



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities

TRAN • NUMBER 117 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Tuesday, October 30, 2018

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Chair

The Honourable Judy A. Sgro

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• (0845)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.)): Welcome to the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities of the 42nd Parliament. Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) we are doing a study on the impact of aircraft noise in the vicinity of major Canadian airports.

Welcome to the committee members and to our witnesses.

From the Department of Transport, we have Sara Wiebe, director general, air policy; Dave Dawson, director, airports and air navigation services policy; Nicholas Robinson, director, policy and regulatory services; by video conference, Joseph Szwalek, regional director, civil aviation, Ontario; and also by video conference, Clifford Frank, associate director, operations, west.

From Nav Canada, we have Neil Wilson, president and chief executive officer; Jonathan Bagg, senior manager, public affairs; and Blake Cushnie, national manager, performance-based operations.

Thank you very much to all of our witnesses for finding the time to share their knowledge with us today. I would ask that you keep it to five minutes so the committee has sufficient time for their questions.

Ms. Wiebe, go ahead.

Ms. Sara Wiebe (Director General, Air Policy, Department of Transport): Thank you very much for inviting Transport Canada to appear before this committee. I want to take some time with you today to give you Transport Canada's perspective on this important issue. As you mentioned, Madam Chair, I am joined today by colleagues from our national headquarters, and also two colleagues from our regional office in Toronto by video conference.

As you're probably aware, Transport Canada's primary goal is ensuring that Canadians have a safe, secure, economical and environmentally responsible transport system.

[Translation]

To that end, in the 1990s, the government made a series of decisions in order to improve the air transportation system. One decision was to withdraw from the day-to-day operations and business choices of the air navigation systems and airports. As a result, NAV CANADA and airport authorities such as the Greater Toronto Airport Authority, or GTAA, are all now private and not-for-profit share capital corporations. This decision has proved to be a success.

NAV CANADA and the airport authorities that run our largest airports are recognized worldwide for the quality of their services and facilities, and more importantly, for the ongoing improvement of safety levels. These entities have proved to be more agile, innovative, effective and responsive to the needs of stakeholders. They also demonstrate these strengths when it comes to the management of their affairs.

With regard to Toronto and its surrounding area, Transport Canada has observed that, over the past five years, the level of transparency, accountability and inclusion has increased significantly. NAV Canada and the GTAA have been working closely with other stakeholders to find possible ways to reduce the impact of aircraft noise in the area. The stakeholders, including the different levels of governments, the industry and citizens, must participate in these discussions, since we all have a role to play in noise abatement.

However, we think that the specific noise issues are better understood and managed by local stakeholders. NAV CANADA and the airport authorities have been working with local politicians, interest groups and citizens. They'll develop the best solutions, while taking into account trade-offs in terms of flight access, economic development and environmental impact, including aircraft noise.

• (0850)

[English]

For instance, Toronto Pearson has been much discussed in the noise conversation to date. It provides direct daily service to more than 67% of the world's economies. The airport also generates or facilitates approximately 332,000 jobs in Ontario, which accounts for \$42 billion or 6.3% of Ontario's GDP. By 2030, it is estimated that Toronto Pearson could generate and facilitate 542,000 jobs.

That being said, we recognize that transportation affects the daily lives of Canadians, and we understand that. While transportation serves as a backbone to Canada's economy, transportation activities must take into account the needs of communities while respecting Canadians and the natural environment. That is why our officials have been closely monitoring aviation noise issues while participating in appropriate forums and encouraging progressive action.

Overall, there are many moving parts, and ongoing collaboration among various actors is required. Transport Canada officials will always work to monitor industry, keep abreast of developments, and consider approvals and oversight as needed.

To finish, I would briefly like to review the deck that we've provided to you. I can do that in just a couple of minutes, and then we will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

As you can see on slide 2, what we wanted to do with this document was outline how aircraft noise management operates in Canada in a general sense, look at the different actors involved, and highlight Canada's balanced approach to aircraft noise management.

On slide 3, you can see that there are a variety of actors involved in noise management, with varying roles and responsibilities. Successful aircraft noise management involves collaboration among all of these entities. Industry is responsible for day-to-day operations, business decisions and communicating with local stakeholders, while Transport Canada provides regulations, oversight and guidance.

Moving to slides 4 and 5, it is important to recognize the international guidance that's provided on this important issue. We look to the International Civil Aviation Organization, ICAO, which is housed in Montreal. ICAO guidance is centred around its balanced approach to aircraft noise management, and there are four elements that are mutually reinforcing.

The Chair: Ms. Wiebe, could you bring your comments to a close, please?

Ms. Sara Wiebe: Certainly.

Slide 6 emphasizes that a balanced approach can't succeed without community engagement, so this is why we turn to airport operators that operate in the community for that. Transport Canada continues to participate in noise management committees, for example.

I also want to point out that in 2015, with Transport Canada's encouragement, industry developed a clear set of standards for the development of an airspace change communications and consultation protocol.

The Chair: Thank you very much. We will give you time to get your other comments in.

Mr. Wilson, you have five minutes, please.

Mr. Neil Wilson (President and Chief Executive Officer, NAV CANADA): Thank you, Madam Chair.

[*Translation*]

Good morning, everyone.

[*English*]

As the chair indicated, I'm Neil Wilson. I'm the president and chief executive officer of Nav Canada. I'm joined today by Jonathan Bagg, senior manager, public affairs, and by Blake Cushnie, national manager of performance-based operations.

I'd like to start by thanking the chair, the vice-chairs and the members of this committee for this opportunity to appear.

It's regrettable, but it's nonetheless a fact that noise from aircraft in this day and age is an unavoidable consequence of the operation of aircraft. That said, significant efforts are being made across the entire aviation industry to reduce the impact of aircraft operations on communities. We at Nav Canada are committed to this goal and to collaboration with our partners: airports, airlines, Transport Canada, and the International Civil Aviation Organization—as well as, importantly, communities—on this important issue.

As the country's private, not-for-profit provider of air navigation services, Nav Canada is responsible for the safe and efficient movement of aircraft in all Canadian-controlled airspace. This means that we are responsible for more than 18 million square kilometres of airspace from coast to coast, reaching halfway across the north Atlantic, the busiest oceanic airspace in the world. We handle more than 3.3 million flights per year, and these flights are made by approximately 40,000 customers, including airlines, cargo operators, and business and general aviation.

Our mandate is achieved primarily through the delivery of air traffic control and flight information services; the maintenance, update, and publishing of aeronautical information products; the reliable provision of communications, navigation and surveillance infrastructure; and the 24-7 availability of advanced air traffic management systems, many of which we at Nav Canada develop right here in Canada and have exported around the world.

Thanks to the work of our 5,100 employees, operating out of more than 100 operational facilities throughout the country, Canada boasts one of the best air traffic management safety records in the world. We also achieve this success with a service charges model that has some of the lowest service charges and is among the most cost-effective in the world.

At its heart, simply put, our service is essential to an industry that employs hundreds of thousands of Canadians, allows millions of us to connect to each other and to the world, and propels the Canadian economy forward. That is why we have invested more than \$2 billion since 1996, when we assumed responsibility for the air navigation system, to make air travel safer and more efficient.

At the same time, we are also committed to helping reduce the industry's footprint, both in terms of greenhouse gas emissions and aircraft noise, and we are also investing in that. Through technological innovation and procedural improvements, Nav Canada has helped reduce the industry's fuel consumption and associated greenhouse gas emissions. We estimate that our efforts resulted in greenhouse gas savings of 1.5 million tonnes in 2017 alone.

In addition, our role as air navigation service provider requires us to ensure that our air traffic control procedures adhere to noise operating restrictions and noise abatement procedures throughout Canada. Nav Canada engages regularly in airspace modernization projects. In deploying advanced procedures, Nav Canada seeks opportunities to place approach and departure paths over non-residential areas, targeting industrial, commercial and agricultural land. In several cases, we have been able to move flight paths or portions of flight paths farther away from residential areas. Newer technologies are also increasing the use of quieter continuous descent operations, which see aircraft descending in a cleaner configuration and at a lower thrust setting.

When I became CEO in 2016, one of the first things I did was to meet certain community leaders concerned with aircraft noise in Toronto to discuss those concerns. As a result, we commissioned, and recently completed, an independent third party airspace review, which looked at noise mitigation at airports around the world, sought input from communities in the Toronto area, and resulted in a series of recommendations that I believe are both meaningful and achievable.

Some of these recommendations were the subject of a significant public consultation process undertaken jointly with the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, which took place this past spring. As a result of this effort, we will be implementing new nighttime approach and departure procedures this November. These mitigations result in as many as 221,000 fewer people being impacted by noise related to a night flight, depending on the runway and procedure being used. As we evaluate these mitigations and we gather community and stakeholder feedback, we will consider applications at other airports that can benefit from a similar approach.

When developing these airspace improvements, our accountabilities are outlined in the airspace change communications and consultation protocol, which provides guidance on when and how public consultation should occur, while promoting cross-industry collaboration.

● (0855)

We remain committed to working transparently with industry stakeholders and with communities equally, to identify opportunities to reduce the impact of aircraft operations while meeting the airspace needs of this country now and in the future.

Thank you, Madam Chair. We welcome any questions you may have.

The Chair: We'll move on to Mrs. Block.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thank you for joining us today and providing us with your testimony.

I have a couple of questions for Nav Canada. I understand that part of Nav Canada's mandate is to alter flight paths to improve airspace efficiency. You talked about that in your opening comments. I wonder if you could expand on what factors you consider when implementing changes to existing flight paths.

● (0900)

Mr. Neil Wilson: Thank you for the question.

When we are looking at flight paths in particular communities, we obviously care about the impact of the changes on those affected around airports. Airports in this country tend to be located in major cities, so there are going to be impacts where aircraft are flying. We take into account the fuel savings and the safety factors that are introduced by changing the air paths. We also engage quite deliberately and carefully with the communities that are affected.

We engage in a number of ways, largely guided by the airspace change communications and consultation protocol, which defines accountabilities in and among the airports, ourselves and other industry stakeholders, as this is really a joint effort that we are all engaged in. When we do so, we have briefings with residents in the affected areas, which are tailored to their concerns. We bring specific information as to how they may be impacted and what possible mitigation there may be around their area. We discuss it with them. We meet with elected officials like you—at this level or at provincial and municipal levels—who represent others who may be impacted, to make sure there's a good understanding of what the issues are. We provide a good deal of information online for those who aren't able to attend the in-person meetings that we have in communities.

We try to do it as early as we can and as consistently as we can. Going back over the years, perhaps we have not done as good a job as we should have. We learned from that and we are trying, day in and day out, to do a better job as we go forward.

Mrs. Kelly Block: Thank you very much.

As the organization responsible for air traffic management across the country, how do you think Canada's aviation industry as a whole can address aircraft noise concerns without negatively impacting our country's economic competitiveness?

Mr. Neil Wilson: I think it's a balance that we have to achieve. Aviation is a significant driver of economic activity in this country. It is worldwide. Canada is particularly impacted by aviation. We sit on the flight paths between Europe and the United States to the south, as traffic flowing between those two areas goes through our airspace. We have built a country not just on railways, but on aviation. It is essential to the economy of this country. We cannot lose sight of that.

At the same time, we have to understand and take into account the very legitimate concerns of folks in communities who are affected by noise and who live in the vicinity of major airports that have grown over time. We have to be sensitive to that and make sure that we achieve the proper balance.

Mrs. Kelly Block: I wonder if you could share with us a little about the role that you might have when looking to strike that balance by perhaps moving some air traffic from an airport like Pearson to Hamilton. We know it has been suggested that perhaps some air traffic, especially cargo air traffic, could be moved to a smaller regional airport to take the pressure off a larger centre and to accommodate the residents living in that larger centre.

Could you comment on that, please?

Mr. Neil Wilson: Sure. We facilitate the movement of aircraft. We don't decide where the aircraft should go. We don't operate airports. Airports operate airports. Airlines operate airlines. Cargo operators determine their base of operations.

They all have interests in where they should operate from and how they should operate, and we facilitate the movement around that. We make sure that movement can be safe, first and foremost, and we make sure those movements can be efficient.

As those policy decisions are worked through by all the various stakeholders, we are interested, obviously. We want to make sure that this can happen as they see fit. We want to make sure it can happen in a safe way. We want to make sure we are as efficient as possible. As we look at the flight paths that we are called upon to design and to assist with, we want to make sure that if there are going to be communities that are impacted in a negative way, we're there to work to minimize that as much as possible and to provide suggestions on how that might happen.

We are part of this infrastructure. We don't drive those kinds of decisions, but we want to make sure that we are part of the conversation and that we can be as helpful as possible to all the stakeholders and to the communities that might be affected.

• (0905)

Mrs. Kelly Block: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: We move now to Mr. Hardie.

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, everybody, for being here.

Ms. Wiebe, I have a question for you. The ultimate accountability for how this all works inevitably comes back to government, because everybody will look to government if things aren't working properly. Within government, where will issues like this ultimately land?

Ms. Sara Wiebe: As I mentioned in my opening remarks, the department, the government, is committed to having a transportation system that is safe, secure and environmentally sound, and that also contributes to our economy.

I think at the end of the day, Transport Canada continues to watch very closely those elements of the air transportation sector that have been deregulated, such as Nav Canada and the management of our airport authorities.

We work very closely with these entities. I think Neil gets kind of tired of seeing us, sometimes, but we do work very closely with them to monitor the activities they are undertaking, from the perspective of the policy framework around this but also from the very important perspective of the regulatory framework that we

manage and have oversight over with regard to not only noise but also various elements of the safety and security of our air sector.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Thank you for that.

Mr. Wilson, you mentioned that you had done a study with the community on the air traffic noise issues around Pearson airport. Could we get a copy of that report and the recommendations?

Mr. Neil Wilson: Certainly. There have been a couple of pieces of work done around Pearson in the greater Toronto area. Jointly with Pearson—

Mr. Ken Hardie: I'm sorry, but I'll need a very short answer, sir, because I have other questions.

Mr. Neil Wilson: Yes.

Mr. Ken Hardie: That's a good answer. Thank you.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Ken Hardie: I noted with interest the comments of one of our previous panellists, who said that Pearson is surrounded, totally surrounded. I don't know if it was totally surrounded when it was first built, but it certainly is now.

In today's regime, would Nav Canada be at the table, let's say, if a municipality wanted to rezone and redevelop an area close to the airport? Would you be part of the public consultation?

Mr. Neil Wilson: I'm going to defer to Mr. Bagg. We want to be as helpful and as collaborative as we can. I can't tell you that we're going to have notice of every single incident where that happens, but Mr. Bagg can assist with that.

Mr. Jonathan Bagg (Senior Manager, Public Affairs, NAV CANADA): When you look at zoning as it relates to development, airport authorities are responsible for producing something called a noise exposure forecast. That's something they receive guidance on from Transport Canada. That exposure forecast provides guidance in terms of what kind of development is suitable in the vicinity of an airport. There is onus on the municipality to be aware of that guidance.

Mr. Ken Hardie: If you become aware of a development and nobody has approached you for this work, would you proactively offer it?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: The exposure forecast work is done by the airports, specifically developed by airport authorities, not by Nav Canada per se.

Mr. Ken Hardie: We'll have to ask them if they're proactively involved, because as we've noticed in some of the other testimony, this development can happen and then the next call that goes to somebody is complaining about noise.

I notice with interest that there are usually quite a large number of hotels near airports, where people go to sleep either after coming off a long flight or before commencing one. Having stayed in a few of those hotels, I notice that they're remarkably soundproof. Are there construction techniques, particularly when there's a new development going in, a residential development, that should be considered by developers and the municipality for cities or communities that are going to find themselves on a flight path?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: There are different construction techniques that mitigate noise in terms of the quality of insulation, window panes, and so on. In Canada, we have some natural noise mitigation factors because of our winters—we have a lot of insulation in our homes—but that is not something that Nav Canada would provide guidance on specifically.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Who would?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: I'm not 100% sure which organization would be responsible for that. I think that goes back to the zoning requirements with respect to what's an appropriate development in an area.

• (0910)

Mr. Ken Hardie: Who makes the decision on the number of night flights that are allowed into a given facility?

Mr. Neil Wilson: Airports determine what they're going to have coming in, based upon the demand at a particular airport. We don't determine demand at airports. We handle what happens when folks are flying in and out of airports. We don't say who flies in or doesn't fly in. Airports make those decisions.

That said, when traffic is lighter, as it is at night, we can do different things. If we are able and if safety permits, we can arrange our procedures to move traffic in different ways. One of the things we're looking to do at Pearson is precisely that.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Okay.

Ms. Wiebe, is Transport Canada consulted? Who has to give approval for an airport's plan to increase the number of night flights?

Ms. Sara Wiebe: Perhaps I could ask our colleagues in the Ontario region to talk specifically about the circumstances with regard to Pearson airport, as an example.

Joe and Cliff, I'd like to pass it over to you.

Mr. Joseph Szwalek (Regional Director, Civil Aviation - Ontario, Department of Transport): Okay. Thank you for the question.

With regard to movement at night, that is all predicated on passengers going in and out of the airport. In 2013, there was a request for a bump-up on movements at night. Again, this is in the quiet time, from 12:30 until 6:30 in the morning. To this day, they have not used that bump-up. The land lease agreement specifies that they have to maintain the airport in the same way as when they took it over in 1996.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Who was the request made to?

Mr. Joseph Szwalek: Do you mean the request for the bump-up?

Mr. Ken Hardie: Yes.

Mr. Joseph Szwalek: That was made to the minister for Transport Canada.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We're now on to Mr. Aubin.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I also want to thank our many witnesses for being here this morning.

My questions are for Ms. Wiebe and Mr. Wilson, but the questions can be directed at other people as needed. I want brief answers since I have many questions and only a short amount of time.

Mr. Wilson, you said in your opening remarks that you've been doing everything in your power to achieve the noise abatement objective. However, this seems a little vague to me. Is there a numerical standard?

For example, I remember reading that the ICAO says that the noise levels shouldn't exceed 55 decibels. Is there a numerical objective for noise?

[English]

Mr. Neil Wilson: I'm going to ask Mr. Bagg to respond to that.

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: There isn't specific guidance in terms of a noise requirement for aircraft operating over residential areas. We use things like noise modelling when we're developing flight paths to understand the noise impact of changes, and we communicate those changes. We also identify ways to increase benefits.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin: I guess that it's the same thing when you talk about compliance with acoustic standards. Again, there's no scientific numerical standard that would give everyone a common understanding. Is that correct?

[English]

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: There are some metrics. You had some folks here earlier—at the previous hearing with Colin Novak, for instance—who talked about metrics and how they can understand annoyance, but there isn't a specific requirement to meet a decibel level.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Thank you.

You talked about the gradual descent—I don't remember the exact term—of aircraft that fly mainly over industrial and agricultural areas. However, the problem isn't really in those areas, although those areas may also have an issue.

Is this a common practice among all flights, or can another technique for landing in residential areas be used that may result in faster approaches but less noise?

[English]

Mr. Neil Wilson: I'm going to ask Mr. Cushnie to answer some of the specifics, but generally, we prefer and favour continuous descent operations, regardless of what land is being flown over, because they're quite a bit quieter.

Mr. Cushnie can provide more detail on that.

Mr. Blake Cushnie: Thank you for the question.

To address the question about industrial areas, I can tell you that one of the goals we've been working toward recently, which we're rolling out in November in Toronto, is to use new technology to try to move the night flights away from as many people as possible.

During the day, our goal is continuous descent—essentially, to use the new technology to guide the airplanes to the runways by the quietest means possible.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Thank you.

My next question is primarily for the witnesses from Transport Canada.

The department has been conducting a number of noise studies, which are called the NEFs. My question is very simple. Has this data been released to the public? If not, why?

• (0915)

[*English*]

Ms. Sara Wiebe: When we're talking about the different studies that have been done with regard to noise reduction, I would primarily point to the studies that have been done by Nav Canada and by the GTAA, for example. We work with them on the development of those reports, as well as on the assessment and the monitoring of the implementation of some of the recommendations.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin: I may have worded my question incorrectly. When Transport Canada uses the noise exposure forecast system, does it post the results on its site?

[*English*]

Ms. Sara Wiebe: Thank you for the question.

I'm looking at my colleague in civil aviation but I don't believe we're familiar with the reports to which you're referring. We can certainly take that question back, but I'm not familiar with that kind of report.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Okay.

I'll send you my question in writing to be more specific and to not waste too much time on the question this morning.

One issue has been bothering me. You said that Transport Canada's main concern is safety and that it works with organizations that I respect, such as NAV CANADA. By carrying out a number of deregulations and transferring its responsibilities in this area to other organizations, how has Transport Canada increased safety in Canada?

[*English*]

Ms. Sara Wiebe: Again, thank you for the question.

I mentioned that in the late 1980s, we deregulated our air sector through initiatives such as the privatization of Air Canada. In the mid-1990s, we further deregulated the air sector in the creation of airport authorities, actions that resulted in the creation of Nav Canada.

I want to be clear that final responsibility for the safety of Canada's air sector remains with the minister, in that it's largely achieved through the regulatory oversight that my colleagues in civil aviation undertake. Responsibility for safety remains with the minister. However, the implementation of it is done through entities such as Nav Canada and the airport authorities.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin: For many years—and this started before the current Liberal government came to power—Transport Canada has been carrying out a series of deregulations and giving more and more power to large companies or other organizations.

Isn't there reason to reinstate a number of regulations to ensure that national standards are established and met?

[*English*]

Ms. Sara Wiebe: In response to your question, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, I would suggest that we consider the deregulation of Canada's air sector a success. We consider that it is a sector that is now more economically competitive globally in some contexts, but we also believe that Canada's air sector is more safe and secure as a result of the actions taken in the late 1980s and mid-1990s.

Again, I emphasize that the ultimate accountability for the safety and security of Canada's air sector rests with the minister, and that rests on the regulatory oversight undertaken by the department and my colleagues in civil aviation.

The Chair: Mr. Iacono, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to thank the witnesses for being here this morning.

When we met with NAV CANADA representatives in May, they pointed out that there had been no significant changes in perspective over the past 20 years. However, clearly the urban realities in the greater Montreal and Laval areas have changed in the past 20 years.

Has NAV CANADA adapted the different flight paths to urban development in the greater Montreal and Laval areas?

[*English*]

Mr. Neil Wilson: The city of Montreal certainly has changed over the past 20 years. I'm going to ask Mr. Bagg to address the specifics of flight path changes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: There haven't been any recent significant changes concerning the approaches. Certainly the traffic at the Montreal airport has increased and more planes are landing at the airport. However, there have been no changes in air routes to take into account the population increase in these areas.

• (0920)

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Thank you.

Is population density a criterion in the establishment of new transportation corridors?

What are the criteria? When was the last update of the criteria?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: Of course we use noise modelling to understand the impact of air routes. When we work specifically on modernizing the airspace and we consider changing the airspace, we use modelling and census information to establish the number of people who are likely to be affected by the noise and to determine how to lower that number.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Has there been a recent update? If so, can you give us the specific date?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: The last major update of Montreal's airspace took place in 2012.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: NAV CANADA is authorized to unilaterally alter air routes to improve airspace efficiency.

Can you describe the process of altering air routes and explain the main reasons for these changes, in particular when it comes to night flights?

[English]

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: In terms of looking at the airspace change, we're guided by the airspace change communications and consultation protocol. It has some robust requirements and accountabilities for Nav Canada when it's conducting airspace change.

That includes how and when consultations are conducted and how we communicate the impacts of those changes. It also provides some timeline guidance in terms of how soon you have to give notification of a public consultation event. There are also follow-up reporting requirements. A public engagement report has to be produced following a consultation and before a recommendation to implement the changes is made. That's a key facet.

There's another piece to it where we need to follow up. It's called the 180-day review, where we come back approximately six months after implementation and look at operational performance, as well as any community feedback we received as a result of the change.

[Translation]

Mr. Angelo Iacono: In France, for example, the continuous descent approach procedure has been implemented at the 11 main airports, including Paris-Charles de Gaulle airport. In 2017 alone, continuous descent approach procedures were used at Paris-Charles de Gaulle airport 30% of the time.

The briefing note that you sent to the committee members states that the "company is increasing the use of quieter continuous descent operations."

How often are continuous descent approach procedures used in Canada?

[English]

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: If you look at our current situation, you will see that we actually recently established something called an industry noise management board, which brings together technical expertise from across the industry. One of the tasks of that industry, starting in Toronto, is to come up with an acceptable definition of continuous descent—what the definition is and what that looks like operationally—and start reporting on it in Toronto.

[Translation]

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Is this approach procedure used for all night flights?

[English]

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: Ideally, we want to do continuous descent with every aircraft. Ideally, we have an aircraft from top of descent—that's cruise altitude—coming on continuous descent all the way to the runway. We'd like to use that as much as possible.

We do have to use levelling sometimes to provide separation between aircraft. One of the ways we separate aircraft is vertically. You can have 1,000 feet of vertical separation and that does require us to level off an aircraft at times. As we move forward, a lot of the work we're doing internationally and as a company is to promote increased continuous descent operations. That's certainly a priority for this organization.

[Translation]

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Thank you,

Ms. Wiebe,

[English]

we were told at the last panel that Pearson airport is presently under financial difficulties. Can you confirm that allegation? If so, by how much is it in financial difficulty? What's the number?

Ms. Sara Wiebe: Thank you very much.

First, I read the testimony and the comments around Toronto Pearson being in financial difficulty. I think we need to look at it more from the perspective of the GTAA, the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, taking a look at its future plans in terms of how its infrastructure will continue to support the increasing volumes that want to arrive at that airport. It's from that perspective that Toronto Pearson is undertaking debt in order to finance their operations.

This is as a result of Canada's user-pay policy. Perhaps you've heard reference to that before. I refer to that because our airport authorities must finance all infrastructure at their airports without any financial support from the government; there is some limited support. This means that when you and I travel through that airport, we pay for our travel and we contribute to the infrastructure that's being developed at that airport.

● (0925)

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Is the amount that was divulged the correct amount?

Ms. Sara Wiebe: I think the GTAA is appearing before you at a later date. I think that's a question that would be more specifically answered by them.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Sikand, go ahead.

Mr. Gagan Sikand (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Thank you.

I'm going to move quite quickly, as I'm trying to share some of my time with my colleague.

We often hear about reports from companies in England, and we hear about the model of Frankfurt. I am a proponent of learning best practices, but, as Mr. Wilson alluded to, Canada is pretty amazing. We have unique challenges, and I'd like to focus on those. What are the unique challenges that Canada faces when it comes to noise abatement?

Mr. Neil Wilson: Yes, we are amazing.

We have some aspects that are unique, but we can learn a lot from others. I talked about the study that's been requested. The group that we commissioned to do that, we commissioned them because they had done a study on the same issue around Gatwick, in the U.K. We know we can learn from best practices there.

We are unique in terms of the mix of the aircraft fleet that we have to service. My colleague spoke about some of the technology we're using. There are some limitations because we have an interesting fleet mix in Canada. Some of the fleet is equipped very well to take advantage of some of the technology that will allow for continuous descent, and some of it is not there yet. We have a mix of large and small. We have a very large general aviation community in Canada, general being private pilots whom we equally have to service and make sure that we take care of. What is unique about Canada is really the mix of the fleet and who wants to fly into our airports.

Mr. Gagan Sikand: Thank you. I'm just going to jump in here.

Mr. Cushnie, you mentioned new technologies that are being implemented at Pearson. What were you referring to?

Mr. Blake Cushnie: As part of all the work we've done in the six initiatives, which perhaps the GTAA will talk about, we're working on leveraging the accuracy of satellite navigation that's on board a lot of aircraft today to guide the airplanes to the runway, particularly at night, as far away from people as possible. What we see is that as we run on the final approach it becomes a different challenge, but we're trying to use this technology to the best of our advantage to be a leader in noise mitigation.

Mr. Gagan Sikand: Great. Thank you.

I represent a riding just outside Pearson. It's a seven-minute drive on a good day, and maybe an hour and a half in traffic. I've always been a proponent of having an airport north of the escarpment of Milton, Brampton and Mississauga. It just makes good sense to me. Could I get some comments from Transport Canada on the implications of this?

Ms. Sara Wiebe: Thank you for the question.

This is, again, another one of those areas of balance we always try to achieve. We have these large airports to which cargo operators and passengers want to fly. As I think Mr. Wilson referred to earlier, we are not in the business of telling aircraft or passengers or cargo where they must fly. Again, I think this is something the GTAA could speak to a bit more when they appear before you.

That said, in our view the GTAA has done a very good job in terms of developing a collaborative engagement with the smaller airports in the region, including Hamilton and Waterloo, to talk about the moment when they will reach saturation and there will be a

need to better manage those flows. But, again, given that our air sector in Canada is market-driven, it's impossible to force these movements in one direction or another.

Mr. Gagan Sikand: Thank you.

Just because I want to share my time, I need a yes or no for the next question.

Do you have the mandate to accommodate such growth?

Ms. Sara Wiebe: Again, the growth is driven by the market. What we try to do is develop policy frameworks that allow for that growth to occur.

Mr. Gagan Sikand: Okay, thank you.

I'll share my time with Mr. Wrzesnewskyj.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Thank you.

Mr. Szwalek, I'd like to have clarity on a response you made in regard to the night flights budget increase in 2013. You said that the request went to the minister, to Transport Canada. Could you just clarify?

• (0930)

Mr. Joseph Szwalek: What ended up happening was that the Greater Toronto Airports Authority had asked for a bump-up for the plans for long-term growth of the airport. It came to the minister. It was dealt with in the region for that—

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Okay, I need clarity and not a long answer.

Was it the minister or the regional authority—I guess your predecessor—or maybe you who signed off on that?

Mr. Joseph Szwalek: It was signed off on by the director general in the region, for the bump-up.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Was it authorized by the minister?

Mr. Joseph Szwalek: Yes.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: I would ask Transport Canada to provide documentation to the committee that will provide us with clarity on the decision-making around this.

I'd like to turn to Nav Canada. You talked about the environmental carbon footprint reduction. What does that mean in terms of fuel savings in jet fuel for the airlines?

Mr. Neil Wilson: In broad strokes, it means that whatever we can do to assist the airlines in reducing their fuel burn has a positive impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: The airlines are very happy about reducing their carbon footprint because it means significant reduction in their jet fuel costs.

Mr. Neil Wilson: They are, and we all are.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Excellent.

I have a couple of questions that go back to accountability. The deck provided to the committee says that Nav Canada and local airports “are committed to a public participation process that provides the community with factual and accurate information before and after a change is implemented.” Was the community consulted or informed before and after the night flights budget increase in 2013?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: The proponent of that change would be the GTAA, and they'd be better positioned to respond to that question.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: This talks about Nav Canada. So you don't know whether or not Nav Canada.... I'd like to have the information on whether or not—

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Wrzesnewskyj. I appreciate the questions, but the time is up.

Mr. Liepert, go ahead.

Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Thanks, Madam Chair.

I'm going to direct my questions to Nav Canada.

I represent a Calgary riding, and we are a good half hour's drive from the airport. In my first year as a member of Parliament, the complaints about aircraft noise in my constituency were zero, but then we had a new runway open in Calgary. Can you tell my constituents, for the record, why they now have aircraft noise when they're not even in the vicinity of the Calgary airport?

Mr. Neil Wilson: Do you want to address the specifics of Calgary?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: Sure. The biggest change that happened in Calgary, obviously, was subsequent to the addition of a new runway. It was important for the airport to be able to accommodate its growth. That resulted in airspace redesign.

Being 30 kilometres from the airport seems quite far, especially when you think of terrestrial transportation like taking a car. For an aircraft, it's not that far. When you look at how planes have to arrive at an airport, you see that they use a system of published routes. Just as a car has to use a road, we have roadways in the sky for planes arriving at the airport. They have to be situated in a way that allows us to manage all the traffic.

Over your area, Signal Hill, for instance, there is one of those routes. There are multiple routes to the airport, and air traffic controllers are managing aircraft from multiple directions. One of the reasons why it is where it is is that it's like hitting a target. The closer that route is to the runway, the easier it is for the controller to do their timings.

Mr. Ron Liepert: I think what my constituents don't understand is that if you go a mile to the west, you're over ranchland. Can you explain how Nav Canada comes up with its routes—I think that's the term you used—when it seems like you're redirecting a new route over an existing residential area when you have nothing but farmland a mile over?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: Sure, absolutely.

Of course, when you look to the west of the city, there's green or agricultural space and it seems obvious. It is very much about sequencing and managing traffic. We use Transport Canada's

approved design criteria, internationally used design criteria, so there are a lot of standards that are applied in terms of designing airspace, which is a key piece.

To the question of why it can't just be shifted further west, that goes to timing. What controllers do is turn the aircraft toward the runway for final approach. They have to get to a place where they can line up with the runway to land. If you put that down too far from the airport, it's hard for the air traffic controller to do the timing.

• (0935)

Mr. Ron Liepert: The reality of that approach is that it's parallel to the runway. It seems to me that the turn thing.... I know we're getting into the weeds here, but another mile over would....

One of the things I've been told is that some of the night noise comes from noisy Russian aircraft or whatever. What controls does Nav Canada have over foreign aircraft coming in and out of our airports with regard to complying with our domestic rules?

Mr. Neil Wilson: We're not a policeman. We facilitate the safety and efficiency of flight. With regard to aircraft that come in, we have an obligation to bring them in and to make sure that it's safe, that they're separated from other aircraft and that they come in.

We have some moral suasion with operators, but frankly, that only goes so far. We have no mandate, no legal ability, to restrict their flight.

Mr. Ron Liepert: Does anybody?

Ms. Sara Wiebe: I think this is where I'll turn to my colleague, Mr. Robinson.

Mr. Nicholas Robinson (Director General, Civil Aviation, Department of Transport): We do have requirements with regard to the safety and security of aircraft landing in our Canadian airports.

Mr. Ron Liepert: Yes, but does that take into account noise?

Mr. Nicholas Robinson: It does not take noise into account specifically.

Mr. Ron Liepert: It doesn't sound like there's any governance over foreign aircraft noise coming into our commercial airports.

Mr. Nicholas Robinson: Our primary responsibility is to make sure that there are safe and secure aircraft landing in our airports, and noise isn't a specific criterion.

Mr. Ron Liepert: I'll direct it to Nav Canada.

Who has control over helicopters?

Mr. Neil Wilson: If you mean their navigation and the management of traffic, we do.

Mr. Ron Liepert: I think I get as many complaints about helicopter noise, especially police helicopters, as I do about commercial aircraft. Does Nav Canada do helicopters?

Mr. Neil Wilson: There's a joint accountability for airspace management in the sense that the airspace is divided into different types of airspace with regard to what's allowable in different sectors of the air. If it's permitted, they're going to be flying there.

Mr. Ron Liepert: If someone wants to operate a helicopter at any time of the day in any part of the city, that operator doesn't need any kind of permission from anybody to do it.

Mr. Neil Wilson: No, they need clearances within certain airspace, but we give clearances to make sure that the flight is safe. They can only fly in certain airspace. For example, here in Ottawa, there's a restricted airspace above Parliament Hill. There are different airspace classifications that allow certain forms of flight with certain equipped aircraft in certain airspace.

Mr. Ron Liepert: Do you know if Calgary has any of those restrictions?

Mr. Neil Wilson: It absolutely would. As to what the specifics are in any particular location, I'd have to get back to you on that.

Mr. Ron Liepert: Would the police have to see to those requirements as well?

Mr. Neil Wilson: Anyone who flies does, yes.

The Chair: Mr. Graham, go ahead.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Bagg, I want to thank you. We've met in the past on this issue. I'm going to go into it right away.

One of the effects of aviation noise is that the airways have impacts on smaller operations. It's not only the airplanes coming into major airports. For example, St-Jérôme Airport, CSN3, where there's a dirt strip and a parachute jumping school, is constrained by airway T709 to the west; Mirabel to the south; airway T636 to the north; and St-Esprit, also a parachute school, CES2, to the east. It gives a very narrow box of operations.

The result of this is that the planes in the parachute school, which are very frequent and very noisy, fly over the same community 20, 30 or 40 times a day.

You mentioned that Dorval changed its approaches in 2012, and T709 is one of the victims of that approach. It now goes just west of CSN3. All these aircraft from the Parachutisme Adrénaline flying school are going over the same lake in Sainte-Anne-des-Lacs every day, all day long.

What can we do as a community, working with you, to allow those aircraft to cross the airway and do their climb-outs on the other side? Is there anything we can do together?

• (0940)

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: I'm definitely familiar with that airspace, and there are a lot of constraints around it. There are IFR operations, and how we design an airspace is certainly in a manner in which we want to keep different types of operations away from each other. That ensures safety.

With regard to next steps and what can be done, I think that we're kind of on that path, in the sense that it starts with dialogue. I know that we intend to meet with you and some of our regional operations managers to look at options and see what is a possibility. However, it

is challenging when you have a very dense airspace and a lot of operations to either side of that airspace.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Solutions are possible and we should be able to find them.

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: We should certainly discuss them and see what operations.... If there are opportunities, we should look at them.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: What prevents us? Right now there's an agreement between Nav Canada and the airport not to have their operations cross the airway. Why would that be?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: That goes back to the point that we try to keep different types of operations systematically separated. If you look at parachute operations, they're flying using something called VFR navigation, so the pilot is responsible for their manner of operation. As a pilot, they're not on a specific route.

Then, if you look at approaching Montreal, they're on IFR routes. They're on a set of very specific, published routes. It's always safer for us to keep those types of operations away from each other.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: On that topic, you talked about continuous descent. In the final few thousand feet, you're still at a three-degree approach angle. Nothing changes there. Is that correct?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: That's correct. On final approach, you're usually using an ILS—instrument landing system—and three degrees is the descent rate.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: In the continuous approach, nothing is really changing that close to the ground toward the end. It's an efficiency.

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: That's correct. It stays the same for final approach.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Is there any circumstance where we ask departing aircraft to use the best angle, rather than the best rate, to get out of the airspace faster?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: There are noise abatement departure procedures—NADP 1 and NADP 2. They target different areas. One targets the area close to the airport and tries to provide some abatement nearby. The other operation looks at providing some abatement a little further away. Either way, both of those procedures have aircraft climbing. At that phase of departure, planes tend to be the loudest—at full throttle.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I noticed that in CFS, the Canada Flight Supplement, there's a whole section on noise abatement procedures for Pearson. I didn't see it for most of the other airports, but there is one for Pearson. They refer to ICAO annex 16, volume 1, chapter 2 and chapter 3—types of aircraft. What does that mean?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: This goes to answering one of Mr. Liepert's questions as well, in terms of the noise standards around aircraft. ICAO sets standards in terms of noise at the source. It's regulation for noise at the source, and maybe Transport Canada can best speak to it. We accept those standards. As time goes by, chapters of aircraft—older aircraft—get retired and are not permitted in airspace. Over time, we are seeing aircraft getting significantly quieter.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Are there a lot of aircraft still in chapter 2 and chapter 3?

Mr. Jonathan Bagg: There are not a lot anymore. There are very few that are still.... Maybe there are some aircraft operators that need special equipment to operate to the north, like gravel kits for gravel runways, and some cargo operators that sometimes have older fleets.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I have a few quick seconds, and I want to give a few seconds to Vance. Oh, I can't do both.

I have one question, but I'll give it to Vance.

Thank you, guys.

The Chair: Mr. Badawey, go ahead.

Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.): Thank you for being here today.

I want to dig a bit deeper on the municipal official plans. Obviously, a lack of discipline to date has put us in the position we're at right now with respect to sprawl around airports.

That being said, official planned amendments and rezoning have allowed that growth to happen around you. My first question is, has the air sector appealed through those processes of official planned amendments and rezoning?

My second question is, do you have the ability to keep that discipline in place to actually appeal to, for example, the Ontario Municipal Board and get favourable decisions so that the sprawl doesn't happen and these complaints aren't as abundant as they are now? Moving forward, is the ability in place for you to do that, so that, although the problem exists, it won't continue to expand well into the future?

• (0945)

Ms. Sara Wiebe: I could answer your question generally from the perspective of Transport Canada and the airport authorities. Our regional offices are always available to meet and discuss this with municipal boards as they do their planning.

Mr. Vance Badawey: That's not my question.

My question is, has the air sector had the ability to appeal when a municipality actually allows growth to happen in an area it shouldn't happen in? I'm sure there are setbacks and things of that nature. Is there an opportunity for you to appeal to, for example, the Ontario Municipal Board to get a favourable decision based on provincial policies, municipal OPs and zoning, so that this problem doesn't grow in the future?

Ms. Sara Wiebe: I'm looking at my colleague from civil aviation. I think there are certainly requirements in our regulations with regard to the type of construction that can happen within a certain distance of the airport. I think that's in a very specific sense.

Nick, do you want to speak a bit about that?

Mr. Nicholas Robinson: Yes. There are specific parameters that can and cannot happen in and around aerodromes. These are set to ensure the safety and security of those aerodromes and the aircraft landing within them. That's where our regulation sets forth....

For a municipal appeal or appellate process, I wouldn't be certain whether there are any cases where a municipality has appealed against those specific regulations.

The Chair: That brings us to the conclusion of our first hour of witnesses.

Thank you very much for coming. We may have additional questions and may need to have you back before we finish this study.

We will suspend for a moment while our next panel comes to the table.

• (0945)

_____ (Pause) _____

• (0950)

The Chair: I call the meeting back to order.

From the Calgary Airport Authority, we have Mr. Sartor, president, and Carmelle Hunka, general counsel and senior director, risk and compliance. Thank you so much for being here.

From the Vancouver Airport Authority, we have, by video conference, Anne Murray, vice-president, airline business development and public affairs; and Mark Cheng, supervisor, noise and air quality.

From Aéroports de Montréal, we have Martin Massé and Anne Marcotte.

Welcome to all of you.

I would like to start with Aéroports de Montréal.

Mr. Massé, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Martin Massé (Vice-President, Public Affairs, Aéroports de Montréal): Good morning, Madam Chair and committee members.

Thank you for this opportunity to describe the actions we've taken on soundscape management, and to answer your questions as part of efforts to assess the impact of aircraft noise in the vicinity of Canada's major airports.

Under the terms of its lease with Transport Canada, Aéroports de Montréal, or ADM, is responsible for managing and operating Montréal-Trudeau airport and the Mirabel Aeronautics and Industrial Park.

Over the years, Montréal-Trudeau has grown into an aviation hub and the third-largest airport in Canada. The airport serves 151 destinations and is home to 37 air carriers. As a result, it's the most international Canadian airport, since 41% of its passengers travel outside Canada and the United States. Montréal-Trudeau plays a significant role in the economic development of the greater Montreal area, with almost 29,000 direct jobs and some 200 companies on its site.

Soundscape management is and always has been a priority for Aéroports de Montréal. ADM's role is to ensure balance between the airport's growth as a key player in the development of the greater Montreal area and continued harmonious coexistence with its community. This is an integral part of our mission, and we're making sustained efforts to maintain that balance.

We develop our plans by incorporating the principles of the ICAO's balanced approach. We also work with our partners to mitigate the impacts on neighbouring communities of the activities involved in operating an international airport. These partners are the following.

Transport Canada is the regulatory body tasked with ensuring enforcement of the acoustical usage criteria and noise-abatement measures. Transport Canada is empowered to sanction pilots and carriers that violate those rules.

NAV CANADA is responsible for providing air navigation services, which means air traffic control.

Lastly, the airlines are required to fly their aircraft according to the operating hours in effect and comply with the flight procedures at Montréal-Trudeau. They're also responsible for their aircraft fleets.

As the airport authority, Aéroports de Montréal is responsible for developing a soundscape management plan, setting up a soundscape management advisory committee, and handling complaints regarding noise.

To that end, Aéroports de Montréal put forward a preferential runway system for night-time operations. It ensures compliance with the operating hours in effect at Montréal-Trudeau and performs thorough follow-ups on requests for exemptions.

During the past 15 years, despite significant increases in passenger numbers, the total number of aircraft movements has remained relatively stable. It would therefore be wrong to conclude that Montréal-Trudeau's growth necessarily means an equivalent or proportional increase in the number of movements.

Aircraft today are larger, carry more passengers, and are less noisy. Technical and technological improvements have resulted in major noise reduction over the past decade.

To measure noise levels, Aéroports de Montréal has eight noise-measurement stations, including one mobile unit. ADM publishes the equivalent continuous sound levels, or the L_{eq} , recorded by the various noise-measurement stations located around the airport.

These stations are positioned strategically along the runway centrelines. The equipment is installed and calibrated by independent professionals. The system is linked to NAV CANADA radar data, which ensures that the noises recorded are correlated to aircraft movements.

Night flights are a significant concern for our soundscape management program. Managing flight schedules is a complex exercise for air carriers. On the one hand, the passenger community wants access to a variety of destinations at the best possible cost, and on the other hand, reducing the number of night flights is a crucial requirement.

In addition to studying all requests for exemptions, ADM enforces the flight schedule restrictions in effect at Montréal-Trudeau. ADM meets regularly with air carriers that have operated flights outside its normal operating hours to demand that they implement action plans to remedy these situations.

Montréal-Trudeau airport is open 24 hours a day to aircraft weighing less than 45,000 kilograms. These are mainly propeller-driven aircraft and CRJ-type planes.

Heavier aircraft are subject to restricted operating hours. Jet aircraft weighing more than 45,000 kilograms must land between 7 a.m. and 1 a.m. and take off between 7 a.m. and midnight. ADM may grant exemptions as stipulated in the Canada Air Pilot.

Lastly, in co-operation with its soundscape management advisory committee, Aéroports de Montréal is continuing to develop further noise-abatement measures to benefit the Montreal community. To that end, an important action plan will be presented shortly to the committee members.

- (0955)

The plan comprises 26 actions in seven categories. These categories are restrictions on night flights; the use of quieter aircraft; noise-abatement procedures at takeoff and landing; the publication of reports and indicators that are more meaningful to the communities; the update of the complaints management policy; land-use planning; and the involvement of neighbouring communities.

Our objective is to reduce the impact of the activities related to airport operations; to provide incentives for air carriers to use the quietest possible aircraft; and to reduce the number of flights taking place during restricted operating hours.

Residents of large cities are exposed to different types of noise from a variety of sources, such as road networks, vehicles, railways and air traffic. It's therefore important that these sources be properly identified.

In that context, regarding the land-use planning category, I want to reiterate that ADM endorses the recommendation by Montreal's public health directorate to enforce action 18.1 of the City of Montreal's urban plan. This plan calls for the establishment of a coordinating committee with the Ministère des Transports du Québec and the various organizations and firms involved in freight transportation, including CP and CN, the Montreal Port Authority and Aéroports de Montréal, in order to limit noise pollution in residential areas. On multiple occasions, we've invited the City of Montreal to establish this type of committee, while pledging our collaboration.

Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Massé.

Mr. Sartor, go ahead.

Mr. Bob Sartor (President, Calgary Airport Authority): Good morning, Madam Chair and members of the committee.

Thank you for inviting me here today to present the perspective of the Calgary Airport Authority.

First, I'd like to emphasize that YYC noise management is a priority, as the city now surrounds its major airport.

Airports around the world share similar challenges when it comes to air traffic noise. Airports are the hub for aircraft arrivals and departures, but those aircraft are owned and operated by the air carriers of the world, and the arrivals and departures are directed by Nav Canada. This is important context for our discussions today and for the study you are conducting.

Today I'd like to walk you through three important considerations from the perspective of the Calgary Airport Authority: our economic contributions to the city of Calgary; information about our operations, their impact on our local communities and our approach to noise management; and lastly, some real perspective on the noise calls received from our communities.

I hope to demonstrate how the authority continuously monitors performance to balance airport operations with community concerns, especially during periods of growth, as we are experiencing today.

First, I think it is critical for the committee to understand that the international airports represented here today are economic and employment powerhouses in our respective cities. In Calgary, YYC contributes approximately \$8 billion to the city's GDP annually, and 24,000 Calgarians are employed directly at the YYC campus. Nearly 50,000 jobs are created and maintained by our operations, and our airport has continued to grow through the tough economic times in Alberta in recent years, with 3.8% growth in passenger volumes in 2017 and a 7% growth rate to date in 2018. I also have to stress that the growth in demand by our cargo carriers is critical to economic viability and to the city of Calgary. We saw a 7.7% increase in cargo volumes last year alone.

The economic driver that airports are to our cities must be a major consideration as you undertake a review of the impact of aircraft noise. With the number of passengers increasing, we have actually seen a reduction in the total number of aircraft movements from 2016 to 2017 due to upgauging of aircraft. Our average daily movements have dropped from 636 to 615.

In 2017, over 95% of flights at YYC occurred between the hours of 6 a.m. and midnight. This means that less than 5%, or on average only 29 of a total of 615 flights per day, are arriving and departing at YYC between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m.

While airports share similar challenges, it is also important to understand that each airport must address its local concerns, and those concerns may be unique to that airport or to that community.

At YYC, we have an active noise monitoring program; in fact, we have 16 noise monitoring stations throughout the city. We have significant community engagement through consultative committee meetings and ad hoc community open houses. We conduct active investigation of noise concerns. We regularly report information regarding activities at the Calgary airport that impact noise, such as runway closures or construction that results in changed traffic patterns. Finally, we collaborate with Nav Canada and the major air carriers to discuss innovations and industry-leading practices in aircraft noise management at airports.

At the Calgary airport, we have the support of the city and the province in noise management through a commitment to the Calgary International Airport vicinity protection area regulation, a provincial regulation known as the AVPA. The AVPA regulates the development of urban areas in Calgary, as well as Edmonton, based on the noise contours for our city arising from air traffic. The development of the urban landscape of Calgary has largely followed the noise contours, keeping residential developments removed from the highest noise contours.

The third item I would like to discuss is the calls we receive at the airport regarding noise. At YYC, we have continued to receive calls regarding noise and the frequency of air traffic since the opening of our new runway in 2014. We received over 5,700 calls in 2017, a reduction of 11% from 2016. However, what is very important to understand is that a large volume of the calls come from a small group of people. At YYC, five callers made 72% of all the calls received in 2017. That is 4,100 calls from five individuals. Two individuals called over 2,700 times, which is 48% of the calls received. In a city of 1.2 million people, we received calls from less than 3% of the population, or about 400 households.

Restricting air traffic at one airport, as we've seen in Europe, does only one thing: It moves the air traffic to another airport. The demand will remain, and the demand will be serviced somehow.

• (1000)

We cannot remove the noise, but we have to take a balanced approach to managing noise, between the needs of the public—who demand more choices in travel destinations and who are increasingly ordering deliveries online—and the residents of the communities over which aircraft fly, as well as the significant role airports play in the economic development of our cities.

I'm happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

The Chair: We'll go on to Ms. Murray, vice-president of airline business development at Vancouver airport, by video conference.

Welcome to you and Mr. Cheng.

Ms. Anne Murray (Vice-President, Airline Business Development and Public Affairs, Vancouver Airport Authority): Good morning, Madam Chair, and thank you for the opportunity to speak to the committee today.

Large Canadian airports are managed by local, not-for-profit organizations. Under this unique model, we receive no government funding and are not beholden to shareholders. We reinvest all profits back into our airports.

At YVR, Vancouver International Airport, this model is underpinned by our commitment to our neighbouring communities. This includes managing airport noise to balance the need for safe, convenient 24-hour air travel with enjoyable urban living.

It's our mandate to provide economic and social benefits to the people of British Columbia and operate the airport in the best interest of the region, while keeping safety as our first priority.

YVR is a key economic generator for the region. We facilitate \$16.5 billion in total economic output and \$8.5 billion in total GDP. Last year, we welcomed more than 24 million passengers. We are also home to 24,000 jobs at the airport.

Vancouver Airport Authority's ground lease with the federal government requires us to manage noise associated with airport operations within 10 nautical miles of the airport. We do so through a comprehensive noise management program, which has a number of core elements: a five-year noise management plan, stakeholder engagement, maintaining noise abatement procedures, noise monitoring and flight tracking, and providing information to answer community questions and concerns.

We're currently updating the five-year noise management plan, and that will go to Transport Canada by year-end. To do so, we engaged residents and stakeholders for their input to customize initiatives for our region. While the core elements are common, each solution must cater to individual airports' unique and local issues and conditions.

As you realize, aircraft noise can be quite technical, but really there are three main ways of addressing it: the aircraft itself; when, where and how the aircraft flies; and the residents, where they live and the environment in which they live.

Looking at the aircraft itself is about reducing noise at the source. Aircraft noise and emissions certification standards are set by ICAO, and the aircraft must meet these standards to operate in Canada.

Over the years, the airlines have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in upgrading their fleets. These aircraft are cleaner and quieter, producing less noise and less emissions.

Secondly, we look at the operating procedures and noise control procedures. This is the part that relates to where and how the airplanes fly. Airports have noise abatement procedures that include night restrictions and preferential runway use. Nav Canada manages the airspace and has procedures to minimize flights over populated areas. The airlines train their crews to fly community-friendly.

The third area we can focus on is the receiver, the person, where they live and what they expect. We work with local cities to manage, through land use planning, the number of people living in high-noise areas. YVR supports the Transport Canada guidelines that discourage non-compatible land use in areas close to airports.

How are we doing? In 1998, we had 369,000 aircraft landings and takeoffs and welcomed 15.5 million passengers. Last year, we had 39,000 fewer aircraft landings and takeoffs and almost 9 million more passengers. To put that in perspective, that's 50% more passengers and 10% less aircraft movement compared to 20 years ago, and all of those operations are with quieter aircraft.

As for noise complaints, in 2017 we received 1,293 noise concerns from 253 people. Four individuals were responsible for 64% of our complaints, two of whom live more than 23 kilometres from the airport. For comparison, the greater Vancouver region has about 2.8 million people.

With respect to night operations, 3% of our total annual runway movements occur between midnight and 6 a.m., an average of 27 operations per night in 2017. These flights are a mix of passenger and courier services. To manage the noise from the night operations, we have procedures and restrictions in place, including an approval process for jet aircraft departures, the closure of our north runway between specified hours, and preferential runway use to keep aircraft landings and takeoffs over the water, where possible.

Our survey results show that we have the community support to grow our air services so long as we continue to manage aircraft noise. We have been successful in doing so within the strong federal framework in place and the flexibility to apply local solutions.

● (1005)

Thank you for the opportunity to share why we are successful today.

We would be happy to answer any questions.

The Chair: Mr. Liepert, you have five minutes, please.

Mr. Ron Liepert: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Massé, we've had various conflicting testimony where it's been suggested that a lot of the cargo traffic could be moved to other airports. The example that's most often given is Hamilton instead of Pearson in Toronto.

We also, however, had testimony from the Mississauga chamber of commerce or a business group that suggested that the Montreal situation with Trudeau and Mirabel is a classic example of why you can't make that happen. The cargo needs to come into the busy airport.

Can you tell us whether it has been successful or not? Who is right in this debate?

● (1010)

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Massé: Thank you for your question.

I don't think that I can determine who's right in the debate. One thing is certain, at Aéroports de Montréal, most of the transportation of large cargo is handled at Mirabel airport, and the transportation of small cargo is handled at Montréal-Trudeau.

Is this the right decision? As fate would have it, we have two airports to manage. Would cargo companies like to be closer to downtown? This is likely the case, but for management reasons, we prefer to keep the transportation of large volumes of cargo at Mirabel.

You know that, now, in the direct passenger service business model, the option of carrying cargo in the aircraft hold is an integral part of the business case. This obviously goes through Montréal-Trudeau.

[English]

Mr. Ron Liepert: Okay.

Mr. Sartor, as you are well aware, I represent a part of Calgary that is a long way from the airport, yet we are now getting complaints about aircraft noise, planes that are 3,000 feet off the ground.

I asked Nav Canada this question, so I'll ask you folks as well. Can you explain to my constituents why this is happening today? Are there alternatives? As I said to Nav Canada, it seems to me that this parallel approach they're now using over Sarcee Trail could just as easily be another mile or two to the west, where there's nothing but cattle to disturb, but that causes another problem, I guess.

Could you explain to me why that's not an option, and why my constituents are facing noise half an hour away from the airport?

Mr. Bob Sartor: Obviously, I will be speaking to your constituents in a couple of weeks at a consultative committee meeting.

We have absolutely no say on where Nav Canada puts the planes.

At that distance, 3,000 feet is highly unlikely. They're well over 3,000 feet when they come over Inglewood sometimes. I think the altitude might be a little higher.

Having said that, noise still disturbs people, and people have different sensitivities to noise. I think we see that in the statistics we collect from Calgarians. Some feel they need to complain three times a day, and some perhaps once a year if something has been amiss.

Mr. Ron Liepert: I'm going to stop you, because I have only a minute left.

You are the operator of the airport relative to what's coming and going out of the airport. I have been told that some of these noisy aircraft at night are foreign aircraft, Russian or whatever, and it seems to me that the previous panel didn't seem to give any indication that there's any ability to control that situation, if that's correct.

Mr. Bob Sartor: We have significant cargo operations at Calgary airport. Some of the major freighter carriers have new jets that are quieter, but many of the cargo planes are previous-generation jets. They will be older 767s, some 777s, which are noisier than, say, the 787. Effectively, you have passenger jets and when that generation of jets is done, some of those jets are reconditioned and repurposed as cargo, so they are louder planes.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Iacono, go ahead.

[Translation]

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I thank the witnesses for being here this morning. My first question is for Mr. Massé from ADM.

Mr. Massé, you spoke about an advisory committee. What is its purpose?

Mr. Martin Massé: The airport soundscape advisory committee meets four times a year. It is made up of municipal and borough councillors, representatives from NAV CANADA and Transport Canada, and our own public affairs, operations, and sustainable development managers. The air carriers also sit on this committee, and that is very important. After all, they are the ones who put the planes in the air.

This committee allows us to pool all of our statistics and discuss specific issues that affect certain regions. It will also soon allow us to test—at our next meeting—certain ideas in connection with our airport soundscape management action plan. Through this we are in a better position to align our data with the wishes expressed by the members of the committee regarding various sectors of activity.

•(1015)

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Are the results of that committee's work shared with Transport Canada?

Mr. Martin Massé: Transport Canada sits on the committee.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Perfect.

The word “advisory” makes me think that this committee could just be window-dressing. Why do you not make it permanent? You say it only meets four times a year. Why don't you hold more meetings? Noise is constant, not occasional. The population concerned might think that meeting four times a year is not very serious. What do you think of that?

Mr. Martin Massé: First, the committee meets four times a year at a minimum. Secondly, I don't think the frequency of meetings should be taken as an indication of how serious the committee is or is not. We are very pleased to be here. I don't think you will call us again next week, but that does not cast doubt on the seriousness of your work.

The existence of the committee is assured since it has existed since 1992. All of the members keep in touch, and the committee publishes a summary of its work on the Internet. I think that if we were to meet more frequently, we would not be able to test the ideas discussed by the committee.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: I have a question for you. Based on the meetings you have held over all of those years, what changes have you made that had some positive noise-related impact on the population?

Mr. Martin Massé: As I said earlier, we will be able to submit an action plan to the committee by its next meeting. This plan will allow us to manage airport soundscapes even better, and to establish a more direct link with stakeholders and answer questions. Indeed, there are often a lot of urban myths surrounding the management of airport soundscapes. This plan will allow us to be present and accessible and to answer all of the questions, particularly those of elected representatives, who speak out loudly and clearly. This will also allow us to remind everyone that we would like to see the City of Montreal—the greater Montreal area—set up a committee on urban noise, because after all, airplanes are not the only thing that make noise in large cities.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Thank you.

In its document entitled “Soundscape Statistics—Year 2017”, ADM lists 543 noise-related complaints. We just learned that in Calgary there were over 5,000 complaints. Could you describe the ADM complaint handling process?

Ms. Anne Marcotte (Director, Public Relations, Aéroports de Montréal): With your permission, I will answer the question.

Currently, for each person who submits a complaint, we register one complaint per 24-hour period. That is why, in 2017, we received 543 complaints from 277 persons. In the course of our current review of the airport soundscape management plan, we will change that methodology.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Perfect.

Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Aubin, you have the floor.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to make a comment before I begin my questions. During the presentations by the witnesses who appeared via videoconference, the sound was so bad that it was practically impossible for the interpreters to do their work. When the committee receives guests via videoconference, I wonder whether it would not be worthwhile to do a sound test before the meeting begins to ensure that the communication will be good. That is the end of my comment, and I will leave that with you, Madam Chair.

My questions are for the Aéroports de Montréal, because that is the area I know best. However, I invite the other witnesses to intervene without hesitation if some of the issues speak to them as well.

Some of the points in your presentation were of particular interest to me, such as your statement that you co-operate with many organizations, including Transport Canada. That department is the regulatory body in charge of enforcing acoustic criteria. I have asked about the nature of those acoustic criteria about twelve times. Acoustics are a clear concept for musicians like myself; they are measured in decibels, frequencies, reverberation and even in soundproofing terms. Every time I asked the question, however, no one was able to provide me with any clear acoustic criteria, nor with any scientific numerical standard. Would you, Mr. Massé, be in a position to clarify these acoustic criteria you are attempting to have respected?

• (1020)

Mr. Martin Massé: Earlier, you spoke of the average noise level used by the WHO.

Mr. Robert Aubin: That is a 55-decibel level, is it not?

Mr. Martin Massé: Yes.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Thank you.

Mr. Martin Massé: But that does not take noise peaks into account.

Mr. Robert Aubin: It's an average, isn't it?

Mr. Martin Massé: Yes, obviously, it is an average. When noise peaks, things are different.

Mr. Robert Aubin: If our average is 80, we have to conclude that we aren't in the right range.

Mr. Martin Massé: Quite so.

ADM uses two noise indicators: the acoustic level, the energy equivalent sound level or L_{eq} , and the noise exposure forecast, NEF, which is basically the digital footprint.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Allow me a side note: are these data regarding the NEF accessible in real time on Transport Canada's website, or does the citizens' committee only have access to those statistics four times a year when the committee meets?

Mr. Martin Massé: Your question is relevant. No, that data is not available in real time, since the NEF value is determined periodically, on an annual basis I believe. That figure is provided in ADM's annual report and on its website.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Fine.

With regard to the number of complaints, I see that close to one quarter concern night flights. Among the administrative or general choices made by a business, how can we explain that an airport like the Frankfurt airport—which is far from small—chooses simply to prohibit night flights, whereas this seems completely impossible for Montreal airports or others in Canada?

Mr. Martin Massé: This choice results from the balance that must be achieved between what the clientele asks for regarding flights, and what the airline companies can do. I don't know whether anyone has ever spoken to you about double rotation. That concept allows an airline company to use an aircraft to do the same route twice, in four segments, and thus serve a particular destination at a reasonable price, particularly sun destinations. This means that the aircraft has to fly as long as possible given the time it takes to prepare these double rotations in the winter, which probably includes two de-icing. So the point is to balance what the population is asking for, what the passenger is asking for, what the airline companies want, and, of course, what our weather permits, generally speaking.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Thank you for that clarification. We nevertheless note that the number of one-time exceptions continues to increase. Does ADM have a strategy to reduce that number in the context of the large increase—I wouldn't say exponential, but it is really considerable—in air traffic? Is it plausible to think that one-time exemption requests will increase at the same rate as air traffic?

Mr. Martin Massé: Several points need to be looked at.

First, an increase in the number of passengers does not necessarily lead to a proportional increase in the number of flights.

Secondly, air fleets are being renewed, as my colleague from Calgary, I believe, mentioned. Certain aircraft like Boeing 767s are being taken out of circulation and replaced with new-generation planes. Our studies show that the slight increase in the number of aircraft movements due to the renewal of those fleets over the coming years will not mean an increase in noise levels.

Mr. Robert Aubin: In the same vein...

[*English*]

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Aubin, you're overtime.

We now go to Mr. Hardie.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I have a number of questions, so I'll ask for relatively short answers. If you want to expand on any of them, please feel free to submit a note to us, so it can go into the record.

We'll head out west, first and foremost.

Good morning, Ms. Murray and Mr. Cheng.

People in every community—including some in our own—that receives news that Amazon is going to open up a great big new facility jump up and down, rub their hands together and say, oh boy. Then the people at the airport say, okay, here it comes, more aircraft with more cargo, etc.

I'm wondering if, in the context of metro Vancouver, YVR has any kind of strategic collaboration with Abbotsford to see if it's possible to manage not only the noise issue of additional cargo flights, but also time shifting to make sure that they're arriving at less sensitive times, and perhaps to consider the ground transportation that inevitably comes after a cargo plane lands.

I have a general question. Do you work with Abbotsford to look at the larger strategic issues in our region? Could you speak to growth as well?

• (1025)

Ms. Anne Murray: Sure.

We work quite closely with all the airports in the region. There are a number of different airports. We just updated our long-term master plan, which looks out 20 years and looks at how we can manage airspace and the airports.

In terms of cargo and packages, we find that at Vancouver airport the majority of cargo comes in the belly of passenger aircraft. We see that growing. We actually have only one cargo freighter aircraft.

The packages are on relatively small aircraft and they're going in and out. We do have good connections from a ground transportation facility working with the local regional transit.

Mr. Ken Hardie: It may be worthwhile keeping an eye on that, because you're definitely going to see a lot more bigger packages, especially with Amazon. Lord knows what they're ordering from that company these days.

We heard from a previous panel that sometimes an airport will prepare noise exposure forecasts to give the community a heads-up as to what may be coming with changes.

First, does YVR also provide this kind of service to the community? Do you ever get requests for this from a community that's looking to, for instance, build more housing in a given area on a flight path?

Do you ever hear of developments and proactively offer this kind of information so that the community is aware before things are done that there are some considerations here, particularly with respect to noise?

Ms. Anne Murray: Yes, we prepare noise exposure forecast contours, and we look out 20-plus years. We provide those to the local municipalities. We have worked with the City of Richmond and encouraged them to require noise insulation information in advance to potential purchasers, and really look to reduce the effect of noise on people choosing to live near airports. It's to give them information so they can make choices about where they want to live.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Having said all that, do you ever hear of a new development somewhere and go, boy, here comes trouble?

Ms. Anne Murray: Land use planning decisions are the purview of local municipalities. I have had conversations with some of our local municipalities and said that they really need to consider whether it's wise and advisable to have those individuals moving into new residential accommodation near airports.

It is Transport Canada that creates the guidelines. It's municipalities that make those choices. We do work with them, but it is a challenge sometimes.

Mr. Ken Hardie: I'm going to get you to stick your neck way out, here.

Would you advocate for the real estate industry to factor in the proximity of developments or home sales to facilities like yours, to ensure that the buyers understand what they're buying into?

Ms. Anne Murray: We have actually done that. We've implemented that type of program with the City of Richmond, so that when they approve new developments in high-noise areas, they oblige the developer to include noise information, both in the sales venue and on restrictions on the property. There's a covenant on the land, so that every buyer is aware of the aircraft noise there.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Mr. Sartor—

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Hardie, but your time is up.

Mr. Graham, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Massé and Ms. Marcotte, I have several questions for you about Dorval and Mirabel airports, as well as those that are located further north.

You heard the questions I put to the NAV CANADA witnesses about the Saint-Jérôme airport. There is a skydiving school at that airport that generates a lot of noise. School activities are restricted because of aircraft approaching Dorval and Mirabel Airports.

What is the current air traffic at Mirabel Airport?

• (1030)

Ms. Anne Marcotte: There are approximately 20,000 flights.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: And what kind of flights are they, generally?

Mr. Martin Massé: Merchandise transport, some passenger transport, and a piloting school.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: In the Mirabel Airport operational zone, is there too much traffic for skydiving activities?

Mr. Martin Massé: I cannot answer your question, but I can provide an answer later.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Thank you. We would appreciate that.

The Dorval Airport should continue to grow, because it has not reached full capacity. Even though the terminal was removed from the Mirabel Airport, does it still have a role to play in passenger transport in the Montreal region?

Mr. Martin Massé: The Mirabel Airport certainly has a role to play. It has in fact never been as large an economic development player as it is today. It employs 5,000 people. These are well-paid jobs, in technical fields or engineering. Obviously, Airbus offers an opportunity for both aviation and industrial growth at Mirabel.

If the point of your question is to see whether that airport could begin to receive passenger flights again, I would say that that does not feature at all in the plans of ADM.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: The Dorval Airport will continue to grow, and there will still be air traffic over neighbouring towns rather than in suburbs or agricultural areas. Is that correct?

Mr. Martin Massé: That airport will without a doubt continue to grow. As for Mirabel, it is much more populous than it was 25 or 30 years ago.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: That is also true.

Further north in my riding, at La Macaza, we have the Mont-Tremblant International Airport. That airport is not part of the airports you manage; could it play a role in air traffic management?

Mr. Martin Massé: I cannot answer you regarding the airport at La Macaza. I can say, however, that an airport management system has to be designed around a large city. You can see this clearly in Toronto, where you have the Pearson, Billy Bishop, Hamilton and other airports. If our Toronto colleagues were here, they would certainly say that they are an occasional relief valve, but I don't want to speak for them.

I believe the future lies in the vision of an airport management system around cities.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Would it be fair to say that the Mirabel Airport no longer receives passenger flights in large part because of the absence of rail transport?

Mr. Martin Massé: That is a factor.

We must also remember that for technological reasons, there was a time when flights from Europe could not go any further than Mirabel on the North American continent. That was one of the reasons why Atlanta became the biggest airport. Several years ago, airplanes began to have the technical capacity to make it to Toronto and then even further.

Of course, access is a factor as well. Highway 13 was never completed and there was no rapid public transit link. But there were also technological reasons. There was also the fact that the choice was made to build an airport without boarding platforms and passenger transfer modules. That may have been a false good idea, which was almost never repeated elsewhere.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Are you talking about the buses that went to the airport?

Mr. Martin Massé: Yes. Most of them now serve Dorval.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I did take one, in fact, when I was young. It was quite interesting.

Mr. Martin Massé: Nostalgia is a big seller.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I am going to continue to talk about the link between rail transport and air transport.

It is easier to take the train from Toronto to Dorval than from Montreal to Dorval. Is that a reasonable state of affairs?

Mr. Martin Massé: What do you mean by "easier"?

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: It is not possible to take a VIA Rail train in Montreal to go to the Dorval Airport. During the entire weekend there are only seven commuter train departures. This is one of the airports in the world that is practically impossible to reach by train. Are you going to solve that problem?

Mr. Martin Massé: That is an excellent question, sir. That is why we are so pleased about the fact that as early as 2023, an REM west branch line will reach the airport.

Regarding the Montreal Airport, we think that should go even further and that the REM should extend to the Via Rail station. It is located less than a kilometre away from the tiered parking which will be rebuilt, so close to the new REM station.

This will allow people, including those in the regions, to take the train to go to the airport. Trois-Rivières or Drummondville residents could easily go to the VIA Rail station in Dorval, then take a Réseau express métropolitain car for approximately one stop, and be warm and cozy in the airport.

• (1035)

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Jeneroux, go ahead.

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you all for being here today. Thank you for coming from Calgary and Montreal. For you in Vancouver, even though you're not here, it's great to see you tonight.

I want to start with you, Mr. Sartor. In Edmonton, we have a fantastic airport, too. However, we're also in the process of looking at building that third runway, eventually. Depending on whom you talk to, it seems to be around the corner, but it's not quite at the stage that you guys are at. However, we're in a different situation. I don't think I've received a single complaint in my riding—and it goes right up to the edge of the city limits—because there's quite a distance, still, from the airport.

In terms of lessons learned—maybe it's consultation with the community—do you have some advice, perhaps, that you could pass on to me when we head down that path, which I hope is around the corner?

Mr. Bob Sartor: Certainly. The Calgary airport has been in its existing location since 1937. The city was but a distant cluster of homes and businesses quite far away. What happened is that the city grew around the airport over a period of time. One thing that has been extremely helpful in Alberta—and it's a unique Alberta phenomenon—is the airport vicinity protection area. That was put in place in 1972, I think. Effectively, it looked at those noise exposure forecasts, based on aircraft at the time, in 1972, and said that any kind of residential development of any significance—schools, places of worship, those kinds of things—should not be built here.

So yes, the city is built around it, but unfortunately, even with those noise exposure forecasts.... The noise exposure forecasts are very beneficial, because they forced the municipality, if it wishes to build there, to work collaboratively with the airport. Unless the municipality and the airport agree, the legislation, which is provincial, will override. That's a real plus.

Having said that, we have not moved those noise exposure forecasts since 1972. The reality is that, while aircraft have gotten quieter, we've had much densification around the airport. The challenge is, even with great legislation.... The important thing, realistically, is a set of acoustical standards that will make sense for homes that are built on flight paths. That's something we're working on with the municipality right now. I don't think we'd have the opportunity to do that if we didn't have what we call the vehicle or the tool of the airport vicinity protection area.

Mr. Matt Jeneroux: That's unique to Alberta. Has no other jurisdiction, provincially, considered something like this since 1972? That's not a question for you, but I do notice that some of the Nav Canada folks are still around here. Perhaps they could answer after the committee.

You talked about the cargo growth that you're experiencing. Cargo growth is a revenue tool. Is it something that airports out there are actively trying to take from each other? Is it growing? Do you want it from your international partners? How, exactly, does that come about? Do you have insight on some of the conversations that must happen to make this a reality?

Mr. Bob Sartor: Again, in Calgary we have the unique situation that we are subject to the Regional Airports Authorities Act of Alberta. It's not just federal; we have provincial regulation, and one of those mandates is to drive economic activity, employment and GDP, not only on the airport campus but within the community we service.

We do go after cargo. It's more like the cargo is coming after us, because we happen to be ideally situated, with easy access to the Trans-Canada Highway. We are the largest consumer of that cargo product, so we will get flights coming in, in what we call our integration alley—the area where all the integrators are—and moving out toward Saskatchewan, west into the interior of B.C. and north into Edmonton.

• (1040)

Mr. Matt Jeneroux: Is there a partnership between you and Edmonton? I know there are a bunch of regional airports, but Edmonton is attracting a fair bit of cargo, particularly from China. I'm curious whether there is that level of partnership between the two of you.

Mr. Bob Sartor: I wouldn't call it a partnership, but Tom Ruth and I are friends and we talk constantly.

In fact, you'd find that most airport CEOs collaborate quite well.

Mr. Matt Jeneroux: Right. I imagine, though, that there is some competition. We often hear of flights being scooped by Calgary. We'd love the direct flights in Edmonton.

Mr. Bob Sartor: We are in a unique position because we're a city of 1.2 million people and this year we will move 17.4 million people. Next year, we'll move another million or a million and one more. So we're a heavily connecting airport. Edmonton is less of a connecting airport and more of a feeder airport. It has its own international destinations, for sure, but connections are roughly 38% of our total business today, which makes us the busiest connecting airport in Canada.

Mr. Matt Jeneroux: But you don't have the Edmonton Oilers.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Sikand, you have one minute if you have a short question.

Mr. Gagan Sikand: My question is for Mr. Massé.

I represent a riding in Mississauga, in the GTA. I'll tell you about my observations, but my actual question will be, what can we learn from Mirabel?

What I've observed is that Billy Bishop can't really reach its full potential because residents don't want the noise there. We're a bit disconnected. I like Pearson. I go through it and it's going to grow. I don't know if the infrastructure in the cities will be able to handle that unless we can get some rail in there and people moving through passenger means.

Pickering is a bit far, and Hamilton is a bit far. A solution, it seems to me, would be an airport north of the escarpment. It would be close to Hamilton and Pearson and would open up Guelph and Kitchener.

What can we learn from the Mirabel experience, though?

Mr. Martin Massé: Personally, it would be quite preposterous on my side to interfere in this debate, but as for Mirabel, as I mentioned previously to your colleague, the fact of the matter is that we never had the commuting systems. Airplanes now can go over Mirabel. We also felt that Montreal lost its position as a hub up until 2013-14, when Air Canada decided to go back to Montreal as a hub.

All in all, for the community it made no sense to have two disconnected airports, without the commuting aspect—still having air connection but without the proper system. It made no sense.

Now that we know we'll have a commuting system, the REM, it will provide safe, sound and frequent commuting for the whole region, not just from downtown.

[*Translation*]

I think circumstances and the contributions of all the players have meant that concentration around Dorval is the only way for that airport to play the role of economic driver for greater Montreal.

[*English*]

The Chair: Unfortunately, we have run out of time.

I've been given notice by Mr. Hardie and then a question from Mr. Aubin, but I'll go to Mr. Hardie if the witnesses will just bear with us for a moment or two.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to raise something that we dealt with and set aside some time ago. I'd like to move that the committee now resume consideration of the motion, which read as follows:

The Committee shall commit to not more than 4 meetings to study bus passenger safety, hearing from, in order but not limited to, emergency room physicians and coroners, the Transportation Safety Board, the US National Highway Transportation Safety Authority, transportation safety advocates and stakeholders, and finally from bus manufacturers, and that the Chair shall be empowered to coordinate the necessary witnesses, resources and scheduling to complete this task.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Hardie.

This is a dilatory motion, which is not up for discussion or debate.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1045)

Mr. Churence Rogers (Bonavista—Burin—Trinity, Lib.): Madam Chair, I wonder if I could introduce a friendly amendment.

The Chair: Can you just hold off on that for a moment? I'd like to make a suggestion at this point, given our time. We have time on Thursday under committee business. Could we deal with the contents of the motion and the debate on Thursday?

Is the committee okay with that?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: At that time, on Thursday, we can have any amendments the committee might want to make, if that's all right with everyone.

Mr. Aubin, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin: This leads me to the question I wanted to ask. I'd like to know if the committee's next hearing on Thursday will be public. I would have also liked to table a motion regarding the Greyhound developments, and the notice period will have expired.

If we don't get good news this week, we can probably ask the minister to come and present his solutions. However, I did not want to table that motion before the deadline, given that the solutions may already be in the works.

Will our Thursday committee meeting be public?

[*English*]

The Chair: Right now, we're scheduled to do consideration of the draft recommendations for our trade corridor study. It's an in camera session for Thursday. You certainly can move to go in public at any time during that meeting.

You'll have a chance to review that a bit longer, and any amendments that you might want to present on Thursday.

Thank you very much to all of our witnesses. We appreciate it.

The meeting is adjourned.

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