

Public Health
277 Victoria Street
5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M5B 1W2

Tel: 416-338-7820
Fax: 416-392-0713
dmckeown@toronto.ca
toronto.ca/health

July 30, 2014

Mr. Howard Eng
President and Chief Financial Officer
Greater Toronto Airports Authority
Lester B. Pearson International Airport
PO Box 6031, 3111 Convair Drive
Toronto AMF, Ontario L5P 1B2

Dear Mr. Eng:

Re: *Health Effects of Aviation-Related Noise at Toronto Pearson International Airport*

Toronto Public Health is aware of concerns raised by residents of Toronto regarding increased air traffic noise in residential areas that have resulted from changes in the flight patterns of aircraft approaching and leaving Toronto Pearson International Airport. We understand that these flight path changes were implemented by NAV Canada in 2012. In particular, residents have raised concerns about the potential health effects from increased aircraft noise.

Jet aircraft are a significant source of noise in the environment. Health Canada summarizes the current scientific evidence of the health impacts of aircraft noise into two key areas: studies that link excess noise exposure to increased stress levels, and studies that suggest that chronic stress may lead to increased risk of hypertension and heart disease for some people.

The extent to which adverse health impacts can be attributed to noise from a specific airport is dependent on local conditions (e.g., type and frequency of airport operations, and the proximity of people living close to the airport and flight paths). Therefore, we recommend that a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is conducted to identify any health impacts associated with aircraft noise from the change in flight paths for Pearson airport. Toronto Public Health recently used the HIA approach to assess the potential health impacts of noise resulting from the proposed expansion of the Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport.

We understand that the GTAA is conducting an air quality study with plans to include a human health risk assessment, and appreciate the opportunity that has been given to Toronto Public Health staff to provide input as a member of the study advisory committee. The expansion of the study to include an assessment of the impact of noise would provide important information to allow us to assess and advise on potential health impacts for residents of Toronto.

Sincerely,



Dr. David McKeown
Medical Officer of Health