

On the other hand, the owners and primary users of TIA, and Toronto's mayor favour a fixed link, preferably a vehicular tunnel limited to providing access for service and emergency vehicles and shuttle buses. The major tunnel proponents at the Commission hearings were those who would benefit from improved access: the general aviation community at TIA, most of whose representatives were members of the Canadian Owners and Pilots Association (COPA) Flight 32; the scheduled carriers, predominantly City Express; and the THC.

The submission of the THC's general manager was not specifically approved by its Board but was, he said, consistent with policies that have been taken by the Harbour Commissioners in the past. If a vehicular tunnel were built, he said, TIA might attract as many as 1,267,000 passengers annually by 1992. Based on a feasibility study, the THC was planning a new terminal that would ultimately accommodate 2.4 million passengers a year. Quoting another study, the general manager estimated that, without the tunnel, the number would be only 666,000 passengers.

The president of City Express said that, even without Airport expansion, his company expects more than 500,000 passengers by 1992. He supports the combination of a vehicular tunnel and a new terminal building.

The Staff Inspector for the Metro Toronto Police supported fixed-link access across the Western Gap, to accommodate secondary emergency response personnel, emergency vehicles, and equipment. He did not, however, provide sufficient evidence to support the recommendations he presented to the Commission, which included the assertion that there was a need for a two-lane tunnel, bridge or causeway.

Representatives from the Ministry of Health also voiced their opinion on existing access to the TIA; they perceive the ferry service as a weak link in an extremely sophisticated system designed to move patients as quickly as possible

from various medical air bases across the province to appropriate medical care facilities in Toronto, and would like to see alternative access.

Other supporters of fixed-link access included the Planning Department of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto (although Metro Council had not taken a position on the issue at the time of the hearings) and the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto.

C. Management

The Canadian Owners and Pilots Association urged the Royal Commission to recommend new management of the Toronto Island Airport, on the basis that, rather than acting in the public interest, the THC operates TIA in a manner consistent with its own corporate objectives; these, a COPA representative said, are to turn it into a "mini-Pearson", apparently in line with a recent economic impact study by the independent consultants Acres International Ltd., on contract to the Toronto Harbour Commissioners. COPA objected to what it described as the THC's intention to turn TIA into a busy jet port, without public discussion and without being responsible to any federal minister, or to the Province.

The organization said it has confidence in the three new City-appointed members of the THC, but doubts they can control THC staff; COPA believes that, in these circumstances, the Airport should be removed from THC control and placed in the hands of a publicly accountable management body. COPA's president said that such an arrangement would eliminate any conflict of interest and ensure that the Airport is operated in response to public demands.

The chief executive officer of Toronto Airways Ltd. would prefer private management of TIA, but because most airports in Canada are publicly owned, recognizes that public management may be necessary at the Island Airport.

Terminal Building

Construction of a new terminal building at TIA was raised at the hearings: the general manager of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners announced that the THC had authorized the steps necessary prior to construction of a new passenger terminal, apron extensions, and the creation of new paved tie-downs for general aviation. This building could eventually be expanded to 9,000 square metres (96,867 square feet) and include 10 gates capable of handling 2.4 million passengers annually.

Subsequently, however, during the hearings on 8 February 1989, Councillor Jack Layton (one of three City representatives on the five-person Board of Toronto Harbour Commissioners) said the terminal proposal was "under review."

Construction of a new terminal has not begun and is on hold pending the evaluation of this and subsequent terminal proposals tabled by City Express.

During the final day of hearings, City Express revealed another set of plans, for a nine-gate terminal building that, it felt, would meet the needs of both general aviation and scheduled carriers. The president of City Express also expressed his belief that a new terminal building and fixed-link vehicular access should go together, but that an improved terminal was required irrespective of whether a fixed link is built.

There is considerable support for preserving the present terminal building, most notably by the Toronto Historical Board, and various alternatives for its use have been presented. In the design favoured by THC staff, the old terminal would remain where it is now and serve as a portal into a new structure. Other suggestions included moving the building to parkland on Hanlan's Point just south of the Airport, where it could be used as an aviation museum.

D. Safety

Although operational safety at TIA was not a major issue at the hearings, Mayor Eggleton expressed concern about the ability of current means of access to accommodate emergency vehicles, and advocated purchase of an on-site search and rescue helicopter at the Island Airport.

The Metro Toronto Police and the Ministry of Health also focused attention on improved access as it related to improved safety measures and procedures.

Other deputants, including some local residents, expressed their willingness to accept change at the Airport if improvements in environmental and safety measures were provided.

E. Noise

Residents' associations and individual residents appeared before the Royal Commission to expression their concerns about the noise caused by aircraft using the Island Airport and about the way it affects their lives.

An official of Transport Canada said that itinerant general aviation and local aviation cause more noise than scheduled commercial flights. But a waterfront resident spoke of the need to close balcony doors in order to hear people on her phone and complained of aircraft revving their engines as part of maintenance procedures. Moreover, take-off and landing noise is believed to be a problem, as is the summertime operation of amphibious aircraft.

These complaints were supported by the submission of the Harbourfront Residents' Association, which represents people living in 14 condominiums, co-ops, and rental projects recently built along the Queen's Quay West waterfront. One Association executive noted that many residents have complained, but that no complaints have been acted on because Harbourfront Corporation, the landlord of the properties, has not objected to noise levels.

City Express denied it is a culprit, and described itself as very sensitive to the needs of its neighbours, only revving (“running up”) engines on the part of the Airport field farthest from the residential area.

Noise Exposure Forecast

On the basis of its Noise Exposure Forecast (NEF), Transport Canada says there is not supposed to be a noise problem at TIA. According to the NEF contours established in the Tripartite Agreement of 1983, no onshore area is affected beyond the minimal annoyance level.

A representative of British Aerospace predicted that ever-improving technology will reduce noise significantly in succeeding generations of aircraft, including commercial jets, and gave as an example one of the company’s new aircraft, the BAe 146.

F. The Future of the Airport

No deputants at the Royal Commission hearings advocated physical expansion of the Airport or lengthening of its runways. However, a former chief engineer of the THC proposed that TIA be relocated on the Leslie Street Spit, which would be enlarged by dredging. The proposal did not receive any support from other deputants.

Metro Councillor Dale Martin suggested the possible elimination of the Airport, which he sees as a non-conforming use on a waterfront increasingly devoted to cultural and recreational activities. He questions whether planning principles should be compromised on behalf of a commercial enterprise.

COPA members also requested a freeze on expansion until such time as definitive criteria have been established for the size of the terminal, and until issues of access and location have been resolved, and an overall land use zoning plan established.

Expanded Aircraft Services

Generally speaking, those who want scheduled carrier services at TIA expanded also support the introduction of jets to the Airport, while those who oppose one oppose the other. The idea that some jets are quieter than some propeller-driven aircraft now using TIA was not accepted: Councillor Jack Layton said that the jet ban, spelled out with exemptions in the Tripartite Agreement, was not based on noise problems alone; the real concern was to prevent TIA from becoming a major waterfront airport.

City Express wants the Tripartite Agreement reopened to allow it and other scheduled carriers operating out of TIA to add a new generation of jet aircraft, using planes that meet existing NEF limitations and that could take off and land comfortably on the TIA's longest existing runway.

A representative of a fixed base operator (FBO) at the Island Airport would also welcome the opportunity to service small-jet traffic on the grounds that eliminating business jets renders general aviation FBOs uneconomic at TIA.

Members of the general aviation community offered varying opinions: one COPA member found it unbelievable that use of jets would be considered, while a COPA director argued that the jet ban is no longer necessary. However, the organization unanimously endorses the introduction of small business jets, if not commercial jets, to TIA.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

A. Conclusions

Role

The analysis of the Toronto Island Airport contained in the Royal Commission's publication number 7, *The Future of the*

Toronto Island Airport: The Issues, makes clear that the Airport provides for only three per cent of Toronto's commercial air passenger traffic and, even under the most optimistic growth projections suggested at the hearings, would not likely increase to more than five or six per cent of total traffic.

The Royal Commission concludes that TIA should continue its existing role as an airport serving general aviation and limited commercial air passenger traffic, and that its operations should continue to be governed by the Tripartite Agreement amongst the City, the THC, and Transport Canada.

While the essence of the Agreement should be maintained, from time to time adjustments may be required in such areas as permissible noise levels, expansion, and access. Experience has shown that the Agreement is sufficiently firm to give the City and others concerned the assurances they need that uncontrolled growth at the Airport (with all its attendant effects) will not be permitted.

At the same time, the Agreement is flexible enough to provide for justifiable changes that will not disturb the balance between the Airport and other waterfront uses (as it was, for example, when landing rights were approved for Dash 8 aircraft, after the Agreement was signed).

Deputants to hearings about TIA held a range of opinions, from those who wanted to see it eliminated entirely to those who believed that both vehicular access and the role of the Airport itself should be widely expanded.

The Royal Commission rejects the view that the Toronto Island Airport should be closed, and does so for three reasons. First, TIA is an integral part of the history of both the Toronto waterfront and Canadian aviation. Second, it is a useful facility, as important to the many thousands who use it yearly for business and personal travel as it is to the generations of pilots who have learned to fly from its runways — all of whom would be needlessly

inconvenienced by its closing. And third, a functioning TIA is integral to the concept of Toronto's working waterfront — a place where varied opportunities include the several hundred jobs generated by the presence of the Airport.

At the same time, the Royal Commission also rejects the idea of a major expansion of TIA, including the introduction of commercial jets and construction of a fixed-link vehicular tunnel, for the following reasons. First, both changes are clearly contrary to the Tripartite Agreement, which specifically excludes them. Second, the Airport would come to dominate the waterfront in a way that would destroy a healthy balance of existing uses. And third, TIA should remain a local airport serving general aviation and limited short haul carriers, without the runway extensions needed to permit additional aircraft.

Although the Province of Ontario currently pays the deficits incurred by ferry operations to the Airport, it did not advocate construction of a fixed link to TIA. Those who did support a vehicular tunnel on the basis that it was necessary for improved safety/emergency access, did not present adequate material to the Commission to support their views.

As part of a regional airport and transportation system, it is important for TIA to have planning, management, and operational links with the overall structure as well as with users of its own services and facilities. Good connections to other modes of regional public transport (GO, VIA, TTC, etc.) are also necessary if TIA is to play its proper role.

Later this year, the Commission will deal with transportation issues, including those related to the Airport.

The Commission's conclusions on the role of TIA support the weight of public opinion expressed at hearings of the Royal Commission. Although there were specific requests from interested parties, there was no overwhelming public demand for elimination of the Airport, for large-scale expansion of it or, indeed, for any change in its current role.

However, a fixed base operator at the Airport and representatives of general aviation companies did bring to the attention of the Commission the fact that changing technology could make it possible to support the presence of small business and cargo jets at TIA, providing they meet size, noise, and environmental constraints.

The Commission was made aware of the limitations of the NEF contours in reflecting actual noise at a particular location, as experienced by individuals. These limitations should be recognized when outlining future use of the NEF and in developing further plans for management improvements.

Management and Accountability

The City of Toronto originally appointed the Toronto Harbour Commissioners as its agent to manage and operate the Airport. It is therefore appropriate that the City be the first to consider significant concerns about management raised by a number of deputants at the public hearings.

In its deliberations, the City will have two major alternatives: first, it may conclude that, with certain management improvements, the THC should continue to act as manager and operator of the Airport. Or, given the recommendation in Chapter 4 of this report (which would separate THC's Port and non-Port functions), the City may decide that it is now appropriate to replace the THC with an airport commission or authority.

If it chooses the latter, the City may then have to decide whether it should continue to be involved with the Airport or should transfer its interest to a regional or private-sector body, such as a Metro or Provincial airport authority (should one be created) or a private-sector consortium.

That, in turn, would necessitate negotiations with Transport Canada (to comply with federal policy), the Province, and/or Metro. If the private-sector management

option were chosen, there would have to be a call for proposals.

In considering the issue of management, the following criteria might be appropriate:

- the need for public accountability in managing and operating the Airport;
- the need for efficiency and effectiveness in the regional airport system;
- the need to protect local interests;
- the need to balance TIA-related activity with other waterfront uses.

If the City, in consultation with Transport Canada, decided to replace the THC as Airport manager and operator, existing THC Airport staff should be protected where possible, and, where appropriate, they should be transferred to the new agency.

Other Management Improvements

Irrespective of the decision on the management and operations, certain management improvements are required. These include:

- a more open and formal approach to airport planning with better links to the City's land-use planning and development approval process;
- a restructured financial and accounting base, including both capital and operating aspects of TIA's budget, to clarify the facility's financial position, particularly with respect to the allocation of operating costs and surplus revenue, and the goal of financial self-sufficiency;
- improved relations with Airport users, general aviation and commercial operators, as well as the travelling and general public; improved noise monitoring and stricter enforcement of hours of Airport operation;



- improved relations with the public, including follow-up and response to noise complaints; better public information and consultation processes (which, if the THC remains as manager and operator, would involve general release of the THC's monthly Airport performance reports to the City and to Transport Canada).

In addition to these management changes, other improvements to the Airport and its related services should be considered, including:

- an improved, expanded or new Airport terminal, the original terminal building to be preserved and possibly relocated, subject to further study;
- a second emergency response exercise to test the effectiveness of improvements to service and procedures incorporated in the 1988 Metropolitan Toronto Emergency Response Plan and arising from the initial Emergency Response Exercise of November 1987;
- a new or updated Airport plan to replace the existing draft developed by the Airport Authority Group (AAG) of Transport Canada, for consideration and use by the Airport's managers and operators. The Royal Commission notes that the existing AAG draft plan appears to support a balance between commercial and general aviation at the Airport (for example, by adding a new tie-down area for general aviation).

A new draft plan should be based on the following criteria:

- (a) full public consultation that includes Airport users and nearby residents;
- (b) a clear outline of user rights, especially as they relate to terminal space, access across the Western Gap, and general aviation tie-downs;

- (c) incorporation in the plan of all proposed improvements to facilities, including the terminal building, safety/emergency measures, access, and noise monitoring;
- (d) a clear-cut plan for complying with the goal of financial self-sufficiency.

Such a plan should be implemented only after formal review and approval by the City of Toronto.

B. Recommendations

The Royal Commission makes the following recommendations:

1. The Toronto Island Airport should continue its dual role serving general aviation and limited air commuter operations within the Tripartite Agreement.
2. The City of Toronto, in consultation with Transport Canada, should consider whether to keep or replace the Toronto Harbour Commissioners as its agent in the management and operations of the Airport.
3. Irrespective of the response to the previous recommendation, the City and Transport Canada should require improvements in the management of the Airport, including a new financial and accounting base and improved public and user consultation processes.
4. A new plan should be prepared to reflect the role of the Airport as contemplated by the Royal Commission, ensuring that it remains at its existing scale within the waterfront environment, is cleaner and quieter, and is sensitive to the needs of its users.