



NEWS RELEASE

Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport Wraps Up 2010 on positive note

Toronto (December 29, 2010) – In a year end review, the Toronto Port Authority indicated that it expected to hit its estimate of 1.2 million passengers for 2010, noting that it had successfully managed the 48 per cent increase in use over 2009, while at the same time establishing new relationships with community groups on the waterfront.

Geoff Wilson, President and CEO of the Toronto Port Authority, which runs the airport, said that the numbers really demonstrated that Torontonians and visitors alike considered the airport a great asset.

Wilson pointed to an Ipsos-Reid poll commissioned by the Port Authority in the late fall that showed that overall customer satisfaction with the airport was at 97 per cent (with 87 per cent very satisfied and 10 per cent somewhat satisfied). Ninety-eight per cent of users described themselves as satisfied with how they get to and from the island airport at the foot of Bathurst Street. “It’s pretty hard to beat these numbers,” Wilson said, noting that the airport’s location and accessibility were the key reasons people chose the popular island airport.

As part of a comprehensive noise management programme it is implementing, the Port Authority is in the process of designing noise barriers for installation at the airport in the coming months. Wilson said that the airport had recently installed a new noise management system, to better track and analyse the source of noise, and respond accurately and in a timely way to public queries. The TPA noted that this new noise management programme was part of a commitment the TPA made to the community in 2010; even though complaints were down considerably this year.

Under the Tripartite Agreement with the City of Toronto and the federal government, the airport’s commercial carriers can only use quiet, fuel-efficient turboprop planes, including the state-of-the-art Bombardier Q400, which are assembled in Toronto. The Agreement also prohibits commercial flights between 11:00pm and 6:45am, a provision the Port Authority rigorously enforces with substantial fines, Wilson said.

The \$1.5 million investment in noise barriers is just one part of the TPA's \$13.9 million capital plan for next year. Other investments in 2011 include new docks at the TPA's Outer Harbour Marina, strategic investments at the Port of Toronto, and a fish habitat at the Leslie Street landfill site.

In January 2010, the Toronto Port Authority increased its environmental commitment by switching to renewable energy, supplied by local firm, Bullfrog Power. Bullfrog president, Tom Heintzman said that the "Port Authority is promoting sustainability along Toronto's waterfront and helping to address air pollution and climate change by reducing its electricity-related emissions footprint."

The TPA also did extensive community outreach by establishing a quarterly stakeholder consultation committee on the airport, which is expecting to hold its first meeting in February 2011. Wilson described these meetings as a real opportunity for communities at the waterfront to work together. The TPA also held public meetings on the proposed pedestrian tunnel to the airport, as part of the environmental assessment process, with a wrap-up meeting scheduled for January 12, 2011.

In reviewing the past year, Board Chairman Mark McQueen, said he was pleased at the progress the TPA had made. "We've consulted extensively with the public on how to manage traffic flow at the airport, we're developing solutions for taxi and traffic congestion, we've taken a major step forward to improving access with the proposed P3 pedestrian tunnel, and we've negotiated carrier operating agreements with both Air Canada and Continental Airlines."

McQueen noted that both carriers are in negotiations on terminal leases, which have to be finalized before they start flying. McQueen said he was hopeful that agreements would be reached in the new year, noting that TPA staff has been "working hard to ensure that new carriers and their passengers will soon call the Billy Bishop Airport home." Before starting service the carriers also need to provide the Port Authority with formal plans of operation, with Transport Canada-issued licensing and operating certificates, and need to train pilots on specific landing techniques to minimise noise for neighbouring residents.

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