

AHU Update on CAA Aviation Health Unit

- ICE Project. The data acquisition phase is now complete and the data are now being loaded into the database for analysis. In the light of the recent New England Journal of Medicine paper on Cabin Altitude and the ensuing debate on the Aeromed List, there will be significant new information which addresses simultaneously health and wellbeing.
- Website. This has been updated regularly and the FAQ's increased with links to relevant information sources for both passengers and medical professionals.
- Pandemic Flu Planning. The AHU is working actively with DfT to ensure an Aviation Preparedness Plan and Dr Johnston has attended The 1st Steering Committee Meeting of Co-operative Arrangement for Preventing the Spread of Communicable Diseases Through Air Travel (CAPSCA). The key reason for attendance was to ensure that our planning process was congruent with that of CAPSCA which is based on the cohesive approach of WHO / ICAO / IATA. The conclusions of the meeting stressed the importance of breaking down silos of competency between Departments at Government level to ensure consistent advice.
- Press Office Activity. The AHU has been active in responding to pertinent articles in both the general press and medical journals to ensure accurate evidence based information on travel and health is disseminated.
- Toilets. Ongoing research confirms that there is no requirement on aircraft for toilet provision. Other transport modalities, eg trains, have no requirement for toilets, apart from provision of a facility for the disabled. This was the subject of an early day motion in the House. A further vociferous complaint using somewhat direct language has been received from the pilot of a cargo aircraft by the AHU, with a copy to our CMO. I feel we need to discuss the way forward in what I believe is a basic human right.