

# Hazards to aviation from volcanic ash cloud

The ash cloud from Iceland's erupting volcano continues to cause air travel chaos across Europe, closing airports and stranding thousands of passengers. The cloud contains tiny particles of abrasive glass, sand and rock that pose a serious danger to aircraft engines and structures

## Exterior

Forward-facing surfaces, such as landing lights and wing leading edges, damaged or scratched

**Cockpit:** Vision obscured by cloud and windshield abrasion

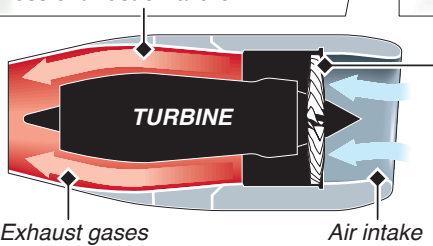
**Cabin**  
Air quality impaired

**Corrosion:** Possible damage to plastic, rubber and metal components from gases such as sulfur dioxide

**ENGINES:** Ash deposits melt and clog interior, blocking fuel nozzles and restricting airflow, resulting in loss of thrust or failure

**Instruments**  
Ash blocks pitot tube, used to measure airspeed. Aircraft could stall if pilot does not know how fast it is going

Turbine blades eroded, leading to reduction in performance



Volcanic ash cloud is about 6-11km high – where most commercial aircraft fly

