

## Toronto Pearson COVID-19 Update - May 5, 2020

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As the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA) manages through the impacts and challenges of COVID-19, the GTAA has worked closely with its business partners and key government authorities, such as Transport Canada, Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC).

The Public Affairs team at the GTAA is connecting with elected officials and their staff at all levels of government. Our aim is to provide up-to-date information about how Toronto Pearson is responding to COVID-19, and the importance we place on the health and safety of our employees, passengers and the movement of critical cargo. We will continue to work with our government partners to manage and recover from the devastating impacts of COVID-19.

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The GTAA will be hosting its virtual Annual Public Meeting on May 6th at 1:30 pm. A link to our meeting will be [here](#).

The Annual Public Meeting will feature discussions about management, operation, and maintenance of Toronto Pearson International Airport. In addition, the Chair of the Board and the President and CEO review the year and the CFO gives an overview of our financial performance.

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### **GTAA President and CEO Deborah Flint meets with Toronto Airports Workers Council**

On April 28, GTAA President and CEO Deborah Flint met with representative of the Toronto Airports Workers Council (TAWC). Deborah and TAWC expressed a shared commitment to the efforts being undertaken to ensure the health and safety of workers, as well as workforce recovery strategies for airport workers and employers.

Please find a [link](#) to the joint statement released after the meeting.

### **Supporting Canada's airport ecosystem**

Canada's airports continue to urge the federal government to provide additional short-term relief and a longer-term stimulus package as part of the nation's overall economic recovery.

Ministers Garneau and Morneau took a very important and welcome step on March 30 to address Canada's airport rent challenge for the remainder of 2020, but more is needed. Extending rent relief to 2021 and 2022 would give Toronto Pearson—a national economic asset and critical link in Canada's supply chain—much needed fiscal flexibility to plan ahead, be resilient in the event of a second or third wave of COVID-19, continue to support the critical movement of goods, and be ready to restart operations and support economic recovery.

Pre-COVID, Canada's airports directly supported nearly 200,000 jobs, resulting in \$13 billion in wages and \$7 billion in taxes to all levels of government. Along with our airline partners, Canada's airports have seen a tremendous drop in traffic and revenues since

this crisis began. In April, passenger traffic at Canada's airports is down by more than 90 per cent. While we are working to be ready to restart some operations as travel restrictions are lifted, we don't expect a return to pre-COVID levels for many years.

Passenger numbers at Toronto Pearson specifically continue to drop significantly: from an average of 130,000 per day to 5,000 per day. The number of flights has dropped as well, from an average of 1,300 per day to approximately 350 per day. Only 9 passenger air carriers are operating at Toronto Pearson; reduced from 67 just weeks ago.

We encourage the Government to continue to move quickly to provide short-term relief; support the movement of critical cargo; work together with industry to restart the economy and travel, and begin to invest in longer term stimulus and recovery.

### **Canadian Airports Council appears at Federal Finance Committee**

On May 1, 2020, Joyce Carter, Chair of the Canadian Airports Council, and President and CEO of Halifax International Airport Authority appeared remotely before the Federal Standing Committee on Finance.

On behalf of all Canadian airports, she delivered the message that Canada's airports are an essential part of our transportation network as catalysts of economic development; facilitators of trade and immigration; and the front door to Canada from all over the world. Pre-Covid the Canadian tourism sector was valued at \$90 billion.

She spoke about the impact on airlines, how many of the still operating flights are near empty, and how many communities have lost scheduled service.

Ms. Carter told the Committee that airports must remain open to move goods, essential workers, and facilitate medevac and other important services for Canada's economy and recovery—the same airports that moved quickly to help in the repatriation of Canadians. Click on the image below to see a cargo flight arriving at the airport.



Airports are struggling to cover fixed costs at a time when revenues are expected to be down 57 per cent nationally. Airports must also continue to meet their capital debt obligations with few or no passengers, revenue from the Airport Improvement Fee that typically covers these fixed costs has vanished.

Ms. Carter called on the federal government to immediately take the following steps:

**Eliminate airport ground rent** to allow airports to preserve cash, focus on operations during the recovery, be able to withstand future shocks, and to pay off incremental debt acquired during the pandemic;

**Introduce interest free loans from the federal government** to protect airport liquidity against both revenue erosion and bad debt; preserve jobs and borrowing capacity to allow airports to respond when passenger growth returns; support airports in minimum investment requirements to meet safety, security and regulatory obligations both during the pandemic and during the subsequent lengthy recovery; and

**Provide loan or bond guarantees and preferred payment designation for airport lenders,** which would relieve the cash pressures caused by current debt obligations and allow airports to continue to borrow at favorable rates.

The health of the entire air transport system is not only essential to serving communities and Canadians through this crisis, but also key to our economic recovery once we begin to reopen the economy.

### **Keeping our airfield in top condition**



Early May marks the start of airside capital maintenance projects that keep our airfield operating safely. The Greater Toronto Airports Authority intends to proceed with necessary runway and taxiway maintenance at Toronto Pearson starting on May 4, 2020.

2020 runway and taxiway maintenance work includes:

- Rehabilitation of Runway 15L/33R (N/S runway);
- Rebuilding of Taxiway H

In light of COVID-19 and the need to protect Toronto Pearson's role as an essential service, we have designed a runway and taxiway maintenance schedule that takes advantage of the significant decrease in aircraft movements, while respecting necessary physical distancing precautions.

This runway and taxiway maintenance work will employ more than 450 people, at a time when thousands of people in the airport community have been laid off.

We are committed to keeping elected officials and the surrounding community up to date about how the work is proceeding and what it may mean for your community. The GTAA held webinars for elected officials on March 11 and April 27 describing the airport's 2020 runway and taxiway maintenance schedule, and targeted briefings are scheduled.

Please feel free to connect with a member of the GTAA's public affairs team for further information or to schedule a dedicated briefing. And click [here](#) to follow our progress as we work to maintain the safety and operational integrity of the runways and taxiways at Canada's biggest airport.

### **Join the Airport Explorers Club!**



Toronto Pearson is pleased to announce the launch of the Pearson Airport Explorers Club. This free, interactive tool is a fun way to introduce kids in Grades 3 to 5 or 6 to 8 to all the fascinating things happening at Toronto Pearson.

If your constituents are at home and looking for an informative and engaging way to keep their kids busy, the Pearson Airport Explorers Club is a fun way to learn more about Toronto Pearson—everything from how luggage travels through the airport, to how air traffic controllers choreograph the arrival and departure of airplanes across Toronto Pearson's five runways, to the ins and outs of airplane deicing.

The first module—All About Airports—is now available. New activities focused on a different airport topic will pop up every week. Be sure to keep an eye out!

To check it out the Pearson Airports Explorers Club and sign up, please visit <https://www.airportexplorer.club/>.

### **Pearson Strong: Helping our passengers remotely**

At Pearson, we are committed to keeping our employees safe during COVID-19, while still being of service to passengers and answering any questions they may have. That's why Toronto Pearson has introduced new ways for passengers to reach us during this period of physical distancing.

Passengers in the Terminals can now ask questions through hands-free video chat and speakerphone capabilities at select Information Counters in Terminals 1 and 3. This technology allows passengers to walk up to the counter and be connected with a Passenger Service Representative by video, or through speakerphone, helping to minimize the amount of physical contact required.

Additionally, we have launched [Online Live Chat](#), allowing passengers to connect with helpful staff online either through their desktop or their smartphone.

In the coming months, we will need to continue to work with government to introduce innovative new ways to demonstrate to travellers that the travel industry has their health and safety top-of-mind.

### **The importance of cargo activity during COVID-19**



On April 6, 2020, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) and GTAA convened leaders from the air cargo supply chain and business community for a virtual roundtable with Victor Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade to discuss the importance of air cargo and supply chains to the COVID-19 response. Leaders participated from multiple sectors of the supply chain, such as airlines, airports, trucking and freight forwarders.

The feedback from these leaders has been used to identify challenges that, when resolved, will empower Ontario's transportation and logistics industry to create even more effective supply chains throughout the province.

To learn more about how government and industry can collaborate to maintain and strengthen Ontario's supply chain, read a summary report from the April 6 virtual roundtable, available [on the Ontario Chamber of Commerce website](#).

In the weeks ahead, the GTAA is looking forward to co-hosting and participating in a similar roundtable with Canada's Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Navdeep Bains, and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

