

The Honourable Marc Garneau, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Transportation  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6  
Subject: Pearson airport - jet noise traffic

Dear Minister Garneau,

Since February 2012, residents of Toronto, at considerable distance to Pearson airport, have been impacted by substantial aviation noise as a direct result of NAV CANADA flight path changes that affected arrivals operations at Pearson airport, over the skies of Toronto. These changes have created a highly concentrated flight path, or "highway in the sky", where none existed previously, and, these changes and impacts were not communicated in an effective manner or at all to our local area MPs or Toronto councillors, and without consultation prior to the changes.

The impact to the citizens of Toronto have not gone unnoticed by local councillors, the mayor, and local MPs, who are reminded constantly of the impacts to residents in the areas of health and quality of life, through all hours of the day and night. In addition to the annoyance and health factors, which to us are significant, at the core of our concerns is an issue that is national in scope and should, we believe, must transcend any partisan political considerations.

**The over-arching issue is simply this: to what extent can or should the federal government delegate to a private company the unfettered freedom to make what are essentially social policy decisions?**

Consider, that a private company has decided where it will locate low-level aircraft super-highways over densely populated areas. These are not merely technical decisions. They have severe social impact implications. Consider, that suddenly, as of February 2012, a corridor running through a previously unaffected residential heart of numerous Liberal ridings has over 50,000 commercial aircraft movements per year, passing low and loud overhead, and often in the middle of the night.

This has happened not just in Toronto but also in Vancouver/Surrey, Montreal and Calgary and, to a somewhat lesser extent, Ottawa. In each of those cities, a private company has unilaterally made the decision as to which populations will suffer the negative impacts of their mandate. While the delegation of such power is rather astounding, what is truly maddening is that that aspect of its decision-making is essentially unreviewable, **by anyone**.

NAV CANADA's decisions are only subject to review by Transport Canada if safety issues are demonstrated to be at play. NAV CANADA easily deflects those inquiries by simply asserting that its decisions were made for safety reasons. That assertion, given the current statutory and contractual framework, appears to be non-reviewable.

In any other area of activity involving the use of public domain (in this case the skies over Canada), such decisions would be the responsibility of elected representatives. At the very least, the chain of accountability would lead to a body of elected representatives. In this unique area, that chain of accountability has been broken. We think it needs repairing.

That is why we believe all federal politicians should be engaged with this issue, particularly those who are directly concerned with transportation, health and environmental issues and most particularly members of the governing party.

The Toronto Aviation Noise Group (T.A.N.G.) has investigated noise abatement solutions to community impacts as a result of NAV CANADA actions of February 2012, ref;

[Inch Report](#):

Now, there are similar/same proposals found in the **Inch Report** that are backed up/confirmed by an independent 3<sup>rd</sup> party review for Gatwick airport:

[Gatwick airport – Arrivals Review](#)

T.A.N.G. has remained scrupulously non-partisan and has petitioned elected representatives of all stripes. Therefore Minister, you are in a better position than most to affect a solution to an issue that is more than a local one.

We appeal to you, as Minister of Transport and your colleagues, to amend the existing framework for civil air navigation and restore the accountability that it currently lacks.

Thank you for your attention in this important matter.

Sincerely,

(name attached via email)

cc. Mayor John Tory  
cc. M.P. Carolyn Bennett  
cc. M.P. Rob Oliphant  
cc. M.P. Arif Virani