

Airport Management Council of Ontario

Mar/Apr 2021

Volume 10, Issue 2

The Airport Environment and You Representing Ontario's Airports

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The Airport Environment and You

From the Desk of the Executive Director

Up Next at AMCO

Spring has sprung and unfortunately with it has come a new lockdown in the province of Ontario, and indeed much of Canada. Unfortunately this means that AMCO will be cancelling our Spring Airfield Workshop once again this year in hopes to see all our members in person this fall in Sault Ste. Marie for the 35th Annual Convention and Trade Show.

Not to worry though! AMCO will still be hosting online speaker series events each month to get our members up to date on the latest news in aviation. This is with thanks to our Speaker Series Sponsor, ADB Safegate, and to all our generous speakers for lending us their time and sharing their knowledge. Members can find all our previous sessions on the AMCO website!

We are moving forward with AMCO Committees. These Committees will include; Transport Canada Civil Aviation, Transport Canada Operations, Transport Canada Security, Nav Canada Relations, Provincial Relations, Labour and Workplace Safety, and the Small Airport and Aerodrome Committee. If you are interested in taking part please reach out to the AMCO offices for more information. Committees are designed to hear what matters to our members most to ensure we are able to best educate and advocate on your behalf so please make your voice heard and share your thoughts and knowledge with the AMCO Board!

As always, if you would like to connect with your fellow members on any topic, including procurement of parts, selling used equipment, or just general questions, the Airport is Asking Program is always available to our airport members. We are grateful to our Airport is Asking Sponsor, Precise ParkLink!

Please remember to stay safe and vigilant in our fight against the COVID-19 virus! The stronger we remain in our resolve and commitment to keeping our communities safe the sooner we can all travel and fly again!

Best Regards,

Aaron Lougheed

Executive Director, AMCO

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Bill's Passage Could Save Sault Airport Control Tower

Original Article by Darren Taylor, Northern Ontario Business, Mar. 24, 2021 For full article click here



Windsor West MP Brian Masse, a New Democrat, introduced a private member's bill on Tuesday, which would provide the federal transport minister with the power to remove airports from NAV Canada studies to reduce or eliminate air traffic control services.

NAV Canada, which owns and operates Canada's civil air navigation system, announced, in Nov. 2020, the launch of a study considering the removal of control towers at seven airports across Canada, including the control tower at the Sault Ste. Marie Airport.

"This legislative change will allow the transport minister to take practical and decisive action to remove... airports from the NAV Canada study," Masse stated in a news release. "When NAV Canada announced this study, the transport minister stated he could not act to protect airports because of the law. With this legal change he will be able to save not only the airport in Windsor but airports across the country," Masse wrote.

. . .

"A strong system of airports is essential to supporting recovery from COVID-19 for our travel and tourism sector, as well as our trade-based regional and national economies," Terry Bos stated in a news release issued Feb. 9. "Canada's airports and our air sector partners want to play a leading role in this recovery but may not be able to effectively do so without intervention by government."

"The airport will stay open regardless of what NAV Canada's decision is. We've made a really strong case to keep the control tower. Sault College has major expansion plans that more than justify the need for a tower here. Although we have to go through the process, we think we've provided input that justifies maintaining the tower," Bos told *SooToday* in February.





County's Investment in Airport Fuels Future Economic Growth

Original Article by Brian Lockhart, New Tecumseth Times, Feb. 19, 2021 For full article click here

Since January 2020, *Simcoe* County has worked with area partners to advance a critical runway expansion approval and funding process. Phase one of this project includes widening the runway from 100 feet to 150 feet. The project also included the installation of new infrastructure to support a lighting system and drainage requirements. Phase two of the project will include the installation of a new high-intensity LED system planned for the spring of 2021, and a proposal to lengthen the runway from 6,001 feet to 7000 feet. The full runway expansion project is estimated to cost \$6.1 million with the County's investment estimated at \$3.5 million. This initiative has received a grant of \$1.5 million through the Provincial Southwestern Ontario Development Fund, and \$345,000 from the City of Barrie. When completed, the longer runway will enable the LSRA to receive larger aircraft.

Since the beginning of 2020, significant infrastructure and operation investments at the airport include the purchase of a de-icing truck for winter operation, modernization of the airport's Automatic Weather Observation System, and installation of closed circuit security cameras. The LSRA is one of the top five busiest airports in Canada without a control tower, and is located on 595 acres. The airport is planning to increase passenger flights for domestic and international travel.

AMCO would like to congratulate Dan Pilon on his appointment as CEO of the Niagara District Airport!



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Airport Working Group Membership Being Set

Original Article by Tyler Kula, The Observer, Feb. 17, 2021 For full article click here



Labour, business, tourism, agriculture and industry representatives, along with local citizens at large, are expected to have a seat at the table of

a working group tackling what to do with the Sarnia Chris Hadfield Airport.

Two spots for citizens are available on the seven voting-member committee. The deadline for applications at sarnia.civicweb.net/Portal/BoardApplication is Feb. 24 at noon. Airport operator Scottsdale Aviation will also be at the table to offer advice and input, but won't have a vote because of potential conflicts of interest.

The group – membership is to be selected by Sarnia city council March 1 – is being tasked with reviewing operations at other airports and consulting with industry professionals to make recommendations on potential future use for the 1950s-built city asset that's seen a sharp drop in revenue. Last year, consultants recommended the city sell the airport.

The Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce has called for the airport to be preserved, arguing it's important for attracting future investment and development amid population and business changes spurred by COVID-19.

"We're very excited as to the direction it's going in," chamber CEO Allan Calvert said. "With all due respect, it's not simply a task force of volunteers, but it's more of a formulated process in obtaining the best qualified people to provide the analysis of where we're at and where we're going (with the airport)."

Huronia Airport Hopes Big Plans Take Off This Year

Original Article by Mehreen Shahid, Orillia Matters, Feb. 17, 2021 For full article click here

Airport manager and board chair say Huronia Airport has been flying high in spite of COVID-19. "We had two major additions to the airport this year," said Adam Ridgen, Airport Manager. "First one was 10 partially serviced building lots for leasing. They're suitable for 50x50 hangars. We also have a new high-volume, above-ground fuel system. It replaces our old system that had reached the end of its life."

In addition to this, board chair Don Cooper said the airport is home to a new aviation school. "Xstream Aviation is making Huronia Airport their home," he said. "They're conducting (ultralight) flight lessons out of here. They have a certified Rotax repair centre, which now occupies one of our main hangars. It's the only one in Ontario, therefore it's quite busy."

Cooper also alluded to another major development that's likely to happen at some point. "It is a major manufacturing operation," he said. "It's confidential at this stage. There's a projection of 200 jobs that will be part of this package."



Thunder Bay Airport No Longer Designated International

Original Article by Leith Dunick, Northern Ontario Business, Mar. 19, 2021 For full article click here



It appears Thunder Bay Airport has lost its international standing. The airport no longer appears on a Transport Canada list of 13 airports currently designated as international airports.

Ed Schmidtke, president and CEO of the Thunder Bay International Airports Authority, said he's not sure when the change was made, but added it really doesn't have much of an impact on the day-to-day operations of the airport.

"At the airport we will still have customs people. We've always had good strong service with Customs Canada that won't change. From a quality, customer, consumer perspective, everything remains the same," Schmidtke said. "What this changes is a list of airports where the government of Canada is going to provide a broader range of services, things like plant quarantines, animal quarantines – the sorts of things that go on in the background when you're doing regular traffic with more exotic countries from any of the four corners of the earth."

Mohawk College Unveils New Aviation Training Facility in Hamilton

Original Article by Anthony Urciuoli, Insauga, Feb. 9, 2021 For full article click here

Canada's newest aviation training facility is setting up shop in Hamilton with the opening of the Mohawk College Centre for Aviation Technology. Announced officially on Tuesday (Feb. 9), the new 75,000-square-foot complex amalgamates all of the college's aviation programs into one state-of-the-art facility in an airside hangar at John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport. The three-storey facility will provide students with modern labs, shops, training aids, classrooms, and access to nearly 20 aircraft; doubling the student enrolment capacity for the college's aviation programs.

"We are excited to have our students training in this impressive new facility. And we are grateful to all of the industry partners who have supported us in this huge project," said Ron McKerlie, President and CEO of Mohawk College. "With this state-of-the-art training facility and the innovative training equipment we can now offer our students, we are confident Mohawk College will soon become one of the top Aviation training colleges in Canada. We look forward to supporting the local and national Aviation industry as companies reinforce their workforces on the road to economic recovery." The Centre for Aviation Technology was built in cooperation with KF Aerospace, which recently constructed an expansion of its aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul facility.

"As an economic engine, Hamilton International Airport continues to seek partnership opportunities to drive community benefits and promote access to local talent and services. With on-site access to a variety of Airport customers, KF Aerospace and Mohawk College's Centre for Aviation Technology will further contribute to workforce development in our region by providing real-life, hands-on experiences and integrated skills training in a modern, state-of-the art facility helping supply well-rounded candidates for the growing aerospace sector."



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Jack Garland Airport Running on Fumes While Seeking New Partnerships

Original Article by Chris Dawson, Northern Ontario Business, Feb. 5, 2021 For full article click here



Chris Mayne owns a local travel agency and is a board member and city councillor on the North Bay Jack Garland Airport Board. He says currently business is down about 90 per cent at Jack Garland Airport. That comes from Air Canada pulling out its regional flights from North Bay back in the early summer plus

Sunwing not renewing its contract to offer flights to the Dominican Republic and Cuba from the local airport.

"There is still some service coming out of the airport such as charters, leased aircraft, private operated, but the airport is down significantly from its normal activity so without the passenger traffic we would normally get from Air Canada, that has severely impacted revenues," said Mayne. Mayne notes the board is forecasting an \$800,000 shortfall which, he says will be supported by the City of North Bay through its budget.

"We are trying to minimize any operating costs that we can," admitted Mayne. "To keep the airport open you still have to plow the runways, keep the lights on. There are still minimum service levels that you have to maintain even though your business is down, but we don't want to close the airport because it would be a multi-year process to reapply, recertify, reopen the airport, so we are still looking to see a return to service at some point in the next year or so." Mayne adds that the federal government has been trying to negotiate with airlines to bring back scheduled service to communities like North Bay, but the numbers have to make sense.



NovaJet Setting Up Base at Region's Airport

Original Article by Staff, KitchenerToday, Mar. 4, 2021 For full article click here

NovaJet, one of Canada's leading aircraft charter and aircraft management providers, is expanding its Canadian presence with the opening of a new base at Waterloo International Airport (CYKF). This latest development follows last year's expansions in Atlantic Canada and the recent growth of the Windsor (CYQG) and Toronto (CYYZ) bases.

Anthony Haries, Director of Business Development, comments: "The latest expansion will provide a base from which we can more effectively meet the needs of our current and prospective customers in the Waterloo Region. We look forward to strengthening the existing relationships and enhancing NovaJet's reputation as one of Canada's leading business aviation service providers."

As part of the expansion, NovaJet also announced it added a Learjet 45XR business jet to its managed charter fleet, with pilots and maintenance staff to support the new location. The eight-seat midsize business jet is currently available for essential travel only, but availability will be extended to regular private jet clientele once restrictions are lifted.

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What is the Future of the Muskoka Airport? Local Pilots Express Concerns

Original Article by Sarah Law, Gravenhurst Banner, Mar. 8, 2021 For full article click here

Len O'Connor has been the CEO of the Muskoka Airport since February 2019. He said the master plan reflects the airport's vision for future growth, and he is excited about the opportunities on the horizon.

There has been a lot of misinformation spread about the plan and the grass runway — which is not being closed, but rather being relocated, said O'Connor. "One of the things that came out of this master plan is a new grass strip for the recreational pilots, so relocating the present grass strip into another area, and it opens up development," he said. The district is spending \$600,000 on the new grass runway, which is expected to be operational in 2022, he said.

As far as safety, O'Connor said "they shouldn't have safety concerns because we're compliant (with) Transport Canada regulations 100 per cent. We go through audits every year and then Transport Canada sporadically will come in and do their audit." But in Earle Robinson's eyes, relocating the grass runway does not solve the problem. "It does not mitigate the serious building turbulence hazard that is at this airport for large aircraft," said Robinson.

However, O'Connor says he feels confident in the direction the airport is heading. "I can tell you that we have a very, very good plan for the airport, for the development of the airport, using the existing land's highest and best use, fiscal responsibility. The main runway remains, the grass runway has been relocated," said O'Connor. "We kind of satisfy everybody that could be satisfied with this master plan."

Sudbury Police Warn of Heavy Penalties for Aiming a Laser at an Aircraft

Original Article by Alana Everson, CTV News Northern Ontario, Mar. 8, 2021
For full article click here

On March 5 around 11 p.m., police say someone pointed a green flashing laser at an aircraft that was 20,000 feet in the air on departure from the airport. "The information that was provided when officers arrived on scene was that this is the second time this had happened," said police spokesperson Kaitlyn Dunn. "So on two separate occasions, on March 4 and March 5, around 11 p.m., this green flashing laser was coming from the direction of the west side of Bowland's Bay.

Bowland's Bay is on Lake Wanapitei, southwest of the community of Skead. Jail time, \$100K fine. Police continue to investigate the dangerous incident and want anyone with information to contact them. It's a federal offence to aim a laser at an aircraft and can carry a fine of up to \$100,000 and up to five years in prison. "This is a criminal offence and it can distract or temporarily blind the pilot, and it also creates a glare which makes it extremely dangerous for not only the pilot, but for passengers on board," said Dunn.

CTV News has learned the aircraft involved are air ambulance planes with Ornge. There was a third incident March 6 as a plane was landing with a patient on board. "In the middle of the night when you are flying along and everything is turned down for preservation of night vision, it can completely illuminate the cockpit, ruining the pilot's night vision," said Chris Busch, manager of flight training and standards with Ornge. "So if you are on approach somewhere getting closer to the ground in a critical phase of flight, it can potentially have catastrophic consequences."





Flair Airlines Expands

Original Article by Lake Superior News, Feb. 10, 2021 For full article click here



– Flair Airlines, Canada's only independent ultra low-cost carrier (ULCC), is expanding service and will bring low fare air travel to 18 Canadian destinations by summer. Service to four of the new destinations will begin in May with more added in the coming months as non-essential travel within Canada safely restarts. Flair's ambitious expansion focuses first on growing its domestic network. Flair's network will expand beginning on May 1st as service is added to Ottawa, ON; Kitchener-Waterloo, ON; Halifax, NS; and Saint John, NB. Flair will add service in June to Thunder Bay, ON;

and Charlottetown, PE; in July to Victoria, BC; and in August to Abbotsford, BC.

"Canadians have been paying too much for too long, and we are changing that with our ULCC model that makes getting around Canada affordable," says Stephen Jones, President & CEO. "Providing affordable air travel within Canada is the first step in restarting travel and tourism, and Flair is uniquely positioned with the efficiencies of our low-cost model. When non-essential travel returns, Flair will be there to reconnect families and provide the low fares that have long been denied to Canadians." Flair anticipates tourism and travel to begin restarting in the Spring and Summer, and the focus on domestic service in 2021 enables the ULCC to provide more low fare options across Canada.

Owner of Billy Bishop Airport Looking for Private Sector Investor, Operator

Original Article by The Canadian Press, Welland Tribune, Mar. 30, 2021 For full article click here

The owner of Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport is looking for a private sector investor to operate the downtown island airport as the industry continues to struggle from the impact of COVID-19. PortsToronto issued a request for interest Tuesday, a step toward potentially identifying a financial investor to run the airport under lease.

The government agency says the move is designed to reduce the airport's overall debt, enhance liquidity enabling infrastructure investment and ensure the airport's long-term viability.

The selected investor would need to maintain the organization's commitment to a managed-growth approach to the airport, including investments to make it among the greenest and quietest airports in the world. PortsToronto would retain oversight of the airport as a member of the Tripartite Agreement with the City of Toronto and the federal government.

A request for proposals could be issued later this year in consultation with the two other levels of government. "The last year has had a profound impact on many businesses and has necessitated innovative approaches to overcome the challenges at present and in future," stated CEO Geoffrey Wilson. "We believe that undertaking a process now that may provide options for PortsToronto to secure a financial investor will enable the airport to come out of the COVID-19 crisis stronger."



Air Travellers Gaining Confidence, Time to Plan for Restart: IATA

Original Article by ANI, Business Standard, Mar. 10, 2021 For full article click here



The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has announced results from its latest poll of recent travellers, showing growing confidence in a return to air travel, frustration with current travel restrictions and acceptance of a travel app to manage health credentials for travel.

While 88 per cent believe that when opening borders, the right balance must be struck between managing Covid-19 risks and getting the economy going again, 85 per cent believe that governments should set Covid-19 targets (like testing capacity or vaccine distribution) to re-open borders.

About 84 per cent believe that Covid-19 will not disappear and there is need to manage its risks while living and travelling normally, 68 per cent agreed that their quality of life has suffered with travel restrictions.

Nearly 49 per cent believe that air travel restrictions have gone too far.

A total of 4,700 interviews were conducted online in 11 markets between February 15 and 23. The sample size was 500 in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, France, Germany, India and Australia. In Chile, Japan, UAE and Singapore the sample size was 300.

The poll showed while there is public support for travel restrictions, it is becoming clear that people are feeling more comfortable with managing the risks of Covid-19.

People are also feeling frustrated with the loss of freedom to travel with 68 per cent of respondents indicating their quality of life is suffering as a result. Travel restrictions come with health, social and economic consequences.

Nearly 40 per cent of respondents reported mental stress and missing an important human moment as a result of travel restrictions. And over a third have said that restrictions prevent them from doing business normally.

"The top priority of everybody at the moment is staying safe amid the Covid-19 crisis. But it is important that we map a way to being able to re-open borders, manage risks and enable people to get on with their lives," said Alexandre de Juniac, IATA's Director General and CEO. "That includes the freedom to travel. It is becoming clear that we will need to learn to live and travel in a world that has Covid-19. Given the health, social and economic costs of travel restrictions, airlines should be ready to re-connect the world as soon as governments are able to re-open borders."

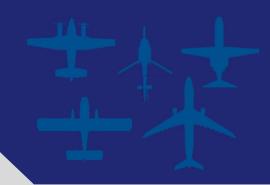




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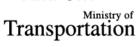
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Contributions can be sent to: amco@amco.on.ca

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Sault Ste. Marie Airport