

HEPA Air Filters Provide Protection When Transporting Patients

Stockdorf/Munich – April 13, 2021 – The SARS-CoV-2 virus is preoccupying us for rather longer than we had hoped. While the need to protect people under all circumstances is becoming more urgent, newly developed measures are becoming more diverse – but which are the right ones? The ASB ambulance service in Berlin and the patient transportation service from Stahnsdorf near Potsdam have taken the decision to install high-performance air filter systems from Webasto in their vehicles.

In March 2020, a small team of Webasto employees at the company's site in Molinella, Italy, considered how they could make a contribution to the fight against the pandemic by leveraging their expert knowledge of air cooling and distribution in vehicles. After just four months, the first HEPA filter systems were already available for fitting to all types of vehicle.

The “HFT 200”, “HFT 300” and “HFT 600” correspond to HEPA filter class H14. This means they are capable of filtering 99.995 percent of particles smaller than 0.3 micrometers from the air. For example, these particles include respirable viruses, bacteria, aerosols and dusts, therefore the coronavirus too, that have a diameter of approx. 0.12-0.16 micrometers. Depending on their size, these filter systems can decontaminate between three and ten cubic meters of room air per minute. To replace the entire room air every minute it is only necessary to select the corresponding number and size of the filter systems. In rescue vehicles the filters, used in conjunction with personal protective equipment, significantly reduce the risk of infection of emergency medical service operators and patients.

Employees involved in equipment decision

“We carefully considered how best to protect our patients and staff during the acute phase of the pandemic and we involved our colleagues in the decision,” says Maximilian Barletta, Head of Central Services at ASB Rettungsdienst Berlin gGmbH. “We need fit paramedics who are able to help others,” he continues. At first, ASB Rettungsdienst has equipped its intensive care ambulance with an HFT 600, which can decontaminate ten cubic meters of air per minute, because over 90 per cent of the patients transported in this vehicle have COVID-19. After a pilot phase, the Berlin-based service is considering whether to retrofit its other rescue vehicles and ambulance with HEPA filters from Webasto.

Installed at own expense to protect all passengers

In Stahnsdorf near Potsdam, the Größer ambulance service primarily transports immunocompromised cancer and dialysis patients to their appointments. To provide the best possible protection for drivers and passengers traveling in the Ford vans, the transport service retrofitted an HFT 300 to each of its six vehicles. The installation was carried out by T&S GmbH Autotechnik & Elektrik in Stahnsdorf, on a one vehicle per day basis to ensure as many vehicles as possible could remain actively deployed. “Before the pandemic struck we sometimes carried two or three patients at a time, but now we can only take one passenger per trip,” is how Ilka Größer describes her company's situation. “Although we receive no public funding for this, we still want to protect everyone traveling in our vehicles to the best possible extent and have therefore opted to fit the HEPA air filters from Webasto.” The patients welcome this commitment

by the Potsdam company and also report that the noise made by the air filters does not disturb them. "The sound is akin to that of a hair dryer, almost monotonous and soothing," says Größer.

Equipment can be flexibly adapted to the vehicle size

Filter versions in lengths of 60 or 120 cm are available for vehicle interiors of different sizes. Several filters can be combined to decontaminate larger spaces. They have a diameter of 20 centimeters and can be installed both horizontally and vertically. If desired, suitable mounting brackets are available from Webasto. Using these, mounting is possible in just 30 minutes. The filtration systems only require a 12 Volt or 24 Volt connection. The filter is tightly sealed with a lid before replacement, which means that filter exchange is contamination-free using the usual protective clothing. The filter system is available via the Webasto dealer network.

Further information is available at www.webasto.com/hepa.

On request, we would be pleased to put you in touch with one of our clients for you to discuss deeper background issues.

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About Webasto:

The Webasto Group is a global innovative systems partner to almost all automobile manufacturers and among the top 100 suppliers in this industry sector. The company's product portfolio comprises a broad range of roof and heating systems for every type of vehicle and all drive types as well as battery systems and charging solutions. Moreover, Webasto has a strong position in the aftermarket providing dealers and end customers with customized solutions and services relating to thermo management and electromobility. In 2019 the company generated sales of around 3.7 billion euros and had almost 14,000 employees at more than 50 locations (with over 30 of these being manufacturing plants). The headquarters of the company, founded in 1901, is located in Stockdorf near Munich (Germany). For more information please visit www.webasto-group.com / www.twitter.com/WebastoGroup

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