different companies.

(1) See our newsletter n. 32/2019 "Suspected deaths"

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Newsletter emesse nel corso del 2019 (scaricabili gratuitamente dal nostro sito):

- 01/2019** : Bird strike di Ryanair a Ciampino: il rapporto (5 gennaio 2019)
- 02/2019** : Il subdolo pericolo degli aggiornamenti in avionica (11 gennaio 2019)
- 03/2019** : Prima vittima ufficiale dei fumi tossici (23 gennaio 2019)
- 04/2019** : Scontri aerei al confine Italia-Francia (27 gennaio 2019)
- 05/2019** : 51 morti a causa del capitano depresso (31 gennaio 2019)
- 06/2019** : Precipita B767 Amazon, 3 morti (24 febbraio 2019)
- 07/2019** : MH370: non è stato un incidente (1 marzo 2019)
- 08/2019** : Ancora un incidente a un 737MAX (10 marzo 2019)
- 09/2019** : Aggiornamento su Ethiopian 302 (11 marzo 2019)
- 10/2019** : La verità sul 737MAX (13 marzo 2019)
- 11/2019** : Chi pilota l'aereo, il computer o l'uomo? (13 marzo 2019)
- 12/2019** : Prima di Ethiopian 302, Lion Air 610 (15 marzo 2019)
- 13/2019** : Emergono dettagli sulla certificazione del 737MAX (18 marzo 2019)
- 14/2019** : Quando l'aereo è troppo nuovo (22 marzo 2019)
- 15/2019** : Un altro pilota suicida in Botswana (27 marzo 2019)
- 16/2019** : Avviso di stallo e recupero (29 marzo 2019)
- 17/2019** : Ethiopian, quel precedente del 25 gennaio 2010 (4 aprile 2019)
- 18/2019** : ET302: quello che dicono le registrazioni (6 aprile 2019)
- 19/2019** : Avvelenamenti negli aerei (Aerotoxic Syndrome) (8 aprile 2019)
- 20/2019** : B737MAX, chi ci ha rimesso di più? (18 aprile 2019)
- 21/2019** : Due piloti Cathay perdono la vista durante il volo (26 aprile 2019)
- 22/2019** : L'importanza dell'addestramento dei piloti (2 maggio 2019)
- 23/2019** : Aeroflot 1492, primo aggiornamento (5 maggio 2019)
- 24/2019** : Aeroflot 1492, secondo aggiornamento (6 maggio 2019)

25/2019 : I fulmini e la sicurezza del volo (8 maggio 2019)
26/2019 : Vicino alla tragedia (10 maggio 2019)
27/2019 : Uomo vs Computer: un capitano si confessa (20 maggio 2019)
28/2019 : Quel maledetto confronto B737:A320 (22 maggio 2019)
29/2019 : Incidente di Mosca: anche il windshear (30 maggio 2019)
30/2019 : Tail strike al decollo causa fretta (13 giugno 2019)
31/2019 : Nuovi dettagli sull'incidente di Mosca (16 giugno 2019)
32/2019 : Morti sospette (27 giugno 2019)
33/2019 : L'incidente di Treviso (2 luglio 2019)
34/2019 : Piovono clandestini dal cielo (3 luglio 2019)
35/2019 : Un decollo al rallentatore (19 luglio 2019)

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