

For immediate release

Federal Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner reports on allegations against Toronto Port Authority board member

Director cleared of conflict of interest

Toronto (June 25, 2009) – The Toronto Port Authority (“TPA”) has received the decision of federal Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner Mary Dawson, clearing board member Colin Watson of allegations that he was in a conflict of interest regarding the TPA’s acquisition of a new, larger ferry to serve the Toronto City Centre Airport.

Certain individuals and local politicians accused Mr. Watson of being in a conflict of interest because he was a professional acquaintance of Porter Airlines President and Chief Executive Officer Robert Deluce. The TPA operates the Toronto City Centre Airport (“TCCA”), which is the Toronto headquarters of Porter Airlines.

In her report, Ms. Dawson stated: “I believe that Mr. Watson exercised his duties both as a Director of the Toronto Port Authority and as Chair of the Audit & Finance Committee with the genuine conviction that the new ferry was a good thing for the TPA as a whole and for the Airport’s primary user, Porter Airlines. I do not believe that Mr. Watson was motivated by a desire to further the private interests of Mr. Deluce. I am therefore satisfied that Mr. Watson did not ‘improperly’ further the private interests of Mr. Deluce.”

TPA board chairman Mark McQueen said that it is time to put this matter in the past so that the TPA can get on with the important work of playing a role in Toronto’s economic recovery.

“I had no doubt the allegations against Mr. Watson were baseless and designed to unfairly harm both his reputation, the TPA and to serve as a plank in the campaign by the small minority of Torontonians who want to close the TCCA. Mr. Watson has always conducted himself with the utmost integrity in many years that I’ve known him. The Ethics Commissioner has put this issue to rest once and for all. I would hope that those who have promoted these allegations will now have the class to apologize for trying to cast a shadow over his character and that of the TPA Board as a whole,” Mr. McQueen said.

Ms. Dawson’s full report is available here:

<http://ciec-ccie.gc.ca/resources/files/English/Public%20Reports/Examination%20Reports/The%20Watson%20Report.pdf>

The Toronto Port Authority was incorporated on June 8, 1999, as a government business enterprise under the Canada Marine Act as the successor to the Toronto Harbour Commissioners. It is a federal public authority providing transportation, distribution, storage and container services to businesses.

The TPA owns and operates the Toronto City Centre Airport, Marine Terminals 51 and 52, and the Outer Harbour Marina. The TPA also provides regulatory controls and public works services to enhance the safety and efficiency of marine navigation and aviation in the port and harbour of Toronto.

Further information about the TPA is available at www.torontoport.com.

30

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