

AIRCRAFT DESIGN AND SYSTEMS GROUP (AERO)

Aircraft Cabin Air – Quality or Contamination?

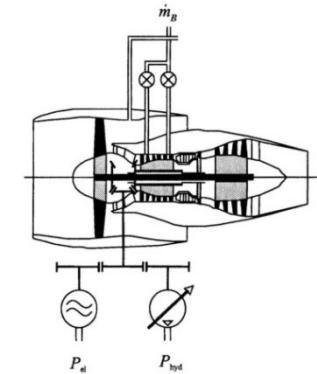
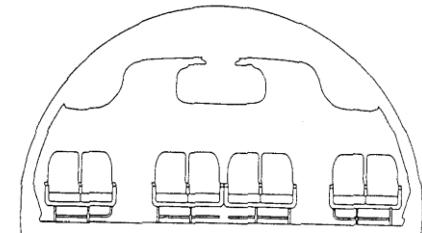
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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17960887>

Personalversammlung "Kabine", Deutsche Lufthansa AG

Frankfurt, 20. November 2017



Aircraft Cabin Air – Quality or Contamination?

Abstract

All aviation fluids (e.g. oil, fuel, hydraulic fluid) are spilled and subsequently ingested from the ground at airports. Jet engines leak oil internally in small quantities in normal operation by design and potentially in large amounts in failure cases. The oil gets into the engine compressor and via bleed air into the passenger cabin. The same is true for the auxiliary power unit (APU). Hydraulic fluids leak from the landing gear bay via the bottom of the fuselage into the APU inlet. As such, hydraulic fluids can also reach the potable water tank. Technical solutions are necessary: filtration in the recirculation path; better: complete air filtration; much better: a bleed-free air conditioning architecture. What can be done today? Crew members can get informed with a personal chemical detector. Cabin crew can get protected with a breathing mask, used in case of a fume or smoke event. In such cases, pilots can descend to 10000 ft to use direct venting of the cabin and cockpit to make a difference for passengers.

Aircraft Cabin Air – Quality or Contamination?

Contents

- Introduction
- **All Aviation Fluids: Ingestion from the Ground!**
- **Engine Oil => Cabin Air? Yes**
 - Air Conditioning Technology
 - Jet Engine
 - Auxiliary Power Unit (APU)
- **Engine Oil => Water? Yes**
- **Hydraulic Fluid => Cabin Air / Water? No**
- **Technical Solutions (in the Future?)**
 - Filtration in the Recirculation Path
 - Complete Air Filtration
 - Bleed-free Architecture
- **Hints (for Today!)**
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- Contact

Introduction

Introduction

Definition: Aircraft Cabin Air

A mixture of outside as well as recirculated and filtered air. In unpressurized aircraft cabins the air is at ambient pressure. In pressurized cabins the air is at a pressure equivalent to below 8000 ft (referring to the ICAO Standard Atmosphere). In most aircraft, the air temperature is controlled. Aircraft flying at high altitude usually show low relative humidity.

Adapted from: <http://aircrewhealth.com/Topics/hazards/cabinair.htm>

Introduction

Definition: Contamination

The process of making a material unclean or unsuited for its intended purpose, usually by the addition or attachment of undesirable foreign substances.

Adapted from: <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/contamination>

The presence of a minor and unwanted constituent (contaminant). Related to health: A harmful intrusion of toxins or pathogens e.g. in food, water, or air.

Adapted from: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contamination>

Definition: Quality

Degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfills requirements.

ISO 9000

Introduction

Health Effects: Occupational Health & Flight Safety

Health effects may be experienced soon after exposure or, possibly, years later:

- **Long-term health effects:**
 - to passengers
 - to crew => **occupational health (OH)**
 - usually related to
Time-Weighted Average (TWA)
 - Permissible Exposure Limits (PEL)
- **Immediate health effects:**
 - to passengers
 - to cabin crew
 - to cockpit crew => **flight safety implications** can lead to:
injury or death of
 - passenger
 - crew

=> CS 25.831

=> CS 25.1309

(Eurofins 2017, EASA CS-25)

Introduction

Potential Concerns Related to Air Quality

- Cabin Pressure
- Relative Humidity
- Carbon Monoxide
- Carbon Dioxide
- Ozone
- Pesticides
- Engine Oil
- Hydraulic Fluids
- Deicing Fluid
- Airborne Allergens
- Nuisance Odors

Can effect people with cardio-respiratory diseases from lack of oxygen

Temporary drying of skin, eyes, and mucous membranes

High concentrations during air-quality incidents. Frequency is believed to be low.
CS 25.831: Concentration must be lower than 50 ppm.

Concentrations are generally below FAA regulatory limits. Associated with increased perceptions of poor air quality. CS 25.831: Concentration must be lower than 0.5%.

Elevated concentrations on aircraft without ozone converters. Airway irritation and reduced lung function. CS 25.832: Concentration < 0.25 ppm resp. 0.1 ppm.

From aircraft "disinsection" with pesticides.

Fumes from hot engine oil may enter the cabin via the bleed air system.

Frequency of incidents is expected to be relatively low. Mild to severe health effects.

Hazardous substance. Skin sensitizing and irritant.

Exposure frequency is not known. Irritated eye and nose; sinusitis; acute increases of asthma; possible anaphylaxis.

Can be present on any flight.

Adapted from: <http://aircrewhealth.com/Topics/hazards/cabinair.htm>

Introduction

Potential Concerns Related to Water Quality

- Original Water Quality Depending on urban water management
- Purity of Tank and Water Lines Depending on aircraft potable water system maintenance
- Pesticides Aircraft "Disinsection" with pesticides
- Engine Oil Fumes from hot engine oil may enter water via the bleed air system.
- Hydraulic Fluids Hydraulic fluids are unlikely to enter the water via the bleed air system.



Introduction

Potential sources ... of air contamination

Engine start during push back

Bleed air switch off during engine start

Cabin cleaning in general

Interior cleaning

No ozone converters installed

De-icing fluids

Aircraft traffic at the airport

Car traffic at the airport

Passengers

Restrooms

Furnishings

Maintenance

Lubricants

Hydraulic fluids

Engine oils

In case of thermal degradation

Potential impact

Exhaust gases (e.g., CO, CO₂, NO_x, fuel, particles)

Short time increase of CO₂

VOC, e.g. alcohols, flavors (terpenes), aldehydes

Residual of tetrachloroethene

Ozone, particularly in cruise

1,2-Propanediol (major constituent) and various additives (e.g., dyes, thickener, antioxidants)

Exhaust gases (e.g., CO, CO₂, NO_x, fuel, particles)

Exhaust gases (e.g., CO, CO₂, NO_x, gasoline, particles)

Emission of CO₂, various VOCs, offensive smell

Smell, VOC from cleaning products

VOC/SVOC, particulate organic matter (POM), flame retardants e.g. organophosphates

Various VOCs, lubricants

Oil base stock, organophosphates, POM

e.g. Tributyl phosphate (TBP), triphenyl phosphate (TPP)

Tricresyl phosphate (TCP), trixylyl phosphate (TXP), Amines

VOCs, organic acids, aldehydes, CO, CO₂, potential unknown products

(EASA 2017b)

only
considered
here is:

All Aviation Fluids: Ingestion from the Ground!

All Aviation Fluids: Ingestion from the Ground!

Intake Vortices

- Due to gravity everything (**all aviation fluids**) will be on the ground eventually.
- Due to jet engines suction everything from the ground will be **in the** bleed and **cabin air**.



See also: <https://youtu.be/p5l3fD2WIQc>

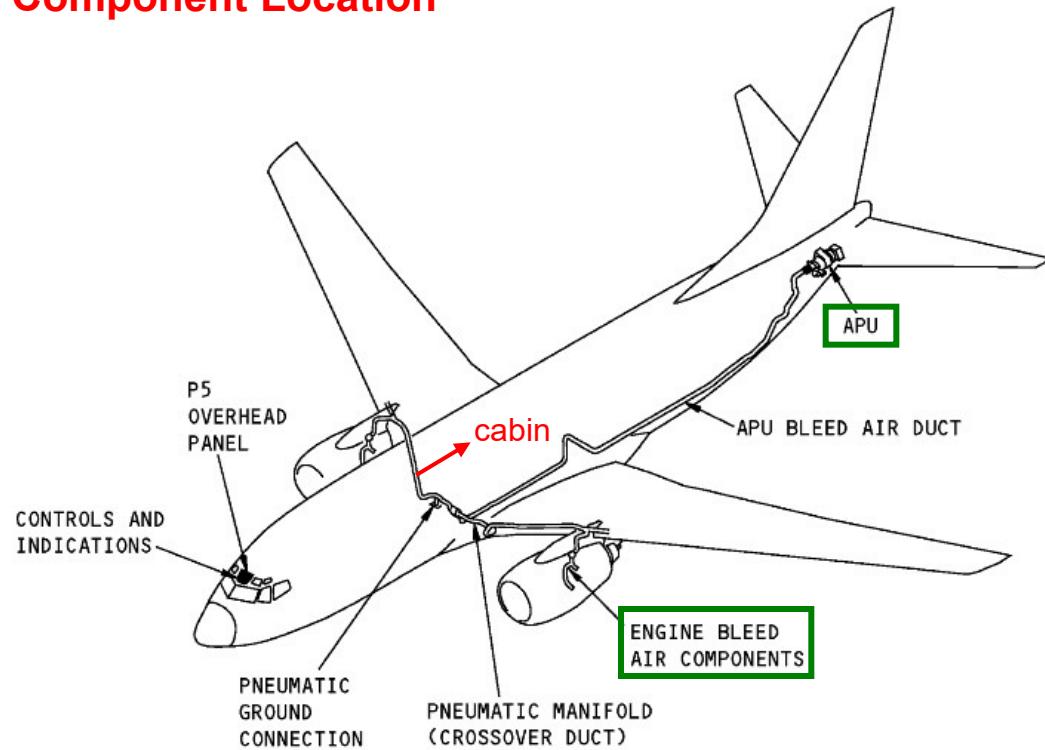
Engine Oil => Cabin Air? Yes

Air Conditioning Technology



737-600/700/800/900 AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE MANUAL

Major Component Location



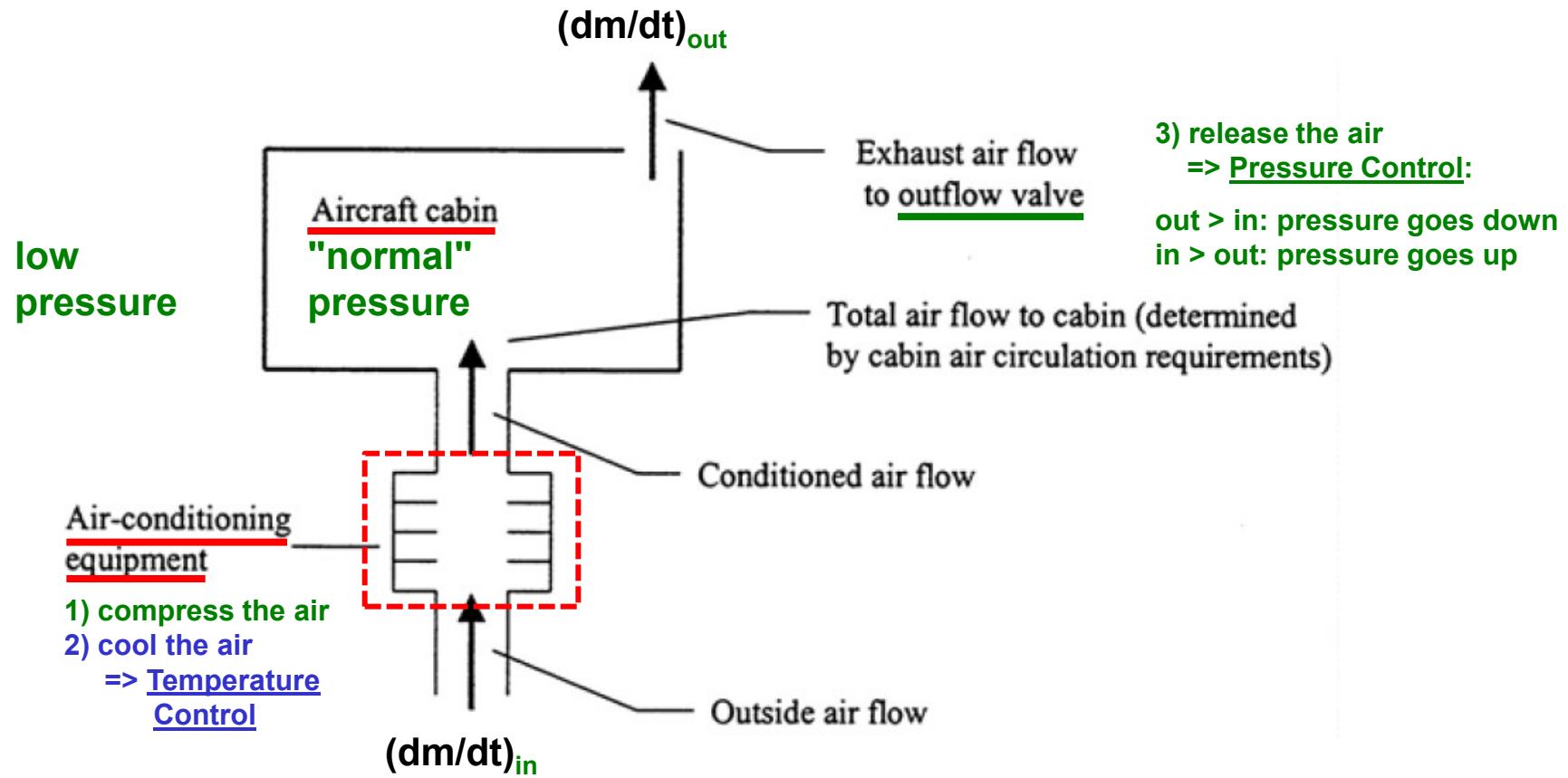
PNEUMATIC - COMPONENT LOCATIONS

Adapted from (AMM B737)

Air Conditioning Technology

Air Conditioning Basics

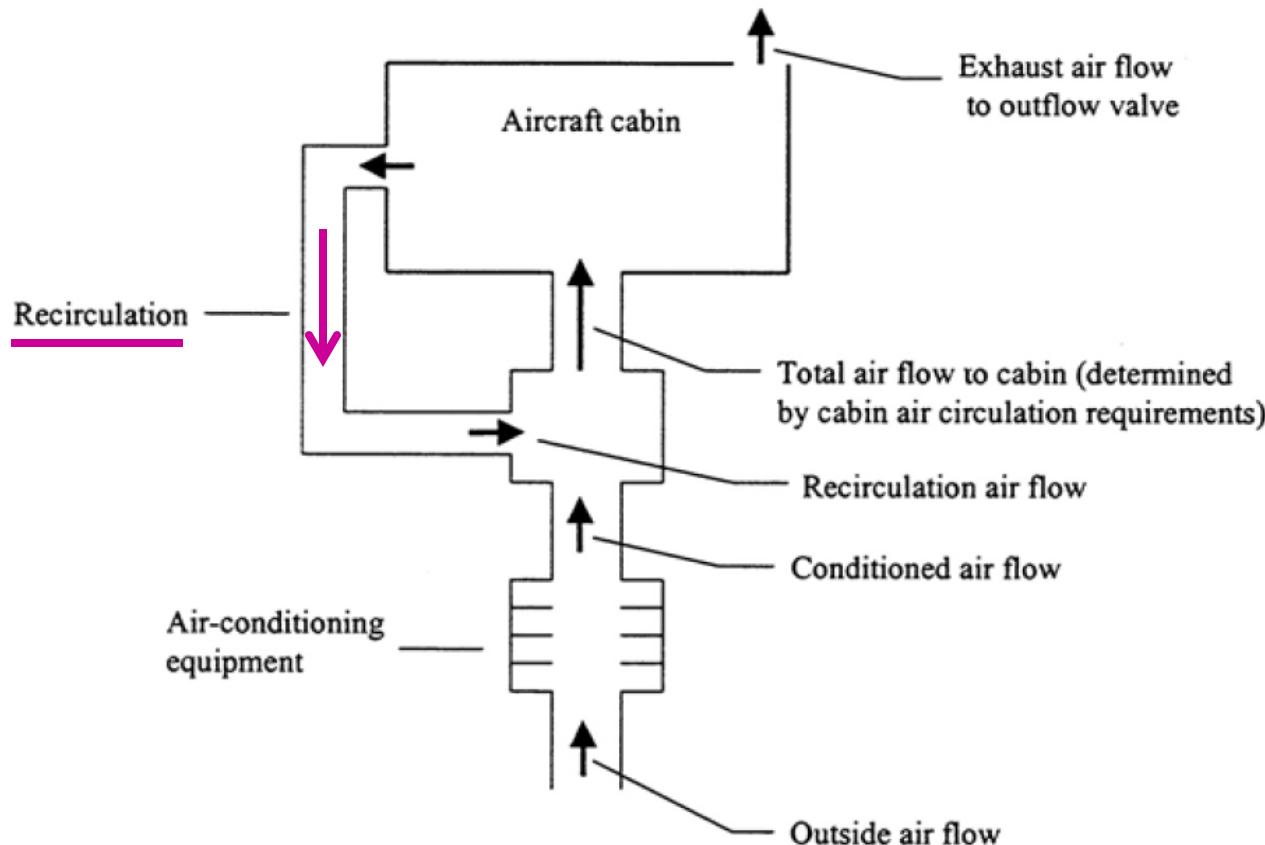
Temperature Control, Pressure Control, Ventilation



Adapted from (NRC 2002)

Air Conditioning Technology

Air Conditioning with Recirculation



Adapted from (NRC 2002)

Air Conditioning Technology

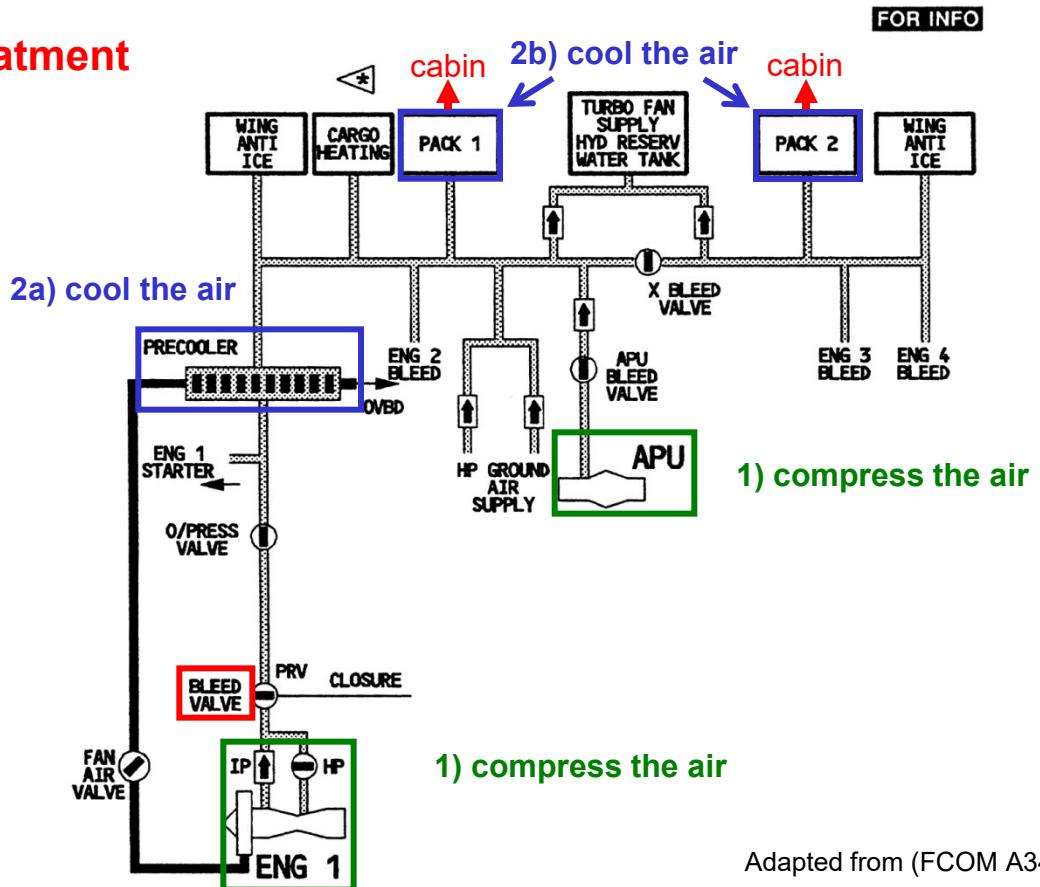
A340 FLIGHT CREW OPERATING MANUAL	PNEUMATIC DESCRIPTION	1.36.10	P 3
		REV 05	SEQ 001

"Bleed Air" Generation and Treatment

compress and cool the air

"Bleed Air"

is "precious air" taken off the engine compressor – air which was initially intended to be used for the engine cycle

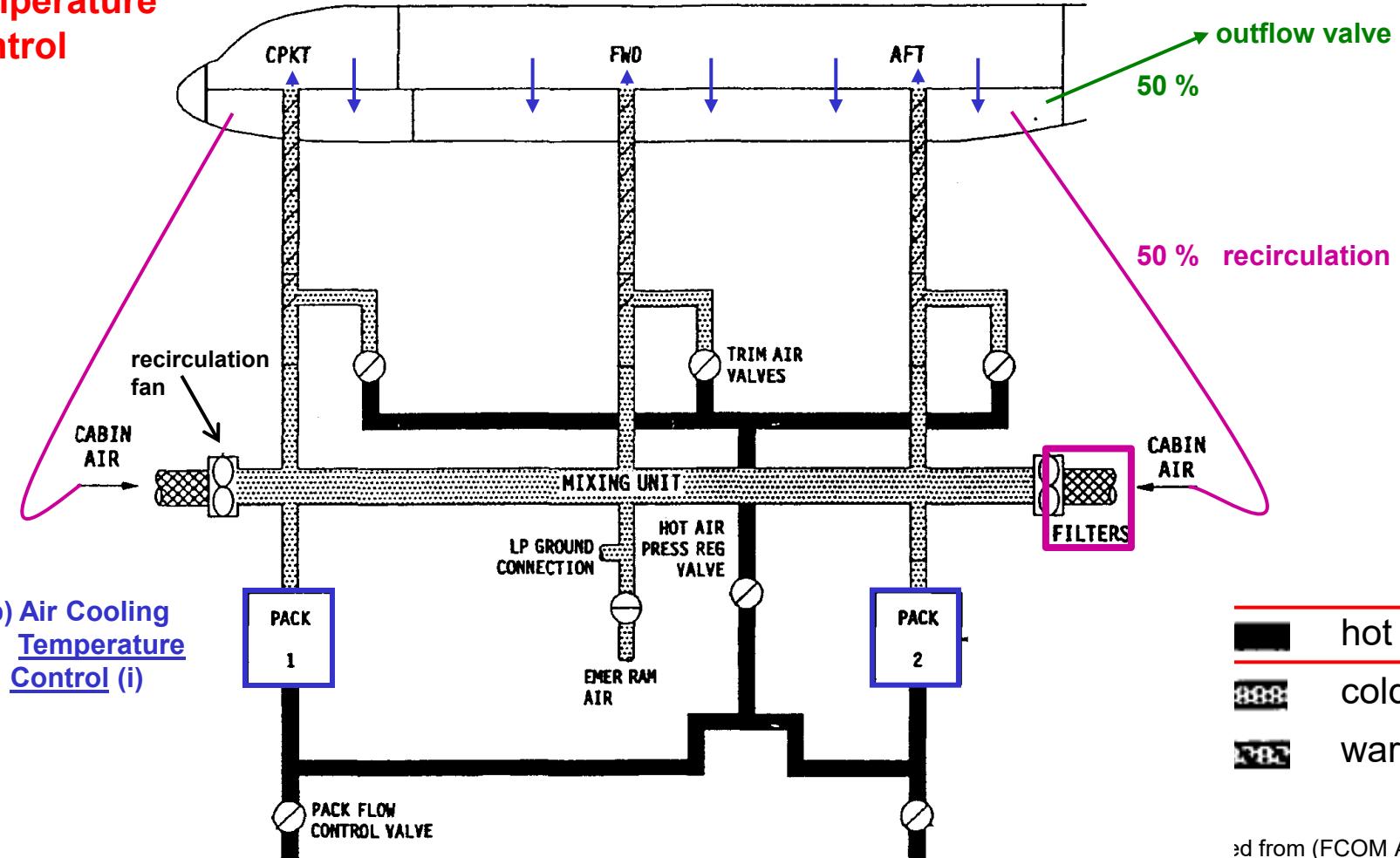


Adapted from (FCOM A340)

Air Conditioning Technology

A320

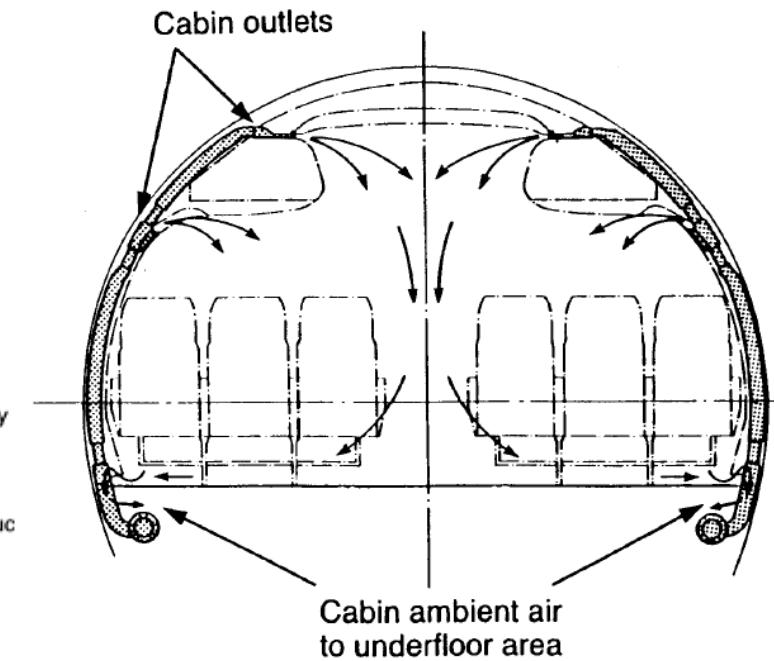
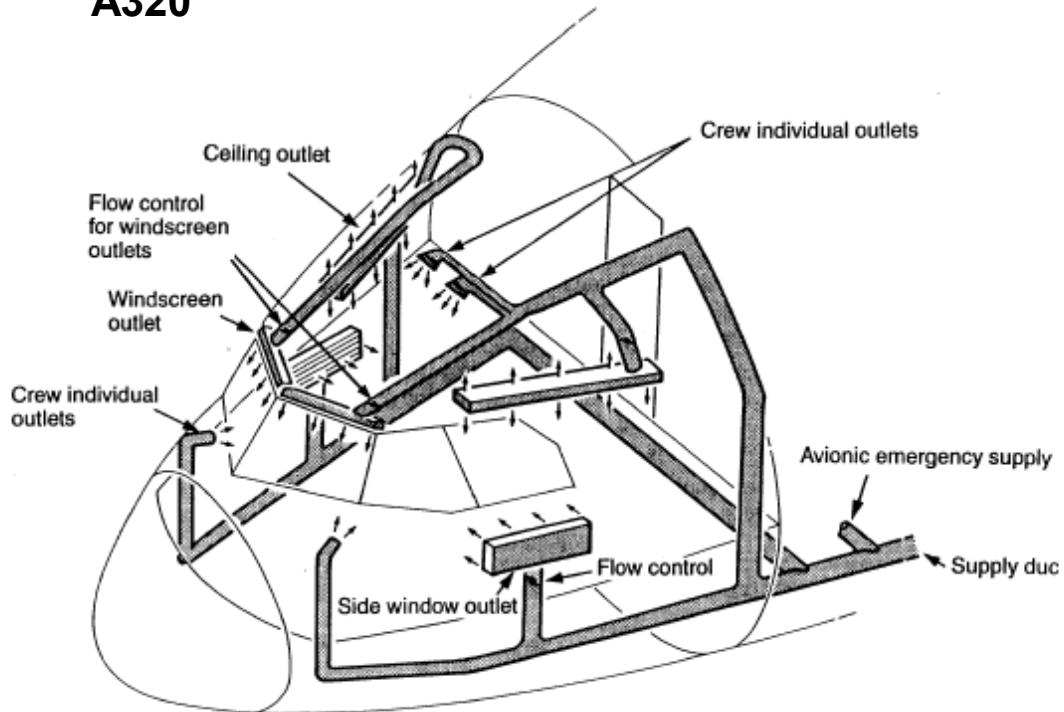
Temperature Control



Air Conditioning Technology

Cabin Air Distribution

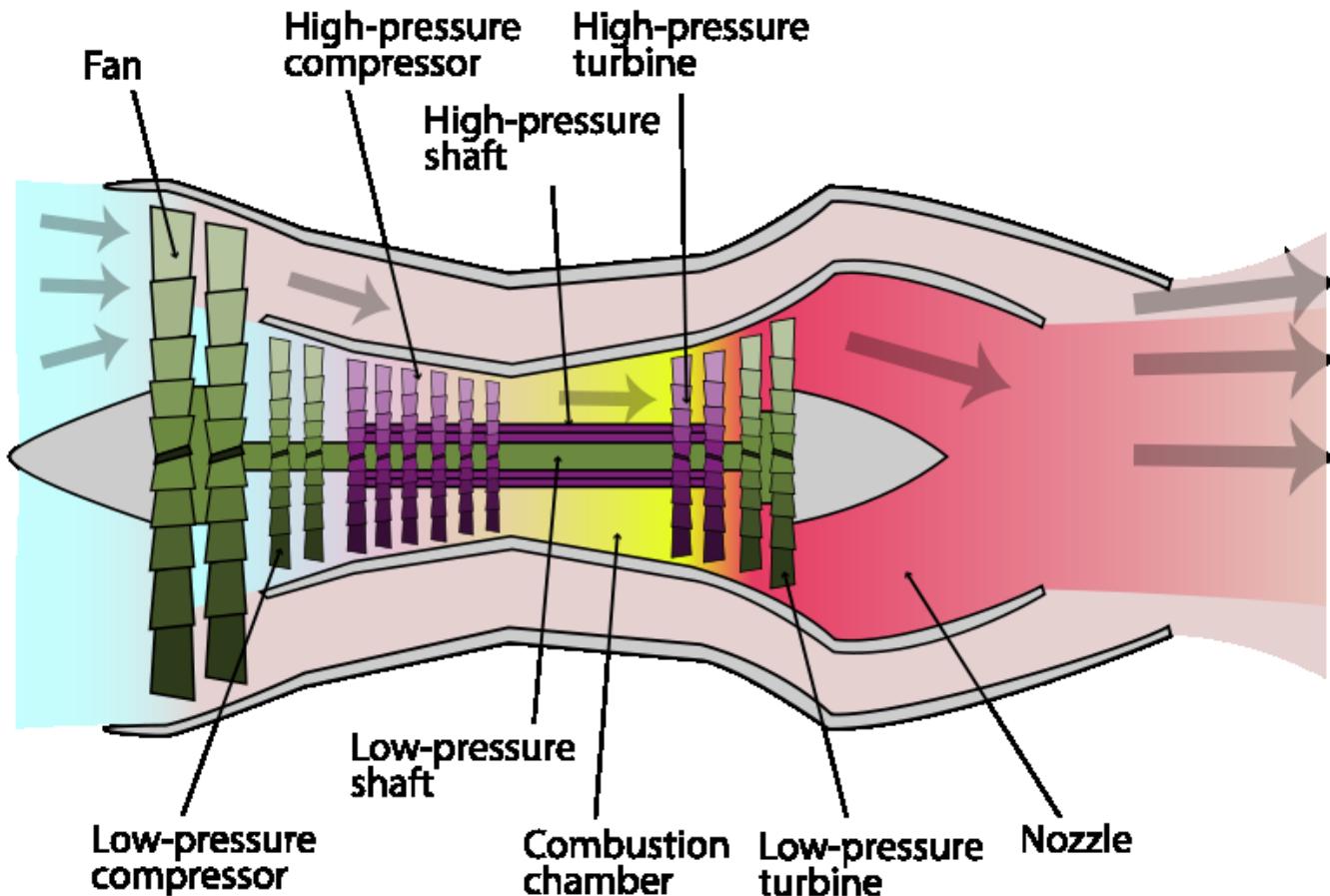
A320



(GENFAM A320)

Jet Engine

Engine Overview

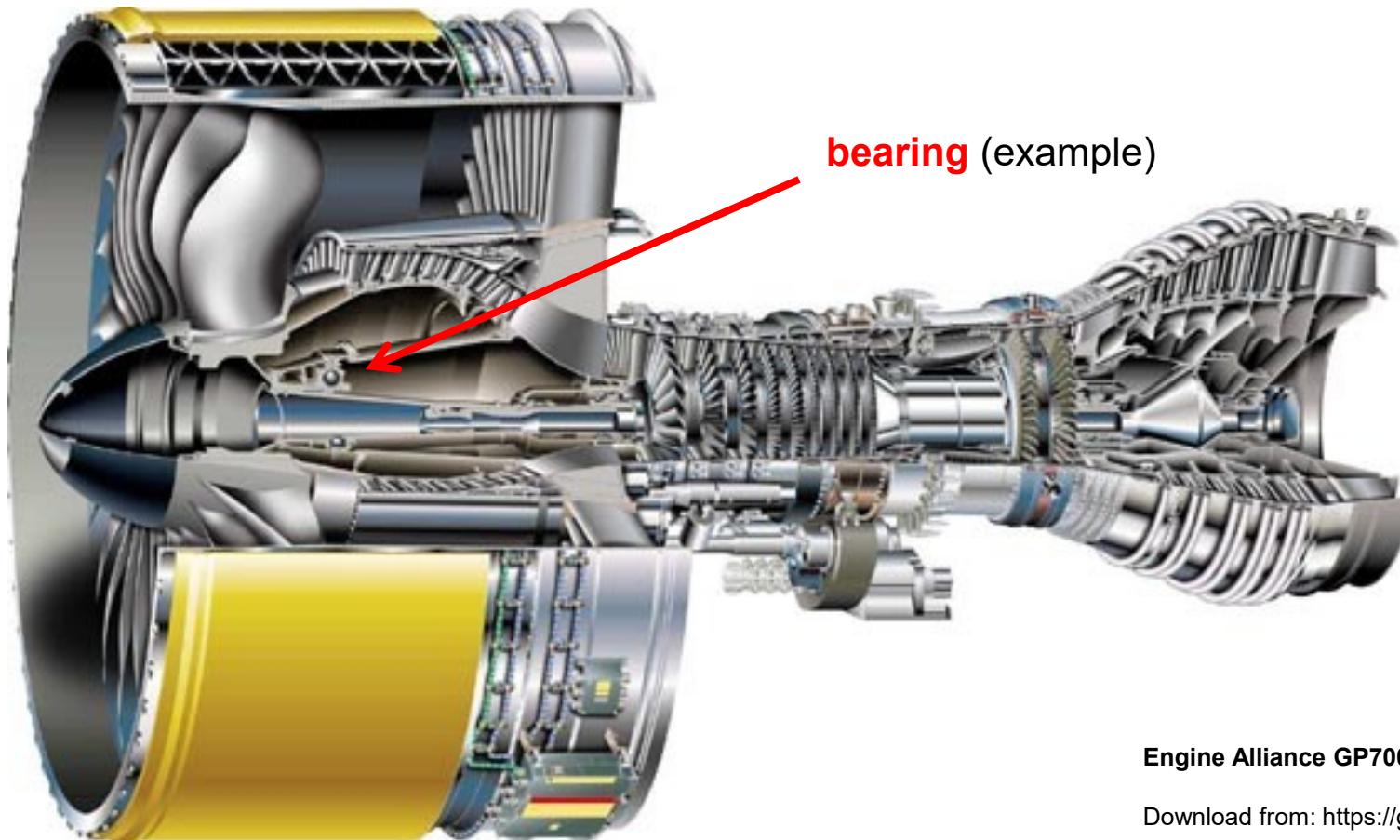


K. Aainsqatsi

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/77/Turbofan_operation_lbp.svg

Jet Engine

Engine Overview



Engine Alliance GP7000

Download from: <https://goo.gl/images/gYIW31>

Jet Engine

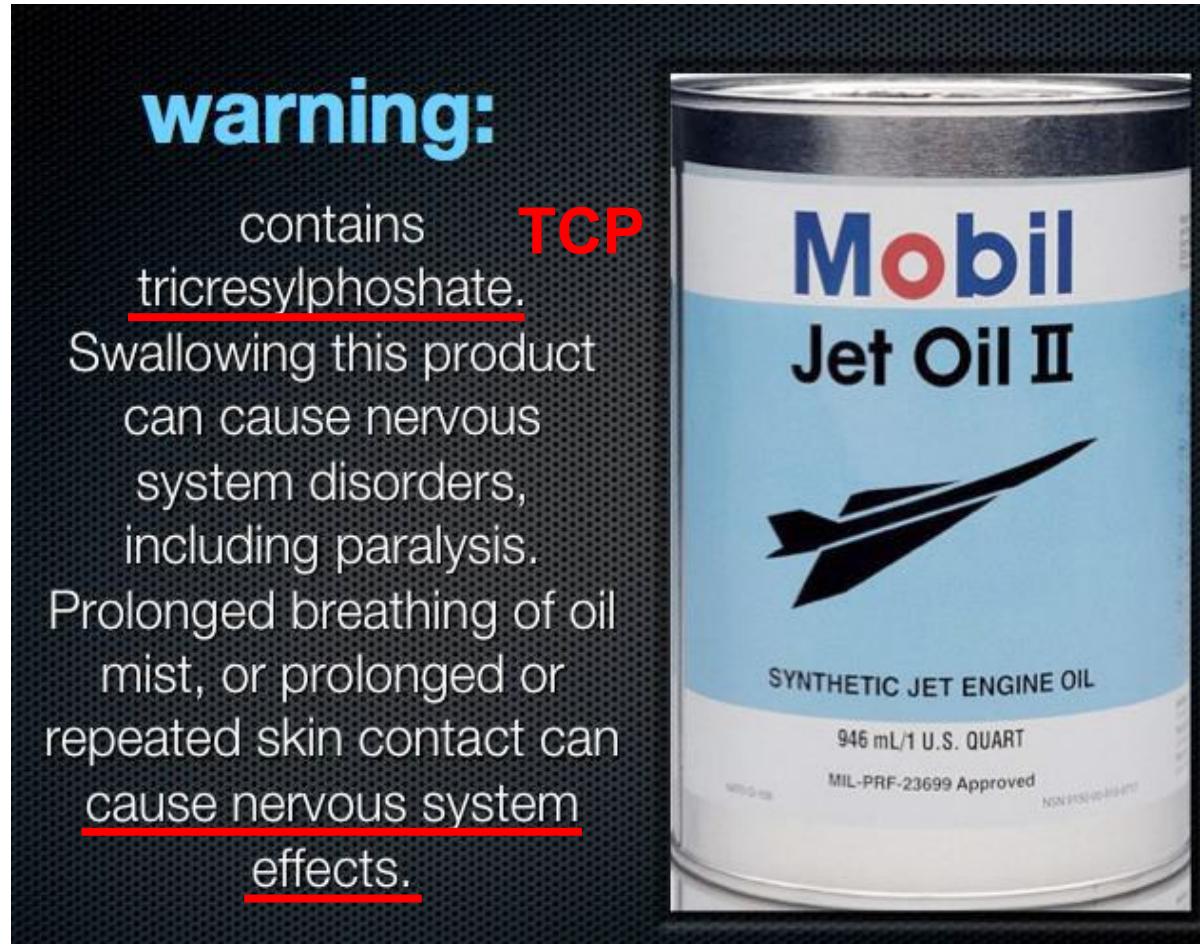
Jet Engine Bearing



(Exxon 2016b)

Jet Engine

Judging Jet Engine Oil Based on Warnings Given by Manufacturer



ExxonMobil

(Cannon 2016)

How much Oil Gets into the Cabin?

Health Effects? => EASA Study 2017: AVOIL

AVOIL – Characterisation of the toxicity of aviation turbine engine oils after pyrolysis (EASA 2017a)

"a ... list of 127 compounds [VOC] was ... identified ... ". The **hazard profile** is given in Appendix 6:

Compound #	Name	CAS	Harmonized classification	Self-classification*
1	Diethyl Phthalate	84-66-2		NC
2	1-Nonene, 4,6,8-trimethyl-	54410-98-9		
3	2-Ethylhexyl salicylate	118-60-5		Skin Irrit. 2
4	Acetophenone	98-86-2	Acute Tox. 4 Eye Irrit. 2	
5	Benzaldehyde	100-52-7	Acute Tox. 4	
6	Benzene, 1,3-bis(1,1-dimethylethyl)-	1014-60-4	NR	NR
7	Heptane, 4-methyl-	589-53-7	Asp. Tox. 1 Skin Irrit. 2 STOT SE 3	
8	Nonanal	124-19-6		NC
9	2,4-Dimethyl-1-heptene	19549-87-2		Asp. Tox. 1
10	-----	140-24-0		Eye Irrit. 2
124	Isopropyl myristate	110-27-0		NC
125	Tetradecanoic acid	544-63-8		NC
126	1-Pentene, 4-methyl-	691-37-2		Asp. Tox. 1 Or Skin Irrit. 2 Eye Irrit. 2 STOT SE 3
127	2-Cyclopenten-1-one	930-30-3		NC

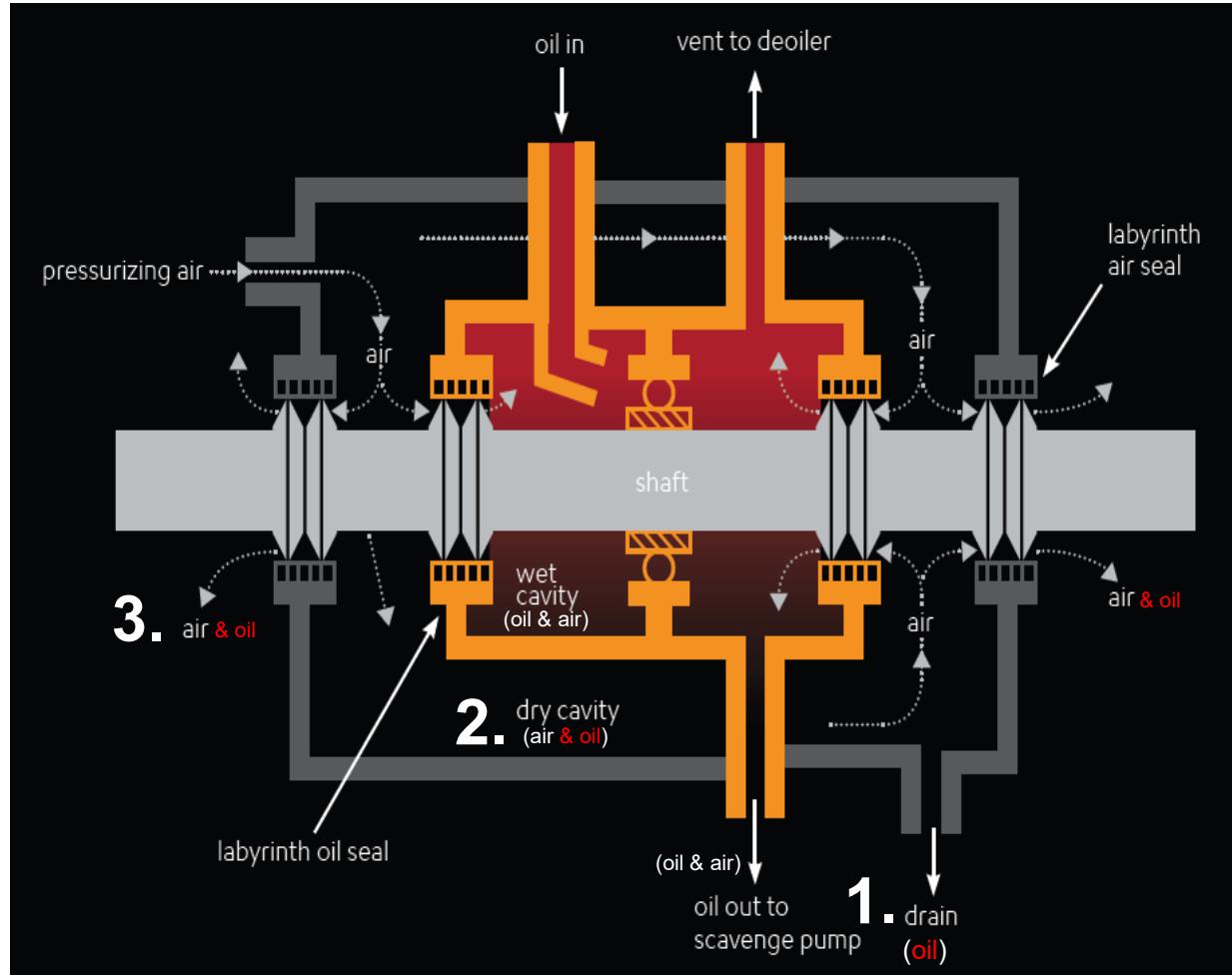
* according to the largest number of notifiers

NC = not classified for human health effects

NR = not registered under REACH

Jet Engine

Engine Air and Oil System



Normal operation of engine seals:

1. The "**drain**" discharges **oil**.
2. The "**dry cavity**" contains **oil**.
3. Air and **oil** leak from bearings **into** the **bleed air**.

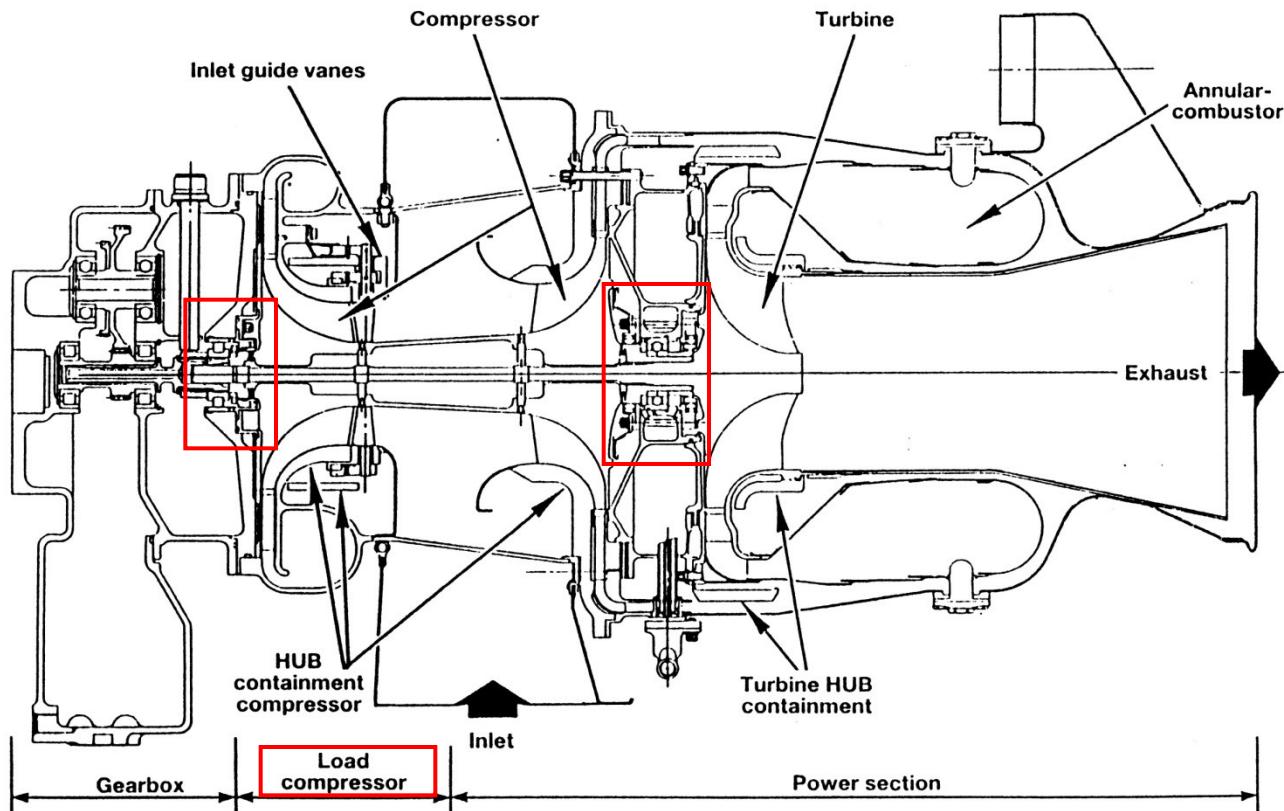
=> **Engines leak small amounts of oil by design!**

based on:
Exxon 2016b

Auxiliary Power Unit (APU)

Bearings and Load Compressor

APU GTCP36-300



(GENFAM A320)

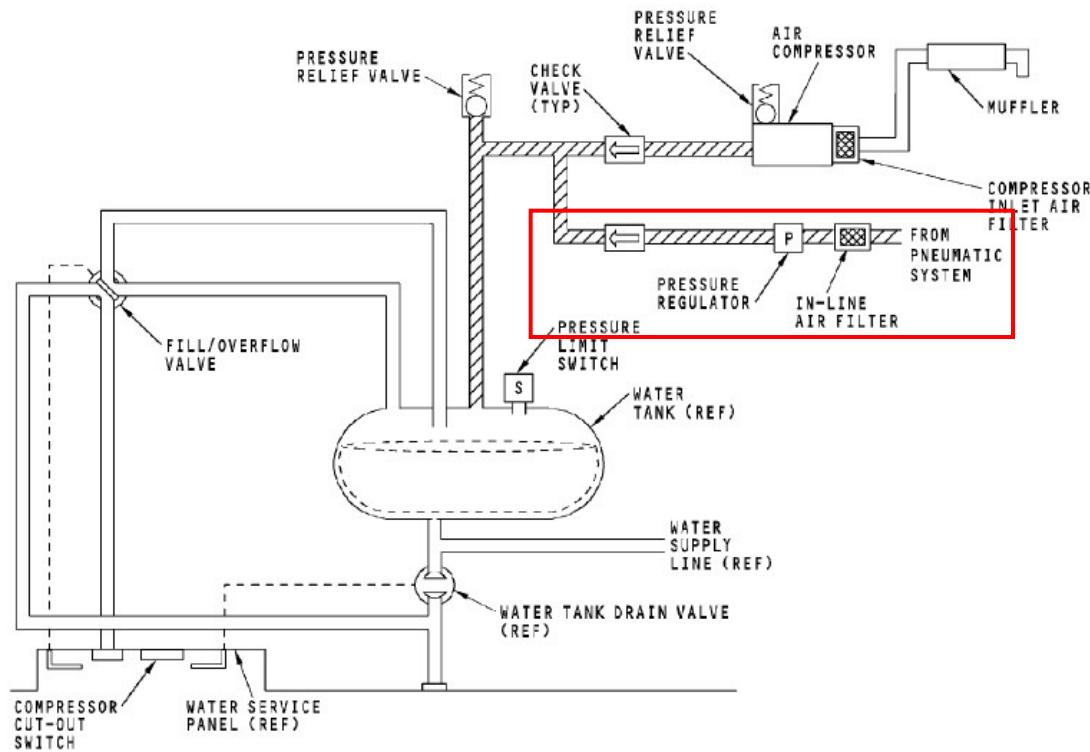
- An Auxiliary Power Unit (APU) is a gas turbine engine.
- An APU will need some form of lubrication (e.g. oil).
- Lubrication needs will be smaller than in aircraft engines, but the APU otherwise experiences the same problems with oil leakage as described for the engine.

Engine Oil => Water? Yes

Aircraft Systems Investigated - Potable Water Tank Pressurization



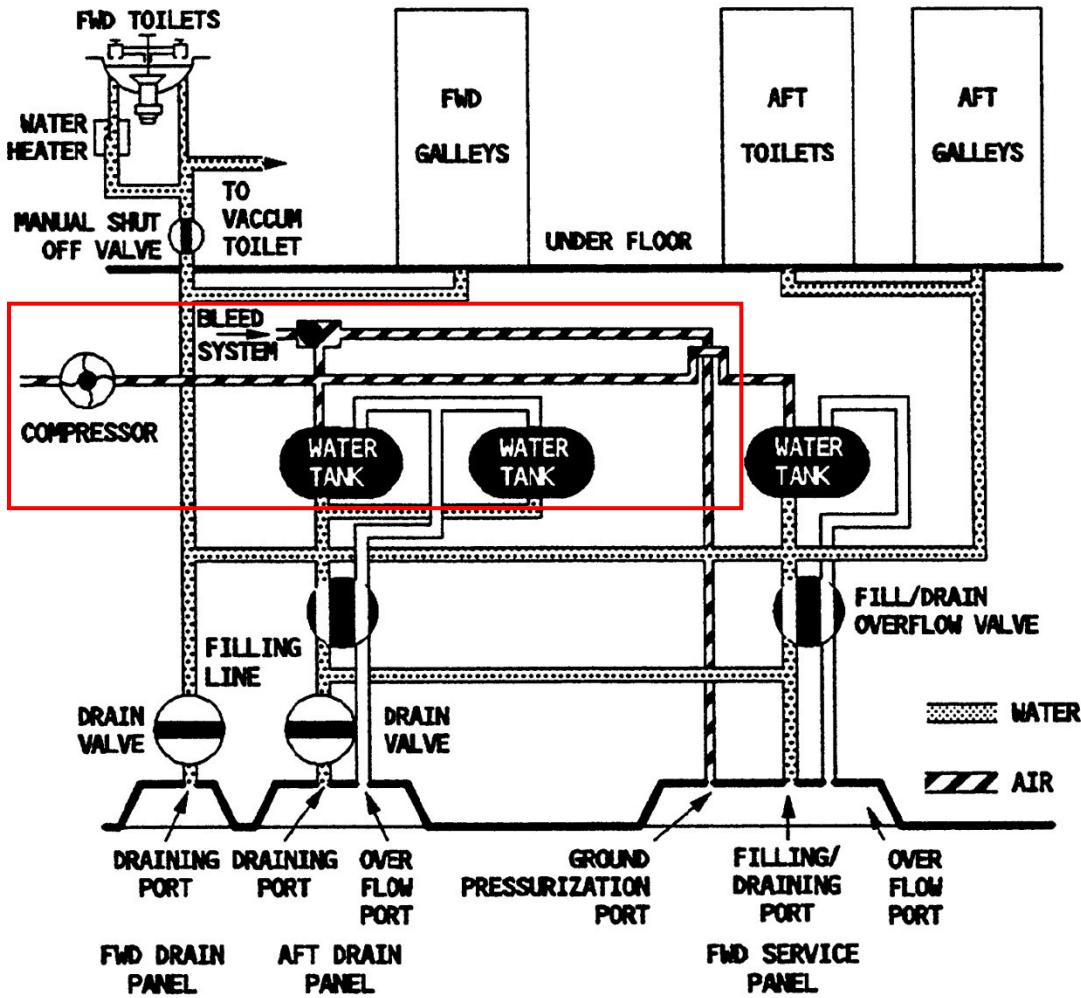
737-600/700/800/900 AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE MANUAL



- Possible bleed air contaminations could reach the potable water passing a filter and a check valve (in flow direction).

WATER/WASTE - WATER TANK PRESSURIZATION - FUNCTIONAL DESCRIPTION

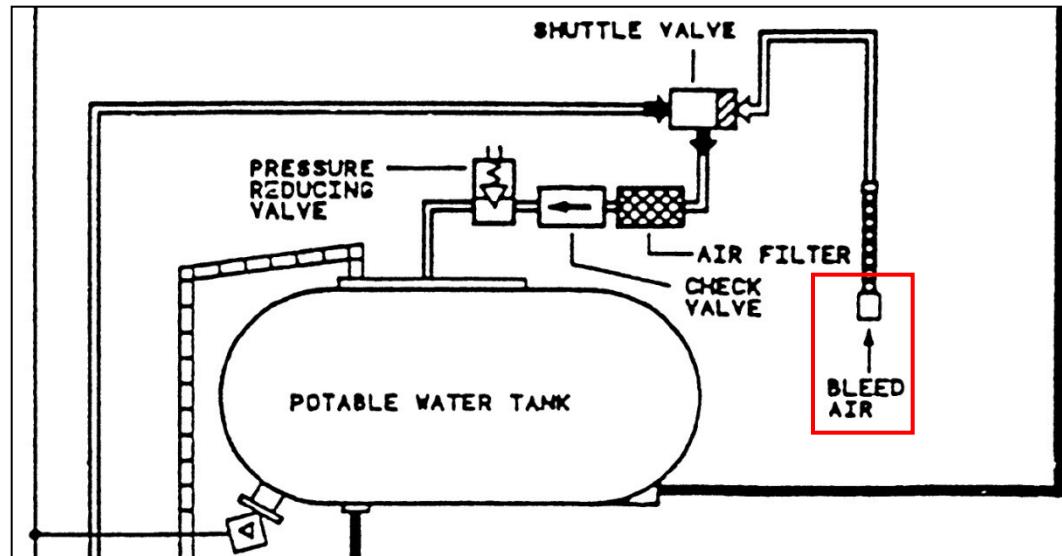
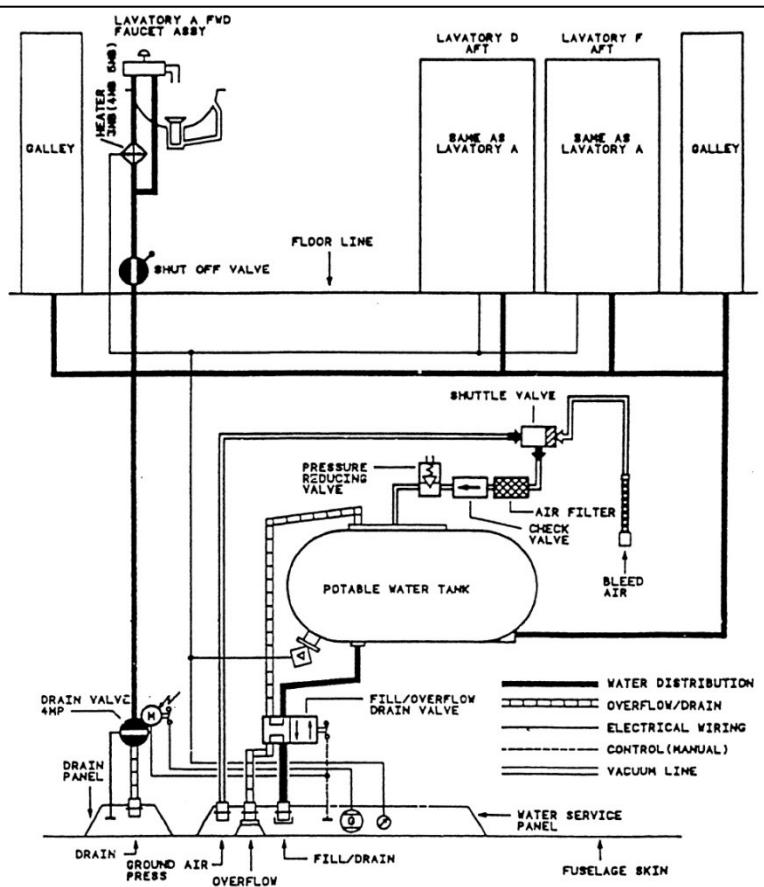
Aircraft Systems Investigated - Potable Water Tank Pressurization



- Possible bleed air contaminations could reach the potable water.

FCOM A340: Potable Water System Description

Aircraft Systems Investigated - Potable Water Tank Pressurization



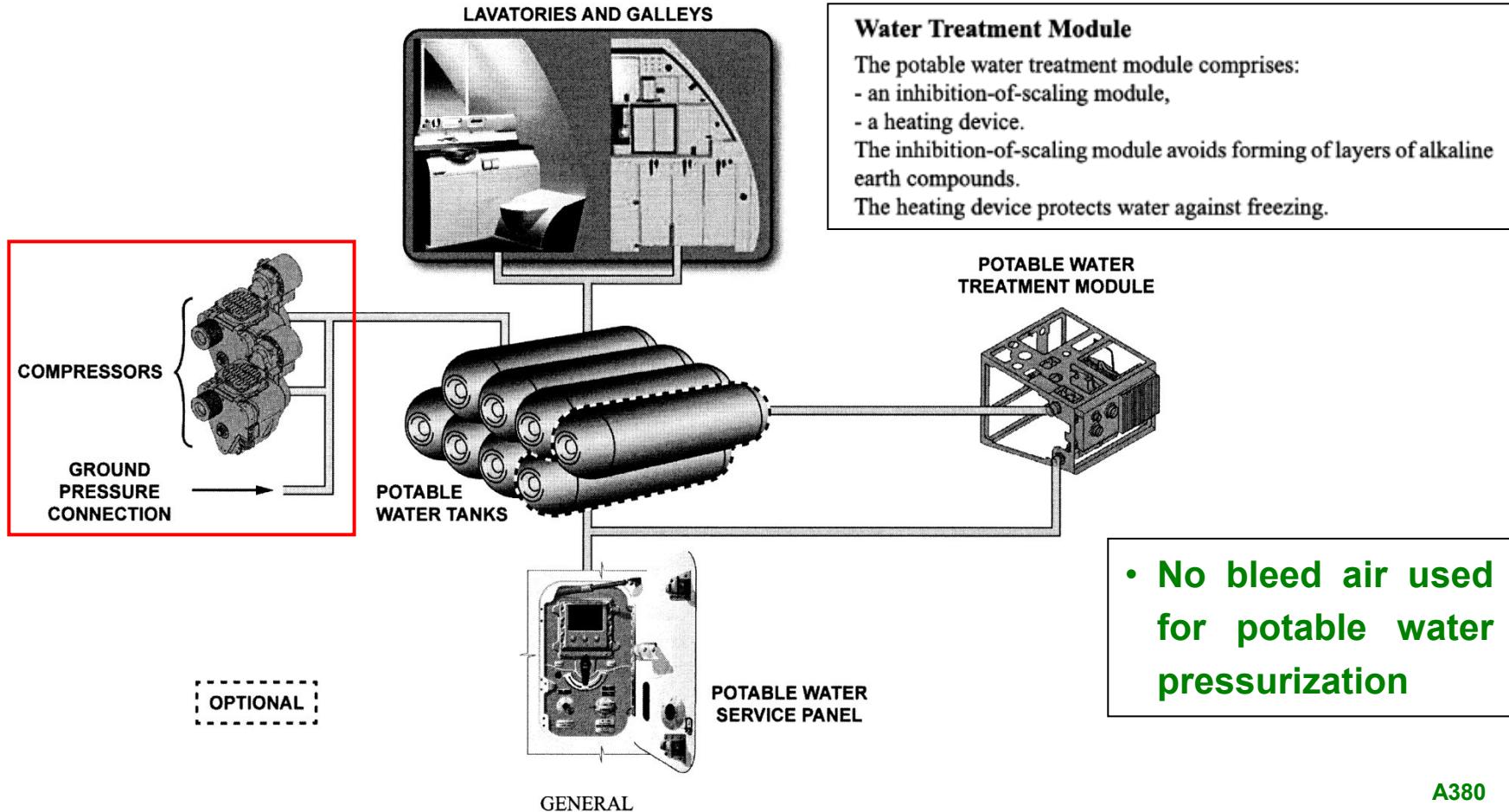
Training Material A320: Potable Water System pressurization.

- Possible **bleed air** contaminations could reach the **potable water** passing a filter and a check valve (in flow direction).

Aircraft Systems Investigated - Potable Water System

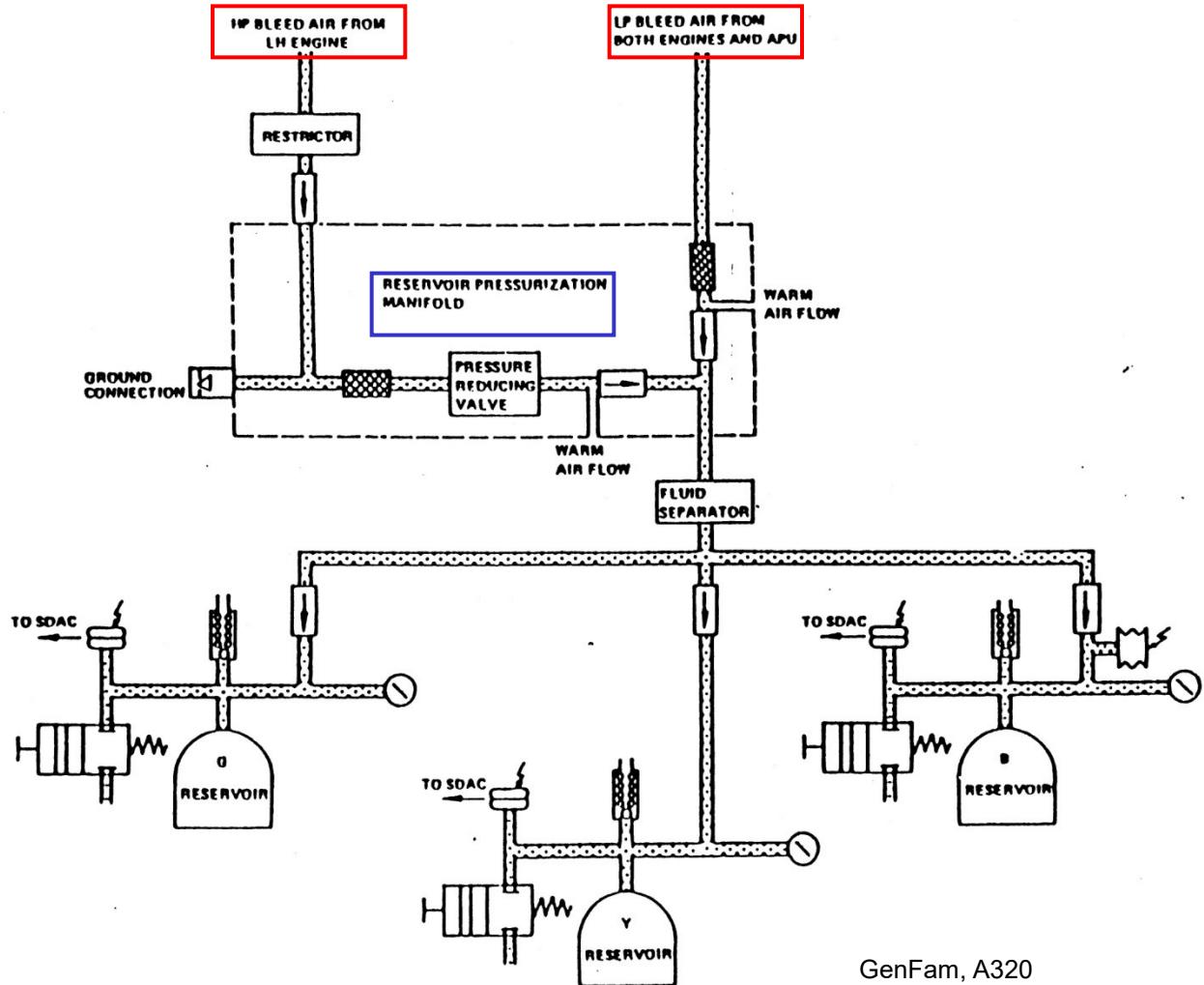
AIRBUS
Training & Flight Operations Support and Services

A380 TECHNICAL TRAINING MANUAL



Hydraulic Fluid => Cabin Air / Water? No

Aircraft Systems Investigated - Hydraulic Reservoir Pressurization



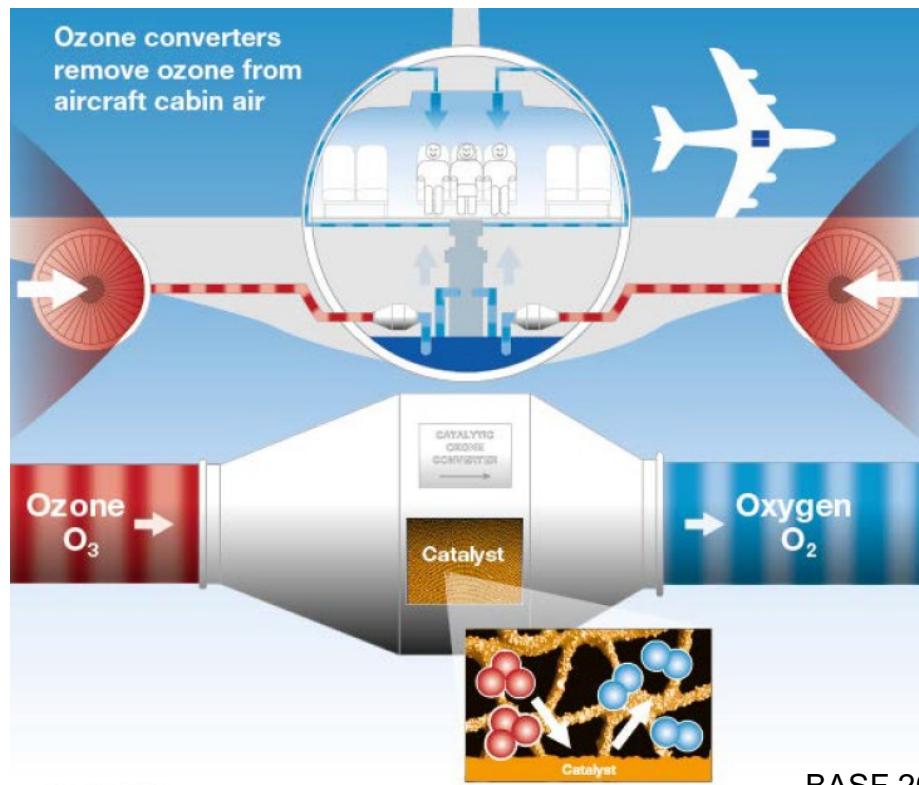
- Hydraulic reservoirs are **connected** via bleed lines with the potable water tanks.
- Pressurized air is in free contact with the hydraulic fluid surface.
- In flight, hydraulic fluid would need to flow upstream and opposite sense through two check valves to get into the bleed line.
- **On the ground**, contaminated air with remaining pressure in the reservoir (≈ 3.5 bar) could flow downstream – but only if **check valves** allow for wrong flow direction.

Technical Solutions (in the Future?)

Technical Solutions

Ozone Converter

- Ozone concentration increases with altitude.
- Low flying aircraft do not need an ozone converter.
- **Catalytic ozone converters** have found to be effective also in removing VOCs resulting from contaminated bleed air.



© graphic arts BASF

BASF 2014

<https://www.bASF.com/en/company/news-and-media/news-releases/2014/06/p-14-265.html>



Technical Solutions

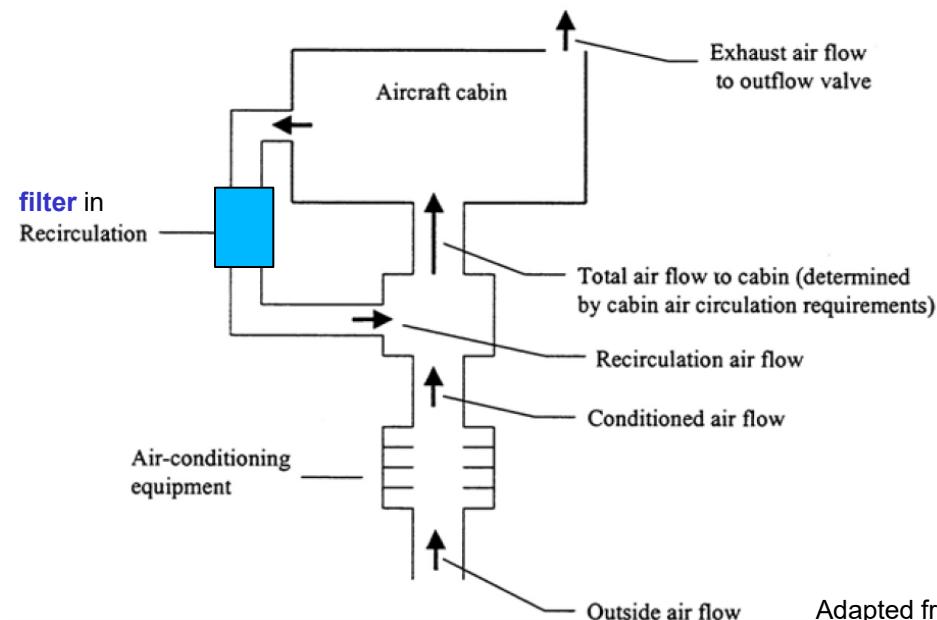
Filter in the Recirculation Path

Pall offers Odour/VOC Removal Filters

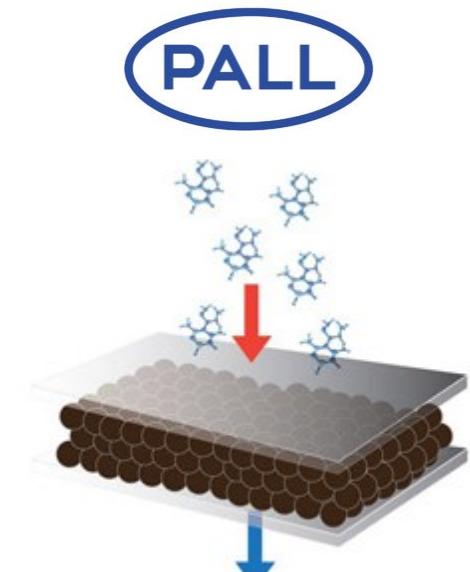
- "The carbon adsorbent is effective at adsorbing volatile organic compounds (VOC). Test results have shown a removal efficiency of 65% ... 73% when challenged with TCPs in the gaseous phase." (Pall 2011)

Application of Carbon Filters

- HEPA-Carbon filters have been added to 33 A321 aircraft at Lufthansa Group so far. (Lufthansa 2017)
- These filters are located in the recirculation path of the cabin air.



Adapted from (NRC 2002)



Schematic of carbon filter
(Pall 2011)



(Lufthansa 2017)

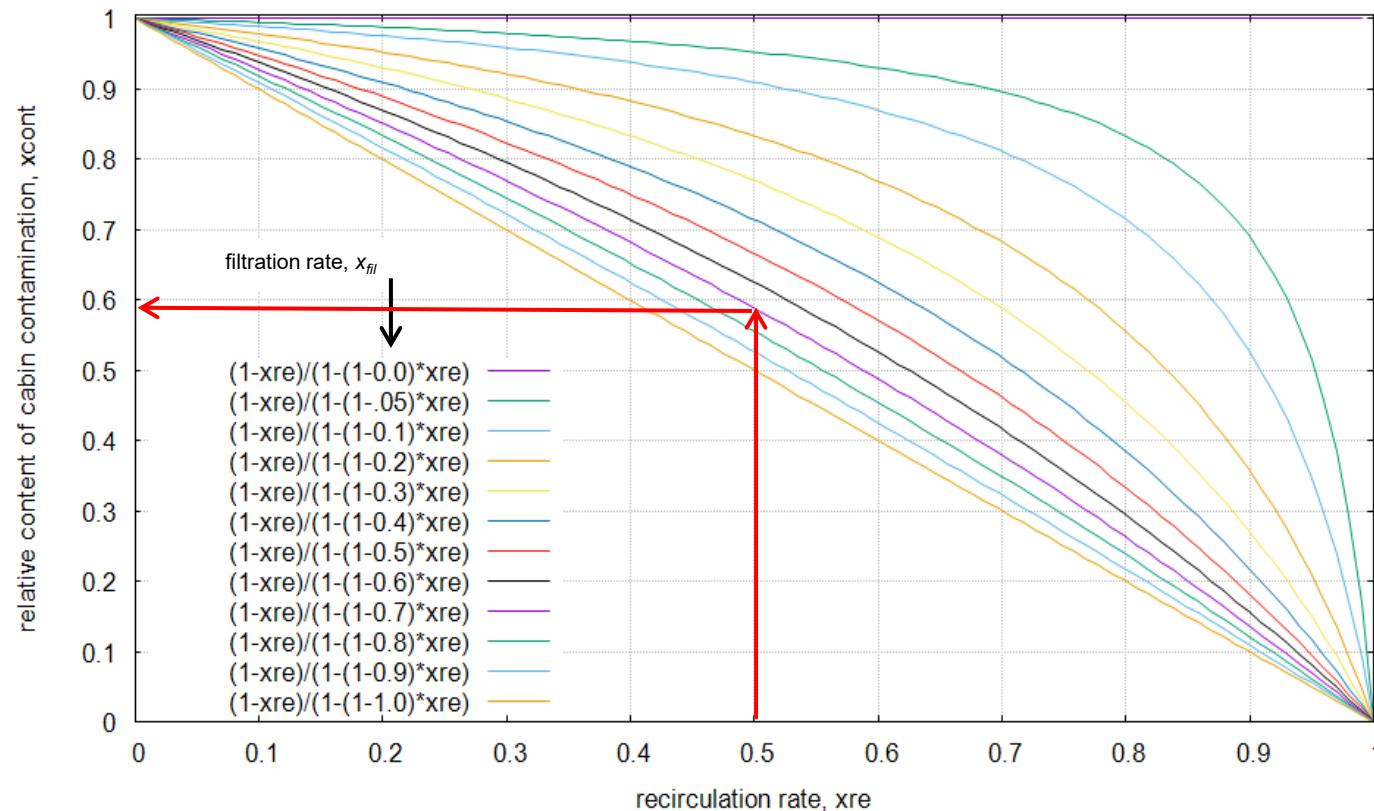
Technical Solutions

Efficiency of Filter in the Recirculation Path

Example calculation:

- With a filtration rate, $x_{fil} = 0.7$ (Pall 2011) and a recirculation rate, $x_{re} = 0.5$ (A320) the **filter** in the recirculation path **reduces the incoming concentration to 58.9%** or around $\approx 60\%$.

$$\frac{x_{cont,cab}}{x_{cont,in}} = \frac{1 - x_{re}}{1 - (1 - x_{fil})x_{re}}$$

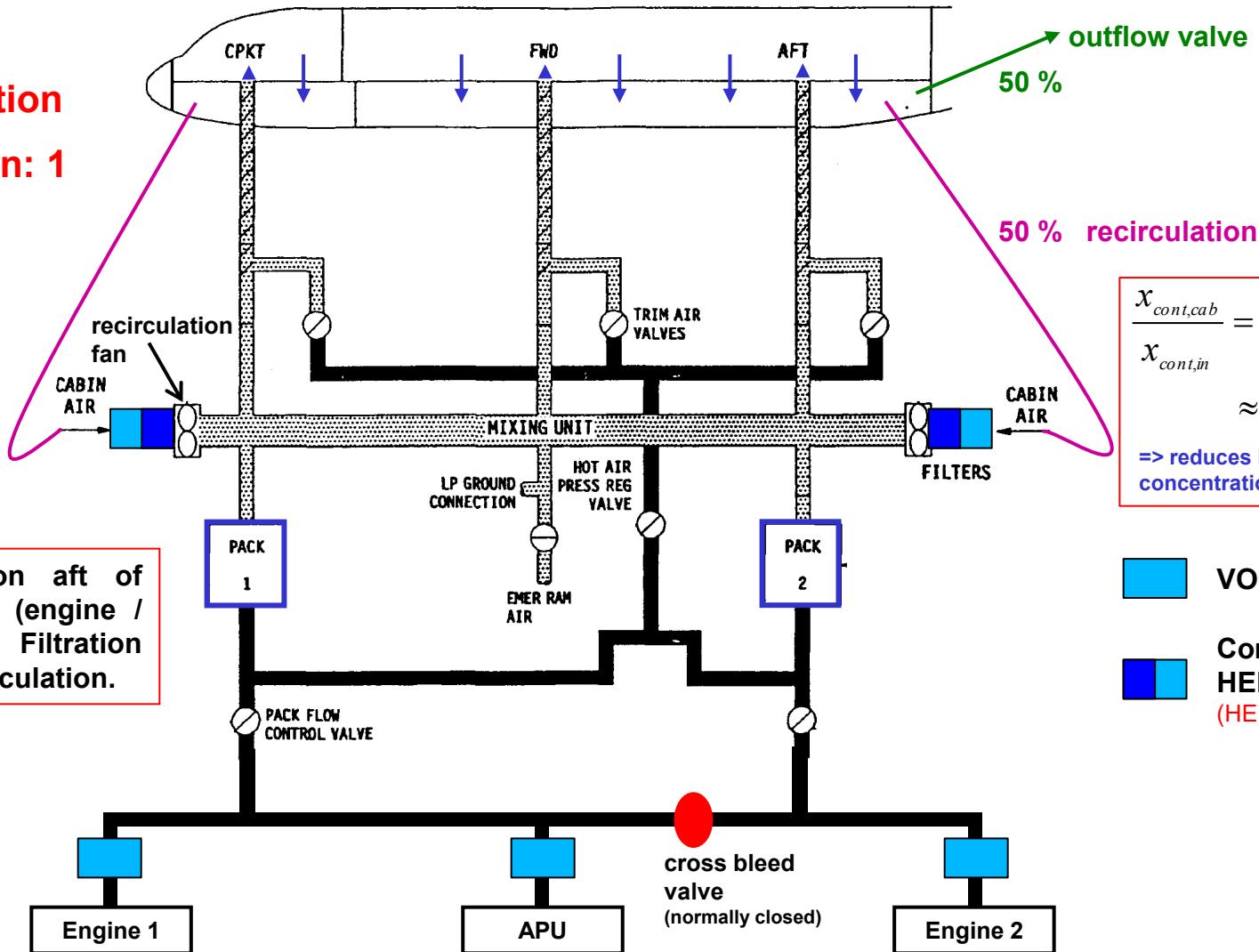


for $x_{fil} = 1$:

$$\frac{x_{cont,cab}}{x_{cont,in}} = 1 - x_{re}$$

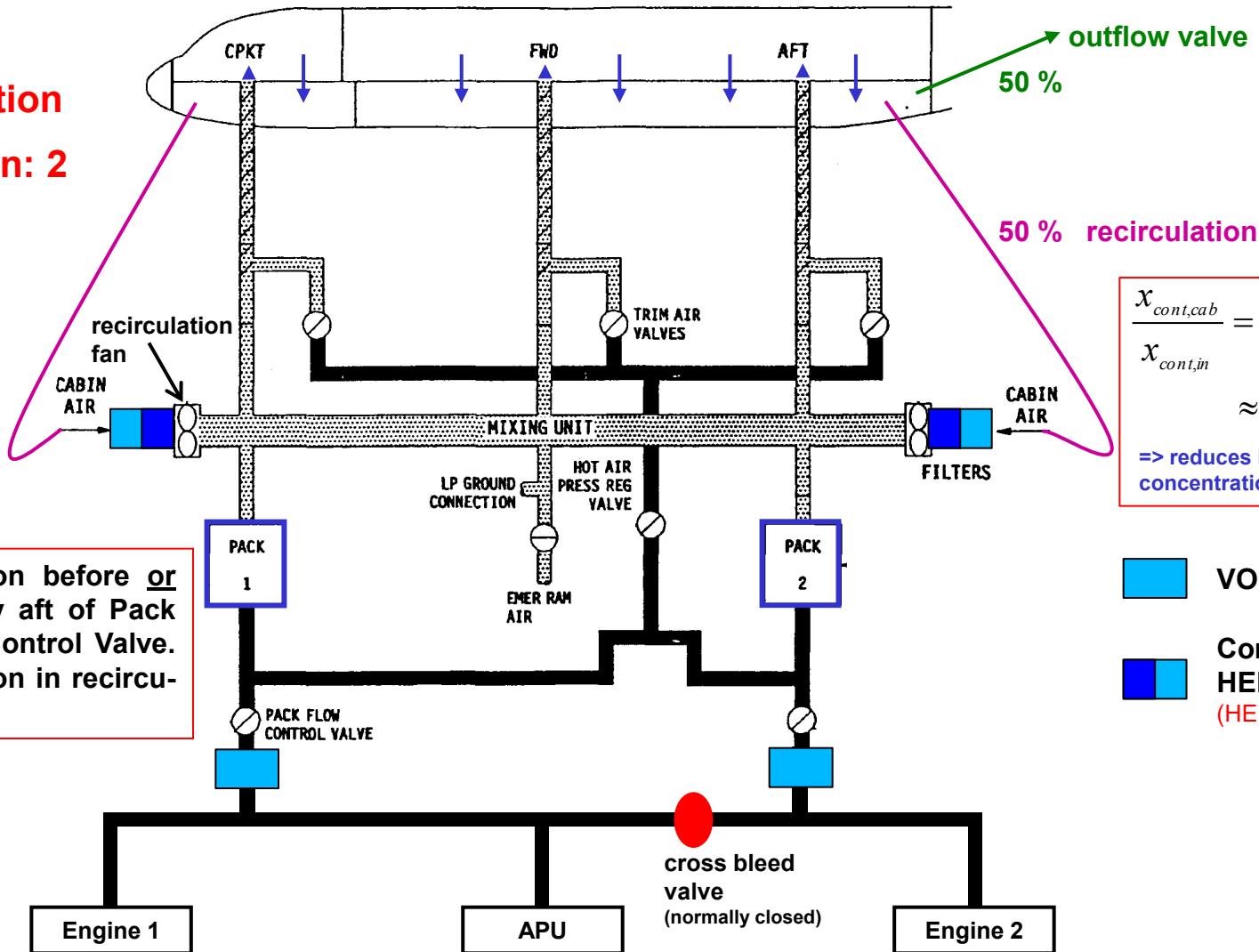
Technical Solutions

**Full
Filtration
Option: 1**



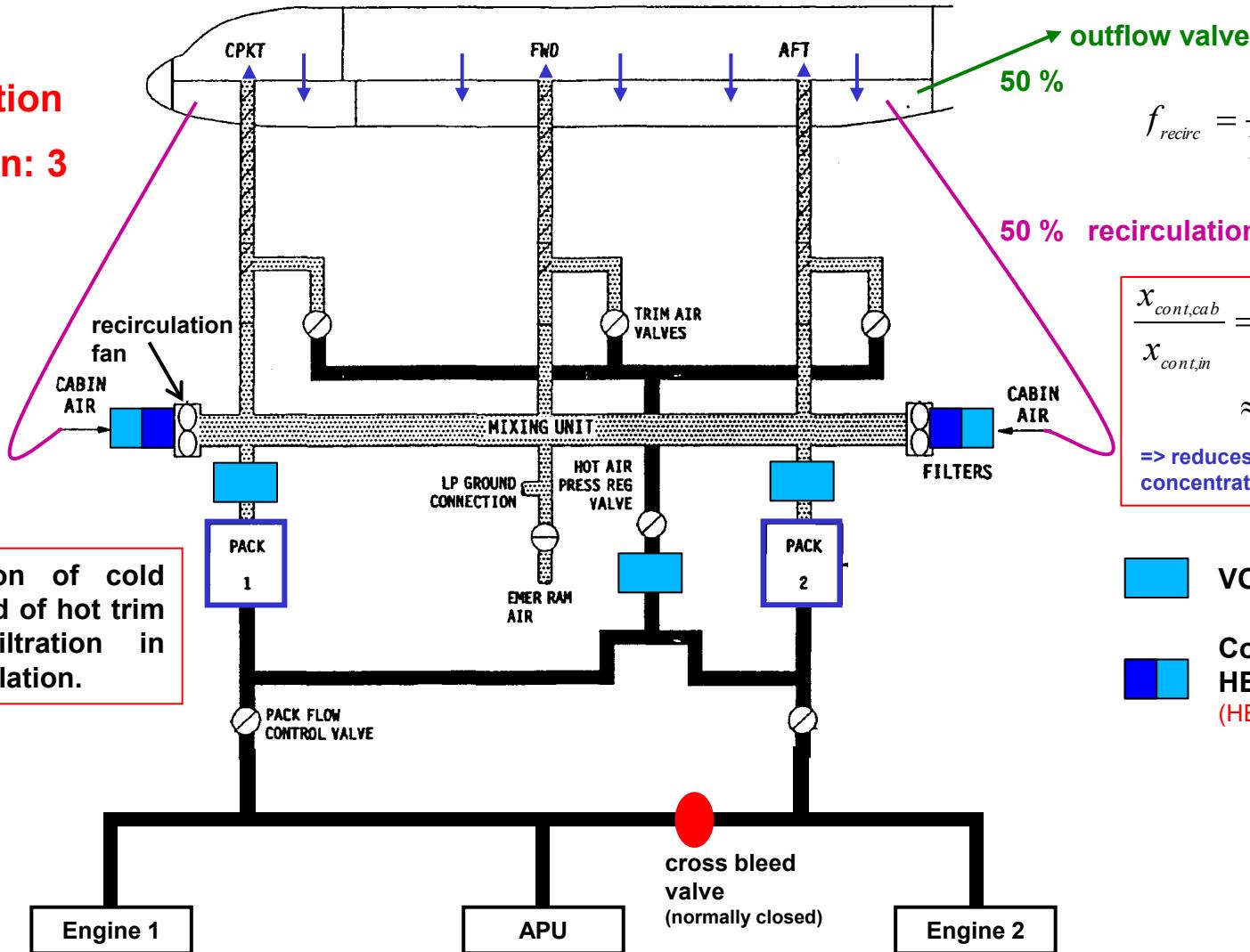
Technical Solutions

**Full
Filtration
Option: 2**



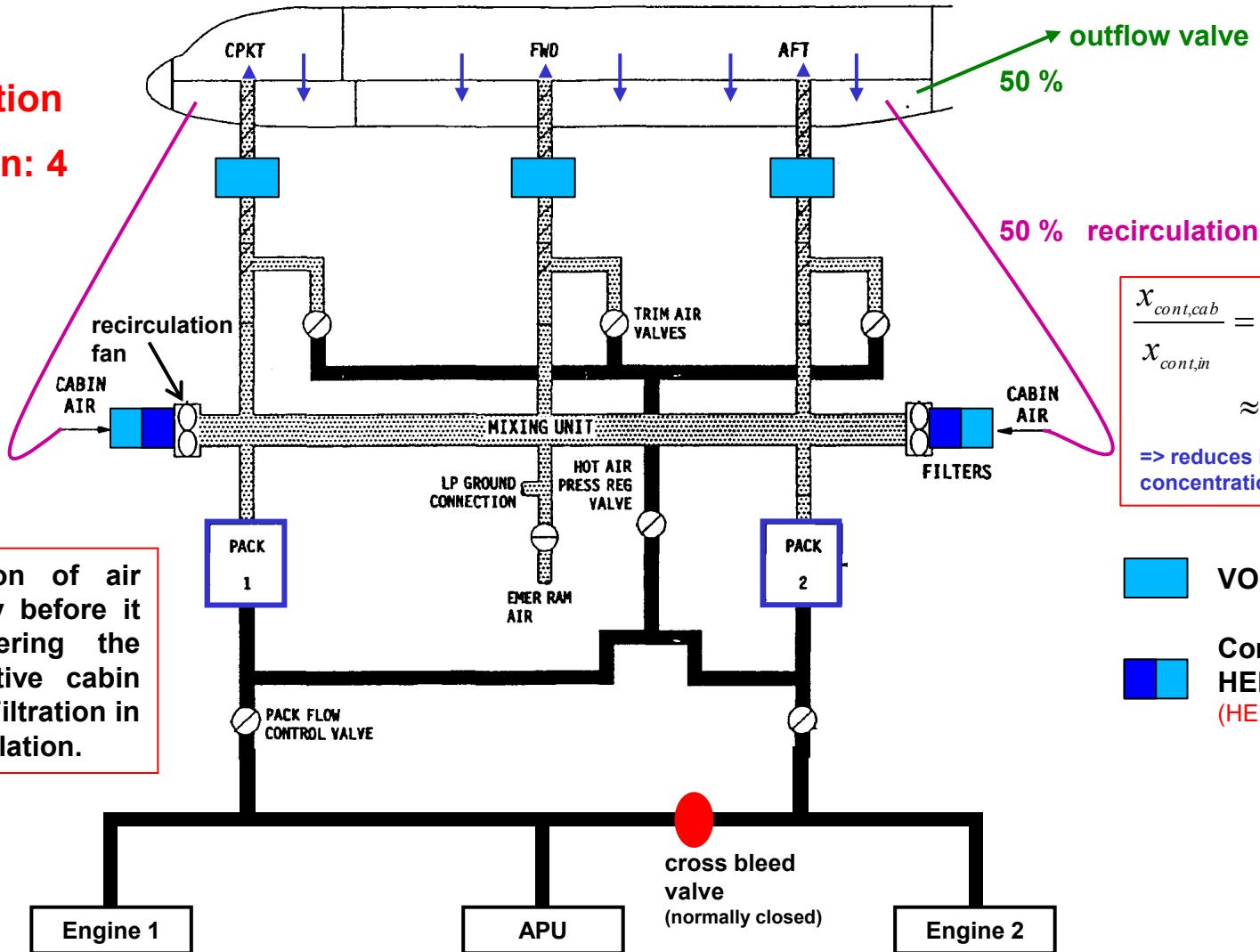
Technical Solutions

**Full
Filtration
Option: 3**



Technical Solutions

Full
Filtration
Option: 4

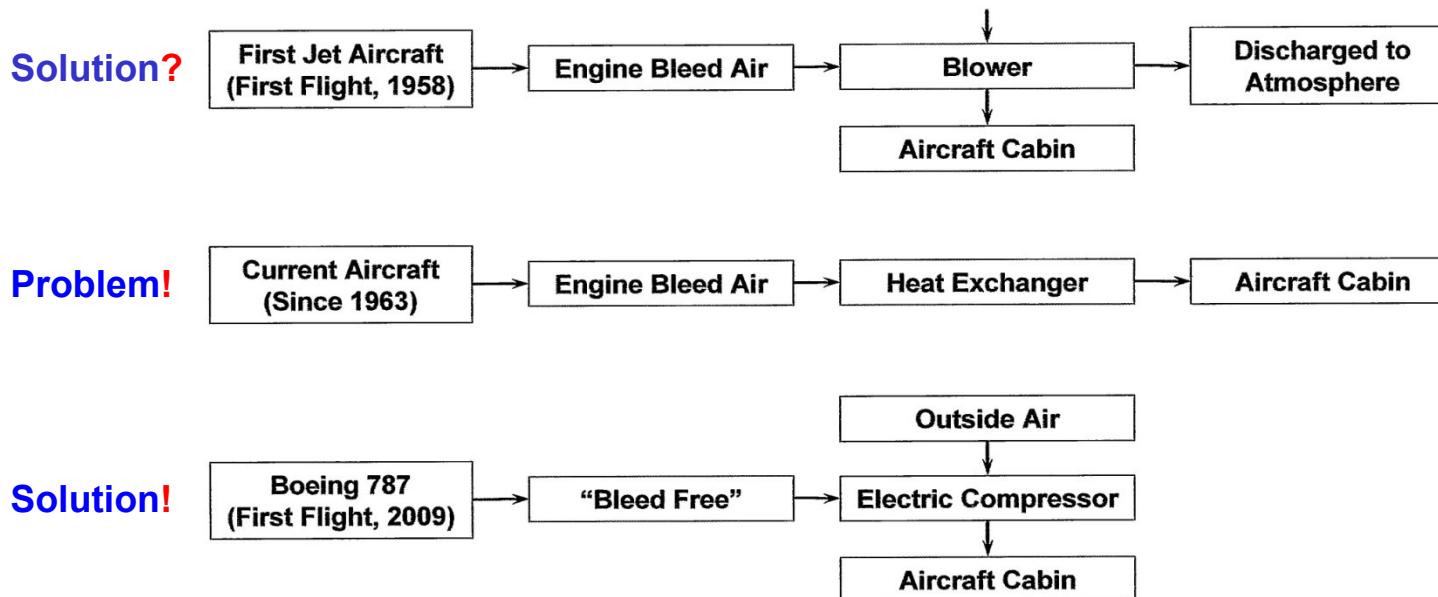


Technical Solutions

Cabin Pressurization Principles and Solutions

Overview

- **First Jet Aircraft** used a "blower" or "**turbocompressor**" (TC). The TC is the coupling of a turbine with a compressor. Bleed air from the engine compressor drives the TC turbine. The TCs compressor compresses outside air to meet the pressurization requirements of the cabin. The hot compressed air needs to be cooled. This can be done with a "vapor cycle system" (as known from the refrigerator).
- **Current Aircraft** make **use of bleed air directly**. It is compressed so much that it contains enough energy to also drive the pack that cool the bleed air down to temperatures considerably less than 0°C.
- The **Boeing 787** uses electrical power to drive an electric motor to drive a compressor. The **energy is extracted from the engine by means of shaft power driving a generator**. No bleed air is used. The engine is "Bleed Free".



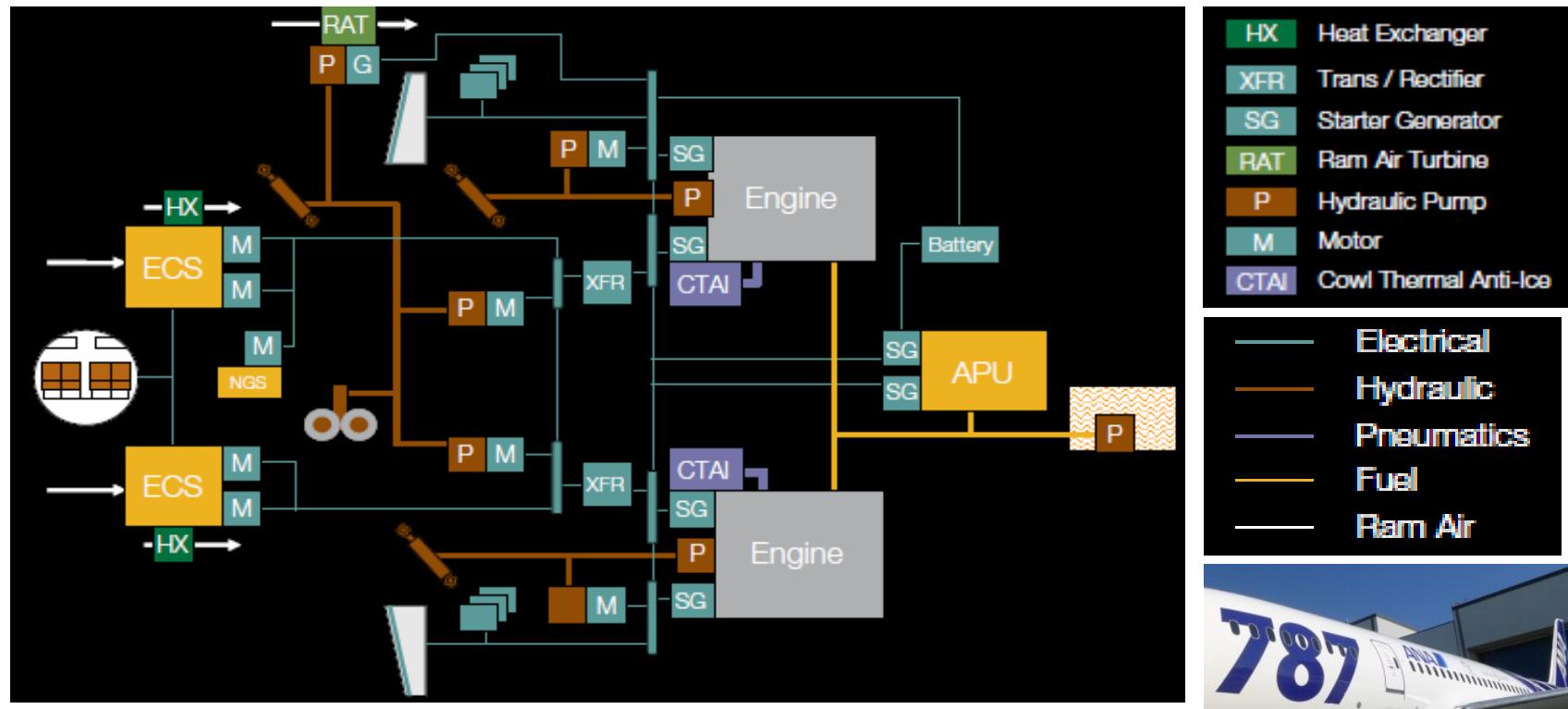
(Michaelis 2010)

Technical Solutions

Electrical (Bleed Free) Cabin Air Supply

Solution B787!

Boeing 2007

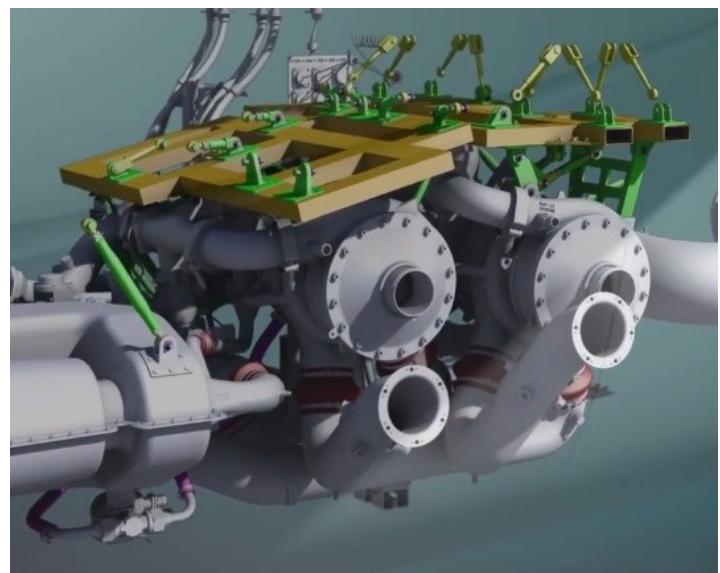
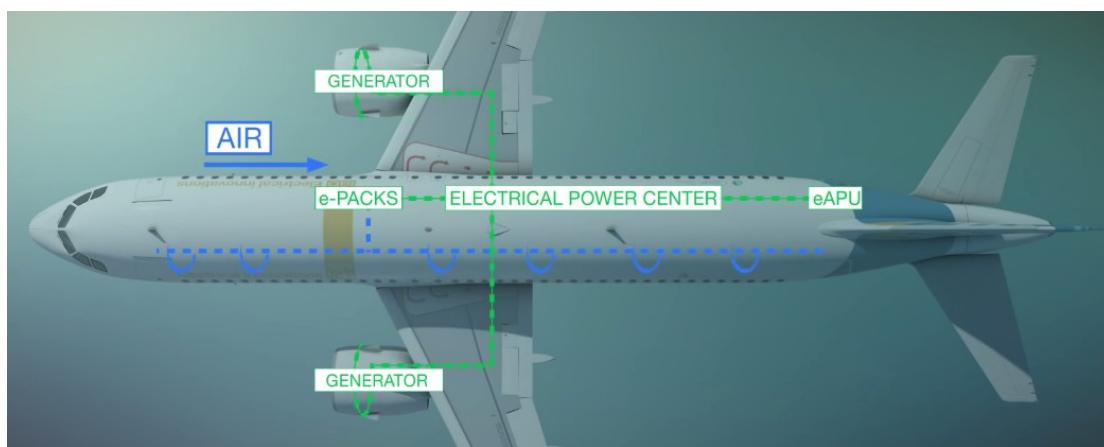


The "Pack" of the B787's Environmental Control System (ECS) is powered by electric motors (M) to compress ambient air up to cabin pressure and to push the air through the heat exchangers (HX) for cooling. The power for the electric motors is produced by generators (SG) connected to the aircraft's engine and APU. After compression and cooling the air is delivered to the cabin.

Technical Solutions

More Electric A320?

Electrical innovations flightlab

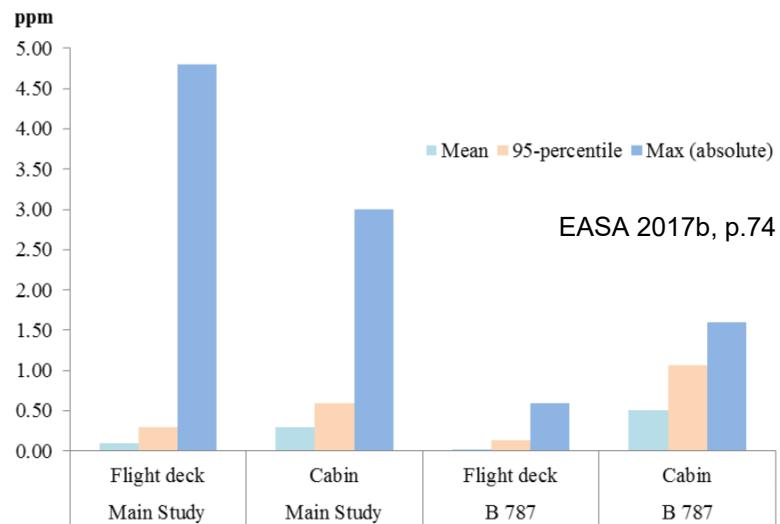


Hints (for Today!)

Hints

Get Informed => Personal CO Detector. Get Protected in the Cabin => Breathing Mask

Normal CO Situation



Failure Case: Fume Event



- The **Carbon Monoxide (CO)** level in normal operation is much lower than the **limit of 50 ppm** (specified in CS 25.831). Failure cases did not occur during these measurements.
- We know much **CO is present in the cabin during a Fume Event. The elevated CO concentration indicates the severity of the event. Therefore, crew should carry their personal CO detector and and be informed and make decisions accordingly!**
- If smoke is present, checklists tell pilots to put on their oxygen mask. In such a case, cabin **crew should consider wearing a personal breathing mask protecting against nerve gas.**

Get CO Detector and Breathing Mask



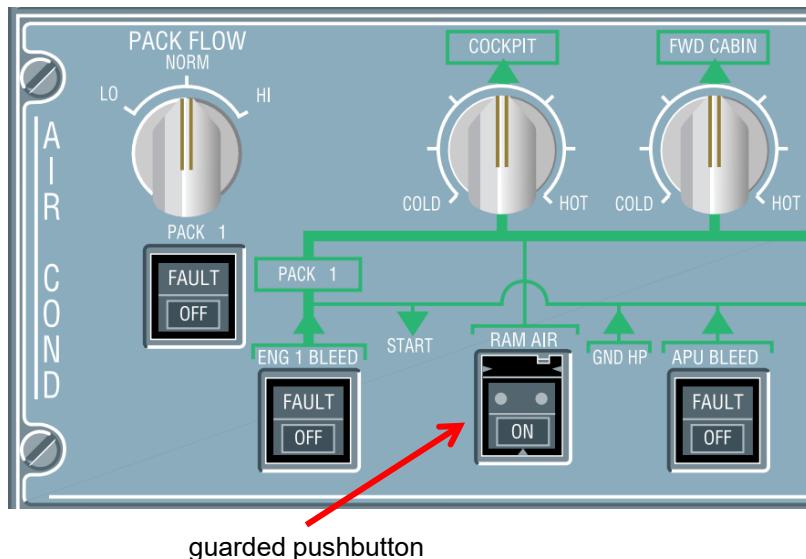
Cabin crew protection !

Hints

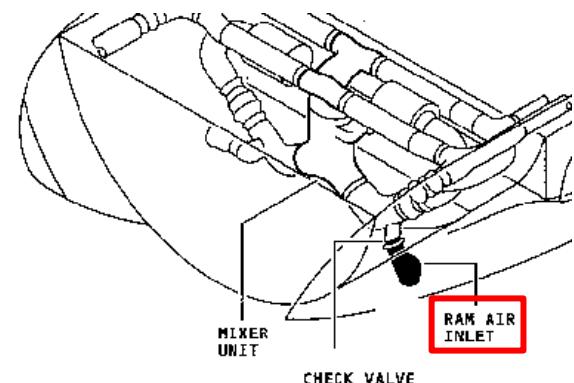
Direct Venting of the Cabin in 10000 ft

Direct venting (independently of bleed air) is possible for most passenger aircraft. On the **Airbus A320**, an emergency ram-air inlet can be opened. These conditions have to be met:

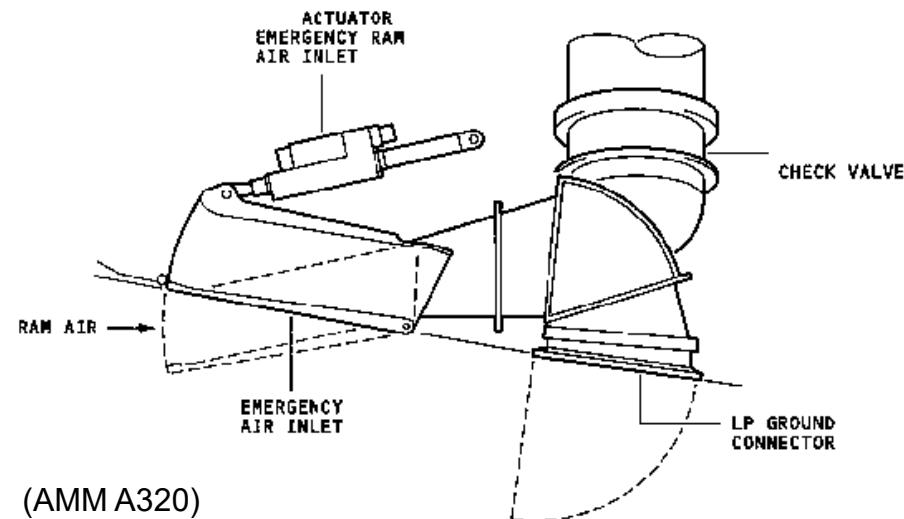
- the altitude of the aircraft is less than 10000 ft,
- the difference between the pressure in the fuselage and the external pressure is less than 70 hPa.



Component location



Emergency ram air inlet



(AMM A320)

Aircraft Cabin Air – Quality or Contamination?

Summary

- **All aviation fluids** can get into aircraft cabin air:
sucked up from the ground and **ingested into the engine**.
- There are many reasons for odors and contamination, but:
- **Concentrate** on the big issue: **Engine seals leak a small amount of oil by design!**
- **Demand a technical change** of the system!
- **Think** about **what you can do today** to make a change. Hints are given!



Aircraft Cabin Air – Quality or Contamination?

Contact

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<http://www.ProfScholz.de>

A List of References is contained in my presentation from 19.09.2017: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4495495>.