

SHOWERS IN THE SKY MET WITH GREEN CYNICISM



With the airline industry heating up at a steady pace and competition soaring, new airlines have been forced to come up with new ideas in order to attract not only the wealthy members of business class, yet the masses of economy class too. This notion was proven several years ago with the introduction of budget airlines. Now it is the turn of the higher class airlines to make steps forward. Recently Emirates airlines have come up with the most impressive aircraft since the Boeing 747 some 38 years ago – the A380 furnished with showers.

The first commercial flights for the A380 were in August this year and took place between Hamburg and Dubai. Full-length beds on board aircraft are nothing new, yet the A380 has been praised, and scorned, for its two shower facilities for the estimated 14 first-class passengers. This facility, though not cheap, is sure to attract businessmen travelling to and from the Middle East, who wish to arrive in a fresh state at their destination. For them, the days of sweltering in an airplane seat with the shirt stuck to their back are gone. The comfort element may well be worth coming up with \$18 000 for. This is the price of an A380 flight from New York to Dubai.

However, the A380 has come across a major stumbling block: it needs to carry a tone of water to accommodate the facility and has, therefore, been met with severe criticism from many green organisations. The fact that the original Emirates' order of 58 of them is a mere start does not help the matters. The carbon costs due to excess water should also be taken into account. The environmental group 'Plane Stupid' is shocked by the introduction of such a non-green addition to the world transport.

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