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The Honourable Judy A. Sgro

Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities

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● (0845)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.)): I'm calling the meeting to order. This is the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities of the 42nd Parliament, meeting 123. That shows that we've had a lot of meetings in our session.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are doing a study assessing the impact of aircraft noise in the vicinity of major Canadian airports.

As a witness today, we have, in person, Antonio Natalizio. Welcome.

From the Direction de santé publique de Montréal, we have David Kaiser, Medical Officer, urban environment service and healthy lifestyle.

From Les Pollués de Montréal-Trudeau, by video conference, we have Pierre Lachapelle, President.

We will open by asking Mr. Natalizio to give us his comments. Please keep them to five minutes. Thank you very much.

Mr. Antonio Natalizio (As an Individual): Thank you, Madame Chair and committee members. I speak to you as a resident of Etobicoke Centre of 44 years, where planes fly over as low as 700 feet and their numbers increase yearly. I acknowledge the benefits of airports to our city and region, but there are negative impacts. The two need to be balanced. To achieve a balance, I urge you to consider three things: the health impacts of noise, the need for noise regulation and the need for a long-term plan.

Regarding health, there is now sufficient evidence linking environmental noise exposure to cardiovascular problems, mental health problems and cognitive learning difficulties in children. As parents and grandparents, we need to be concerned about these impacts on infants and adolescents, because they are vulnerable. Other countries, such as Australia, Germany and the U.K., have eliminated or curtailed night flights. I hope you will conclude that it's time for Canada to join them.

Regarding regulations, only three of the many civil aviation regulations pertain to noise. They are ineffective and insufficient to regulate the night sky. This deficiency has allowed Toronto Pearson to remove the old night curfew and reduce the restricted night period from eight hours to six hours. It has also allowed it to double night flights in the past 20 years, and if nothing is done, they will double again in the next 20 years.

The night sky needs to be regulated. The old night curfew needs to be re-established so we can have uninterrupted sleep. It's a basic human right. We espouse human rights on the world stage but fail to look in our own backyard. Children are our most precious resource, but airports have ignored their right to sleep. Many airports have implemented night curfews and have continued to thrive. Contrary to industry predictions, the sky didn't fall. Airport night hours must be realigned to the body's need for eight hours of sleep, as we had prior to 1985. Six hours are inadequate, and the consequences are significant. Insufficient sleep costs Canadian businesses over \$20 billion a year in lost productivity, and it costs society more than \$30 billion in health costs.

The U.K. has regulated the night sky, and Heathrow is now a shining example. Although bigger than Pearson, it has an annual night flight limit of only 5,800, compared to Pearson's 19,000 and growing. The GTAA wants to make Pearson the biggest international airport on the continent, and to do that, it will keep increasing night flights. Airports such as Heathrow, Sydney, Zurich, Munich and Frankfurt are leaders in aviation noise management because of government regulation, not because it's in their corporate DNA. New regulations are a must.

Pearson communities are exposed to more than 460,000 flights per year, and this level of traffic generates many concerns. From January to July of this year, the GTAA received 81,000 noise complaints. The equivalent number for last year was 50,000, and it was 33,000 for 2016. How do they compare with other major Canadian airports? They are not even in the same ballpark.

Our growing concerns are not being addressed by the GTAA. Therefore, I urge you to recommend the creation of an independent watchdog. Countries that are concerned about community health impacts have an aviation noise ombudsman. Australia was one of the first, and the U.K. is the most recent. With your help, Canada can have one too.

Regarding the long term, we cannot rely on the aviation industry to find an equitable solution for the region. This is clearly a government responsibility. In 1989, the government established an environmental assessment panel to address Pearson's expansion plans and the need for new airports to serve the long-term needs of the region.

● (0850)

When the panel recommended against Pearson's expansion, the government dissolved it and the long-term question was never addressed. Three decades later, our communities are paying the price for that decision. We now have an urgent need for a long-term solution.

I urge you to address the region's need for another airport and, in the interim, to recommend greater utilization and expansion of neighbouring ones.

In summary, Madam Chair, we need to address health impacts, because they are real and costly; regulate the night sky, because sleep is a basic human right; and study the long-term issue, because a solution is urgently needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here. I look forward to your questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We move on to Mr. Kaiser for five minutes, please.

Mr. David Kaiser (Medical Officer, Urban Environment Service and Healthy Lifestyle, Direction de santé publique de Montréal): Thank you for inviting me. I think I'll speak in English, because I understand that that's the majority, but I'm happy to answer questions in English or French.

I'm a public health physician. I'm at the Montreal public health unit. I was invited here because we've done work on the health impacts of environmental noise, and more specifically airplane noise. I want to go through, from a public health perspective, how we see noise from aircraft as being an important issue and where we think there's work to be done in order to improve public health.

At Public Health, we've been working on this for about 10 years. It starts, actually, from community noise complaints. It comes from people who called us to say they think there's something going on here and they would like us to investigate. Building from that, we've been able to develop a lot of knowledge in Montreal about the real impacts.

At an international level, it's very clear. The World Health Organization just put out, actually, their new noise guidelines about a month ago. In the lead-up to that, they did a lot of scientific work over the last year, looking at the health impacts of various environmental noise sources. I want to focus specifically on what they found in terms of scientific evidence for aircraft noise.

There's high-quality evidence, which means many studies that go in the same direction, that indicates a link between noise from aircraft and what is called "annoyance". Annoyance can maybe sound like something that isn't specifically a public health concern, but if you live in a place that is noisy and have lived there for a

while, you know that annoyance over time is something that really does affect quality of life and is related to other health impacts.

Second is sleep disturbance. On this, there's what the WHO calls moderate-quality evidence. That means there are fewer studies, but they do go in the direction of a link between aircraft noise and disturbed sleep.

What's even more concerning is that, in the long term, there is now moderate-quality evidence that aircraft noise specifically has impacts on cardiovascular health. That includes hypertension, or high blood pressure. It includes stroke. It includes heart disease. Some of that is really being annoyed for 30 years by noise in the environment. It generates stress. It generates high blood pressure. It can lead to heart disease but also disturbed sleep. We know that disturbed sleep dysregulates the body and can result in hypertension and heart disease. Also, important in the current context is that it can lead to obesity. There's starting to be better evidence about the links between chronic noise exposure and obesity.

There's less good evidence about cognitive impacts—that includes in children but also in adults—as well as mental health and quality of life.

Just to put some numbers to it, we know that about 60% of the residents on the Island of Montreal are exposed to noise levels that may have impacts on their health. For aircraft noise, more specifically, we have almost 5,000 units with about 10,000 to 12,000 people who live inside what is called the NEF 25, or noise exposure forecast of 25. They're in a zone close to the airport, where we know there are likely to be impacts. About 6% of the people on the Island of Montreal, or one person in 15, say they are highly annoyed by noise, and about 2%, or one person in 50, report that they have their sleep disturbed by airplane noise. This is specifically for airplane noise.

Those numbers can seem small, until you think about how few people actually live close to the airport out of the 2 million people on the Island of Montreal. If you look at distance to the airport, about 40% of the people who live in that NEF 25 report being highly annoyed by noise, and 20% of the people live within two kilometres of the airport. So you're getting people who live pretty far from the airport reporting that they're highly annoyed.

From a public health perspective, that brings us to recommendations that we've put out for several years now. We put out a brief in 2014, and four years, as you know, is not that long for policy to change. A lot of those recommendations are still, I think, very relevant. I just want to highlight two that I think are most pertinent at your level.

●(0855)

The first is not a complicated recommendation; it is not based on extensive science. In order to better understand what's going on and to inform people of potential impacts to their health, we need to have access to data. At the present time, we don't have access to information about where planes are in the air, how many there are, and what types they are. We don't have access to the noise measurements. Access to data is recommendation one.

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Kaiser. We're very tight for time.

Mr. David Kaiser: Okay.

The second recommendation is just to continue working on administrative and technical improvements to reduce noise at the source. I think those two things at the federal level are still very salient.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Lachapelle, you have five minutes, please.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle (President, Les Pollués de Montréal-Trudeau): Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Let me make one point first.

Mr. Lachapelle has given us a graph, but it's in French only. Can I have permission from the committee to distribute it? The clerk did a little bit of innovative work here. Do I have permission to distribute it to the committee members?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Thank you.

Go ahead, please, Mr. Lachapelle.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle: Madam Chair, members of Parliament, thank you for your invitation to present to this committee.

Before I begin, I wanted to mention that I sent the committee clerk a dozen documents. I sincerely hope that these documents will be brought to the attention of the members of the committee. With regard to the data collected by our measuring stations, you already have in hand an example of the noise peaks. Very often, Aéroports de Montréal and public health authorities talk about average data, but it's important to look at the peaks that the public are subject to. I will now move on to my testimony.

I am honoured to present on behalf of the citizens group, Les Pollués de Montréal-Trudeau, concerning the noise pollution around Pierre-Elliott-Trudeau Airport. The noise is deplorable, and impacts thousands of citizens living on the Island of Montreal. This situation is in part the result of the strange decision made in 1996 by the airport authorities to close a modern airport, Mirabel, which resulted in a concentration of passenger traffic over the Island of Montreal.

I want to emphasize that, since the 1990s, citizens have been alerting Parliament to the problem. They have not been heard. Les

Pollués de Montréal-Trudeau began their work informally in 2011, and the committee was officially formed in 2013. The objective of this presentation today, honourable members, is to convince you of the need to act, not only to improve the public health of thousands of Montrealers, but also to rebuild the confidence of citizens in the good faith of Parliament. In fact, Parliament has not maintained control over the management of international airports in Canada, nor has it sufficiently controlled the noise pollution caused by airplanes.

●(0900)

[English]

I will now go straight to the heart of the matter—namely, the requests made by hundreds of citizens since 2013 concerning the noise and air pollution at Montréal-Trudeau airport.

First, we ask for a complete ban on nighttime flights from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. Being able to sleep at night without interruption from airplane noise is a fundamental need.

Second, last April 30, Aéroports de Montréal announced a \$4.5-billion terminal project, a new terminal at Pierre Elliott Trudeau airport. We ask for the immediate freeze and end to this project and the preparatory work that has started.

As our third request, we ask for an economic, environmental, social and health evaluation of the current situation and of the impact of the project announced on April 30. The absence of suitable legislation in Canada allows for the creation of this sort of airport terminal project without adequate public evaluation.

Four, we ask that a public evaluation be carried out by an independent and scientifically competent group, which would include public hearings on the airport situation.

Five, since Aéroports de Montréal began to rent the airport, the management of noise and air pollution has been inadequate. We ask that responsibility for the assessment of its environmental impacts be transferred to an independent and transparent organization that makes its findings public.

Six, we ask Parliament to take back control and monitoring of the international airports in Canada, a role that was relinquished in 1992, when this was taken over by private organizations. Hundreds of citizens consider that the increased noise due to airplanes is a result of Parliament relinquishing its oversight. This change created negative impacts on the health and quality of life of thousands of people in Canada and on the Island of Montreal.

[Translation]

Seven, we ask that you take into consideration the analysis of Canada's international airports by Michel Nadeau and Jacques Roy, of the Institute for Governance of Private and Public Organizations. I provided a copy of their work to the committee clerk in both official languages. This study is very revealing of the situation and is accompanied by recommendations that are full of common sense.

These observations and recommendations are the fruit of thousands of hours of work since 2013 provided by volunteers living on the Island of Montreal and coming from all walks of life. These volunteers deplore the noise and air pollution created by the low-flying airplanes over the cities and boroughs of the Island of Montreal.

I will summarize my remaining points because my time is limited.

One of the many actions that led to these requests is a petition of 3,000 names that was tabled in the House of Commons in 2013. The Minister of Transport at the time, the Hon. Lisa Raitt, swept it aside.

We have installed noise measuring stations. This morning, you got an example of the graph they produce. Our stations are public and permanently measure airborne noise at about ten locations in Montreal.

We have tried, together with the citizens of the Papineau riding, to raise awareness of the Right Hon. Justin Trudeau. Our request for an appointment was refused: it seems that the member for Papineau does not want to meet his constituents.

In May, we wrote to the Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, requesting public hearings on this \$4.5 billion project. We have not received any response. I even followed up by phone.

● (0905)

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Lachapelle, I'm sorry to interrupt, but we're over your time limit, and I can assure you that the committee has many questions for you. I'm just going to have to move on to the committee members and their questions.

Mr. Lachapelle has sent in, in French only, a lot of recommendations. There are over 400 pages of what appears, based on his testimony, to be some very important information. Would the committee like the 400 pages translated and distributed, or should we give it all to the analysts to include in the report? Would that be the better thing, to give it all to the analysts so they can review those recommendations and insert them into the report?

Mr. Wrzesnewskyj, go ahead.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Madam Chair, just for clarity, are the 400 pages all recommendations, or is it a report with recommendations? If the recommendations are a smaller portion of this report, I wouldn't mind having just the recommendations part translated, but if it's 400 pages of recommendations....

The Chair: It's 400 pages of various reports that are here, so the suggestion is to take the recommendations specifically and have them translated into both official languages. All that additional information in the 400 pages will then be sent to the analyst for inclusion in her report.

Is everybody good with that?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: All right, thank you. We'll make sure everybody gets the recommendations, Mr. Lachapelle.

Now we're going to move on to questions from the committee members.

Mrs. Block, go ahead.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I want to thank our witnesses for joining us today. We're probably nearing the end of our study, and it's been a very good study on the issue of noise around our airports and the effects on communities.

Mr. Kaiser, my first question is for you. Other witnesses have testified that the negative health effects of aviation noise are related to noise annoyance, and you started to get into that a little more. Would you take some time to answer that a bit more fully? Do you agree with that?

Mr. David Kaiser: Clearly, annoyance is part of the impact. Annoyance is the most studied impact of environmental noise internationally. It's been studied for many years in Europe and now to some extent in North America. It's most common. For example, the studies we've done in Montreal show that about 20% of people say they're highly annoyed by at least one source of environmental noise.

Annoyance is common; it's present and it does have an impact on the quality of life and health. I think what's important from a public health perspective is to make sure we don't see it as just an annoyance problem. Annoyance is real, and it's problematic, but sleep disturbance is quite separate from annoyance, and I'll explain why.

From a health perspective, the problem with sleep disturbance is not so much annoyance or waking up and realizing an airplane went overhead and it's annoying to wake up; the body's response to noise at night is physiological. We know from many laboratory studies, calibrated studies of sleep disturbance, that you don't need to be waking up to have that impact on long-term cardiovascular health and obesity.

Annoyance is an issue, but sleep disturbance is a separate issue. It's much more tied to the long-term effects of heart health. We need to make sure that we have both of those together. From a regulatory and public health perspective, the strategies for dealing with annoyance are not necessarily the same as those dealing with sleep disturbance, because sleep disturbance is really a nighttime issue for the majority of the population. I think it's important to have both.

● (0910)

Mrs. Kelly Block: Thank you.

We've also had many witnesses suggest that public health organizations like Health Canada should develop noise standards based on human health. Do you think this would be an effective initiative? If you do, what factors would need to be included in this kind of standard, and who would need to be at the table?

Mr. David Kaiser: In terms of noise standards, there is already a very good starting point, which is the WHO guidelines. They were just renewed, and they are based on the best available evidence. We know what we should be aiming for; we have that information. The recommendation for aircraft noise is 45 decibels of an indicator they call Lden. It's a weighted indicator that penalizes noise in the evening and at night.

The issue of standards is important, but we have a very good idea of what we should be aiming for. After that, should public health organizations have a role in that? Absolutely, but the issue is really how we get there. Who needs to be around the table at every level, from the local/regional level to provincial and federal? It's the agencies responsible for zoning and planning, which means municipalities and ministries of planning and development, and the agencies responsible for transport, which means different types of transport at every level. I also think citizen participation is really important.

Who should be around the table? Health should be at the table, clearly, but it's more to bring the information. We already know what we need to do and where we should be aiming. The people who actually do something are much more in planning and transport, and the people who are impacted need to be there too. I think those are the essential building blocks.

Mrs. Kelly Block: How much time do I have?

The Chair: You have almost two minutes.

Mrs. Kelly Block: All right.

Mr. Lachapelle, how would you propose that airport authorities balance the concerns of citizens and communities surrounding night flights with the economic benefits that are offered by these flights?

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle: I'll answer in French, if I may.

Until now, I believe that the airport authorities have failed in their responsibilities to be good neighbours, at least with respect to Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport.

This is a very broad question you are asking, and it concerns the balance between the economy and public health. Montrealers affected by noise pollution, particularly aircraft noise, are certainly seeing their productivity decline. Indeed, unable to sleep, they enter the workplace tired or call in to inform their boss that they won't be in to work. This has an economic impact.

We can't go back to the Middle Ages, when people died at age 30. We are in the 21st century, and airport authorities in Canada are behaving as if we were in the Middle Ages. It is up to Parliament to bring these people to their senses. There is an imbalance at the moment, not on the economic side, but on the environmental and public health side. These people affected by aircraft noise and suffering from psychiatric problems will need to be treated. You will therefore have to increase taxes to add beds in hospitals.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Lachapelle.

You have some very good points. Thank you very much.

We'll move on to Mr. Iacono.

[Translation]

Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to thank the witnesses for being here this morning.

Mr. Kaiser, Montreal's public health authority has conducted several studies on noise, which led to the publication of a public health notice on the health risks associated with noise from aircraft movements at Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport.

Could you send this document to the clerk, as well as all the others you mentioned this morning? We'd also like to receive two other very interesting documents, the public health notice on transport noise and its potential impact on the health of Montrealers, and "*Le bruit et la santé; État de la situation*".

● (0915)

Mr. David Kaiser: Yes. Absolutely.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: You've certainly done a lot of studies. Are there any others that should be conducted with respect to this issue? What aspects should be focused on?

Mr. David Kaiser: That's a very good question.

Of course we want to know more and better document the problem. Let me come back to what I said earlier: noise is harmful to health, and we have already gathered very good evidence on this subject. In Montreal, we are one step ahead of several other major Canadian cities in the collection of city-specific data. That being said, work is currently under way in several cities, including Toronto and Vancouver, to do the same documentation work. It is important to collect data locally if you want to take action that is appropriate for the region. It is of course possible to use data from other associations, but it should be possible to rely on specific data. In Toronto, for example, will the proportion of people who say they are very bothered by noise be 2%, 3%? This remains to be verified.

What is essential, as I said at the end of my presentation, is to have access to the data in order to do follow-up. This is a real need. This is not about research, but rather what is called surveillance in public health. A sufficient understanding of what is happening with respect not only to noise levels generated, but also to air movements is required to ensure that health interventions can be implemented. For example, it is necessary to understand the increase in certain types of trajectories and the movements of arriving and departing airlines, as well as the potential impact of all this, before looking for ways to work on them. Once again, the need for data is paramount.

The next step is to get the right people around the table, who should agree on a noise control policy at both the provincial and federal levels. This does not necessarily require more data, but action. Data must be integrated into work at the political level.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: You've spoken a lot about data. If you have any documents on the subject, be they on the status of the situation or analyses, could you share them with us?

Mr. David Kaiser: Yes, I'll send you all the scientific articles we have, as well as the notices mentioned earlier.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Perfect.

Who are the members of the Soundscape Consultative Committee, do you know?

Mr. David Kaiser: This committee was set up when the public health branch began working on noise issues related to the airport. At the moment, in Montreal, there is no functional committee made up of all the stakeholders in the field.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Are any doctors on the committee?

Mr. David Kaiser: There were some at the beginning, and the public health branch was also present. It should be noted that Aéroports de Montréal has legal obligations in this regard and that the company has formed its own committee. There is no longer an intersectoral committee like the one established initially, almost 10 years ago.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: We could say today that this committee is ineffective, couldn't we?

Mr. David Kaiser: Yes. In fact, it no longer exists in this format.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Thank you.

Mr. Lachapelle, you mentioned a petition and the fact that it had been brushed aside. And the response from the minister at the time was apparently a bit evasive.

Could you elaborate on that? What was the intent of the petition?

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle: The petition was filed in 2013. I have to say that our thinking, at Les Pollués de Montréal-Trudeau, has evolved since then. The petition contained a number of requests, but the three main ones were: a review of landing paths at Pierre Elliott Trudeau Airport, the presence of public representatives on the airport's board of directors and the issue of curfew.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Mr. Lachapelle, could you please provide shorter answers; otherwise, I won't have time to get answers to all my questions.

What year was the petition organized?

• (0920)

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle: You're asking me what was in the petition, right?

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Yes. What was it exactly?

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle: I made three requests. First, there was the issue of the curfew. Next, as I explained, there was the issue of flight paths. Lastly, the third thing had to do with the make-up of the airport's board of directors.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: When was the petition drafted? What year?

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle: It was filed in early 2013 by three MPs: Ms. Mourani, Mr. Garneau, who was replacing Stéphane Dion in his absence, and an NDP MP whose name I always forget, who represented the Lac-Saint-Louis and Dorval region.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: And what was the outcome of the petition?

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle: We received an acknowledgement of receipt from the House of Commons, signed by Ms. Raitt. I could send you the form we received. It was flatly refused. She responded that our requests came under the Montreal airport. It was what we call in French, in Quebec, a "*maison de fous*", or a madhouse: you're sent from kiosk to kiosk, door to door, to find a solution.

[English]

It's a merry-go-round for citizens.

[Translation]

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Thank you, Mr. Lachapelle.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll go on to Mr. Aubin.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to thank each of the guests for being with us this morning. You're arriving almost at the end of this study, and there is a very broad consensus in your testimony. I have several questions and would ask you to provide brief answers so I can get as much information as possible. I am now preparing recommendations to table, rather than understanding the issue, since we've already been presented with the real picture.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Natalizio strongly suggested recommending the creation of an ombudsman position, for example. I would like you to tell me quickly if you find this an interesting avenue. If not, would you give more priority to Transport Canada's reappropriating a number of powers that it had before the creation of NAV CANADA, for example, and that it should have?

I would like to hear the answers of Mr. Kaiser, Mr. Lachapelle and Mr. Natalizio, in that order.

Mr. David Kaiser: I will give you the same answer: this need is real. If Transport Canada is the authority, that's fine, but then it's about bringing the right people to the table and aiming for a more permanent structure and policies to control noise.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Thank you.

What do you think about it, Mr. Lachapelle?

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle: Responsibility should be assigned to Transport Canada, with accountability to the public.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Thank you.

Would you like to add anything, Mr. Natalizio?

[English]

Mr. Antonio Natalizio: We have a situation where both Nav Canada and the airport authorities are accountable to no one. Health issues are not going to be addressed by organizations that have a private interest. These are issues that have to be addressed by the government. There's no other way.

I've studied airports around the world. The best ones—the ones that have night curfews, that have restricted hours of operation that are eight hours long and not just six hours, as we have at Toronto Pearson, for example—

Mr. Robert Aubin: Sorry—

Mr. Antonio Natalizio: —they are done by regulation, not by goodwill. It's clear.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Could you also talk to us about the notion of data? The graph you sent us, Mr. Lachapelle, speaks for itself.

Is the data you collect at your stations recognized when you interact with the Montreal-Trudeau Airport consultative committee or with NAV CANADA or Transport Canada, or are you told that this data is not conclusive?

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle: Our measurements are made at our measuring stations, which are equipped with devices that are not certified or approved internationally. However, they have been validated by devices of this type. If our stations have a defect, it is because they exaggerate airborne noise by 2 decibels, which is not significant when the reading is between 70 and 80 decibels.

Mr. Robert Aubin: I fully understand.

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle: The authorities reject them, but we are eager to see the data of Aéroports de Montréal. That data is secret. This is a democratic society, and Aéroports de Montréal has secret data.

Mr. Robert Aubin: I understand the problem. Not only do you not have access to the data and recommendations will have to be made, but the authorities don't recognize yours, which are based on the same type of devices.

Mr. Kaiser, you said that internationally, it was becoming increasingly clear. However, the Minister of Transport, in almost every one of his bills, always talks to us about harmonization. It is clear, as we have seen, particularly in the case of the passenger charter, that the European Union is far ahead of us.

Is there a model country or model law that we should use as a basis for our recommendations?

● (0925)

Mr. David Kaiser: That's the burning question.

Instead, I would tell you that we have made a lot of progress in Quebec over the past three to five years. For example, there is ongoing work to adopt a provincial noise policy, which is in part a result of work undertaken in Montreal 10 years ago.

It would really be difficult to draw inspiration from a legislative framework that is very different from ours, such as that of the European Union, and to try to draw conclusions from it. I think we should rely on other parameters instead. We could study the reciprocal influence of environment and health or transport and health, and then use the results of these studies to create our own model. Things are going very differently in Europe.

Quebec has done a lot of work on this issue, and we could learn from it and build on it.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Thank you.

Do I have a minute left, Madam Chair?

[English]

The Chair: Yes, you have one minute left.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin: With regard to the public health problem related to noise around airports, aren't we also witnessing a change in the urban landscape? I mean, the wealthiest people don't hesitate to move as soon as they realize the problem caused by the proximity of an airway.

Are we witnessing the creation of poorer neighbourhoods where health problems will increase, because of this exodus due to the noise problem?

Mr. David Kaiser: It's a very complex issue. I can answer that this is the case in general, but not for this specific issue at the moment.

I will be very honest about this. With regard to environmental and transportation noise in a city like Montreal, it is clear that the most disadvantaged people are those who are most exposed because of their location near noise-generating factors.

However, for reasons that go back several years, this is not necessarily the case at the airport. It would be dishonest to say otherwise. No doubt noise reduces home equity, but in Montreal, the problem of aircraft noise is a somewhat special case in relation to health inequalities.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Is it the same for Ontario?

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Aubin. I'm sorry.

Mr. Hardie, go ahead.

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

As the witnesses can tell, we're compressed for time.

If we ask for short answers, please feel free to follow up with something a bit more fulsome if there are more points you want to make.

Is it Dr. Kaiser or Mr. Kaiser?

Mr. David Kaiser: It can be either, but I'm a doctor.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Okay, it's Dr. Kaiser. I wish we would put proper salutations in our notes here.

On the issue of daytime versus nighttime, we take the point that sleep deprivation caused by interruption is not a very good thing.

In the daytime, it's more of an annoyance feature, and obviously, as much as people want flights to be reduced at nighttime, we can't make the same argument in the daytime because of the economics of the airport and what it needs to do.

If you were sitting in our chair and looking at making recommendations, would you suggest that we parse the nighttime effect versus the daytime effect?

Mr. David Kaiser: From a scientific perspective, definitely, but we also have to think about what can actually be done.

I think overall exposure to noise and daytime exposure to noise are maybe more in the domain of urban planning, zoning, sound insulation, and making sure that we don't expose more people—for example, that we don't build buildings right next to airports if we can avoid it.

With the nighttime noise, if you could snap your fingers and have no more planes after 11 at night or before seven in the morning, that problem would be gone, even if you have people living next to the airport.

I would definitely separate those out.

Mr. Ken Hardie: I'd like to challenge all of you to take a 360° look at this, because the focus is on airplane noise. If the airplane noise went away, a lot of people would notice that there are a lot of other noises out there too.

Mr. David Kaiser: Sure.

Mr. Ken Hardie: There are cars, trucks, motorcycles; there are loud stereos; there are noisy neighbours and a lot of other things. It occurs to me that I've slept in a few hotels at airports, and I can sleep very well because they are built not to let that sound in. So we need to look at home construction standards. Perhaps, as well, there may be an experiment to be had with what you might call active acoustic sound control, like the noise-cancelling headphones you can wear that totally obliterate all outside noise. These are getting more sophisticated and more effective, and there could be a community experiment where we actually allow people to try these and see if their sleep improves, especially.

We have airports, flight paths and runway usage that have to be considered. We have aircraft, the flight techniques and the design. I understand there is one brand of Airbus that could use some retrofits, and Air Canada is going through that process with its fleet right now.

We have regulations with respect to operating hours, and that has to be part of the mix. You mentioned, Dr. Kaiser, that municipal planning, airport location and development along the flight paths have to be much better managed, and as we look at new airports we have to keep the municipalities from growing around them. We should have learned something by now.

Then, finally, when it comes to home construction, there is much more we can do with respect to soundproofing and, again, sort of acting on the personal and active sound control that you can apply in a building and individually.

Again, it's the other sources. This isn't just an airport thing. If the airplanes went away, you'd start to notice a lot of other noises as well.

I'll just conclude quickly here by saying that the challenge is for the complete circle of suggestions. This isn't just an airport issue. It's more a quality of life and community issue that needs a complete 360° look.

Okay, that's it. Thank you.

● (0930)

The Chair: Would you like to hear any response to your comments, or move on?

Mr. Ken Hardie: Well, the challenge is out there to come back to us with something. We know what the complaints sound like.

Dr. Kaiser, we'll go back to you on this one.

A voice: I would like to respond.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Yes, sure, by all means.

Mr. Antonio Natalizio: Just recently, I read a medical article from a sleep expert who says there isn't a major organ within the body or a process within the brain that isn't detrimentally impaired when we don't get enough sleep.

There is another article that I've also read recently: You can fool the conscious mind by masking noise, but you cannot fool the unconscious mind. It is the one that is affecting all our organs and body.

From my point of view, last night was the only night I got a good night's sleep in the last three nights, because the wind has been blowing from the northwest and our runway is being used frequently throughout the day. Two nights ago, there were more than 30 planes that went over. I couldn't get any sleep. The night before last, it was the same thing. The bags under my eyes are really not a reflection of my age. That is just sleep deprivation.

Mr. Ken Hardie: You're 27, right?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Ken Hardie: Seriously, sir, I do take your point. We've said this before. We are looking at balancing the environment—in this case the human environment—with the economy. We can't shut down the airports, and it isn't easy to move them, so we do have to look at all options, including, obviously, the ones you have raised.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Hardie.

We'll go on to Mr. Wrzesnewskyj.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to underline a point you made, Dr. Kaiser, when you suggested the best time for a curfew. You said from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. I just wanted to make sure that point was underlined.

Mr. Natalizio, you've lived in Markland Wood for 44 years. Forty-four years ago there were no night flights. Along with your statement, you've provided an excellent brief with a number of different sections to it. I'd like to go to the section entitled "Pearson in perspective". I believe it's quite informative.

No matter which airport you look at in Canada, the impacts of nighttime airplane noise are real for those who are experiencing it. It's fascinating that Pearson is the source of approximately 460,000 out of 1,200,000 flights in the country, which is about 38%, yet the level of complaints from Pearson.... When you take in all the complaints across the whole country, there were 175,540 complaints, and Pearson generated 168,000 of them, or 96% of all complaints in the country.

I just wanted to bring that perspective, because I'd like you to talk about what kind of neighbour and what kind of corporate citizen the GTAA is. They testified before committee earlier this week, and we've experienced in the past how they provide a very rosy picture, especially to elected officials. You call their night impact study "gratuitous", and you have a section you call "My Experience at Dialogue with the GTAA".

Could you perhaps tell us succinctly how they deal with the neighbours?

• (0935)

Mr. Antonio Natalizio: That's a very important question. I've heard the statements made by the GTAA here two days ago. Basically, they tried to leave the impression that they were making progress. The fact remains that airport complaints have been increasing by 50% each year in the last three years. How can you tell me, as a resident, that the airport is making progress in addressing noise issues?

I have tried to engage with the GTAA over the last couple of years, but it's not meaningful dialogue. In their noise management action plan, which I'm sure the committee has heard about, they say:

With our new Noise Management Action Plan, the culmination of two years of extensive study and consultation, we intend to make Toronto Pearson an international leader in aviation noise management.

That's music to everyone's ears, but it's simply not true. Toronto Pearson is starting from the bottom of the heap, and everyone who's read the Helios best practices report will know that. The action plan talks about more studies and more consultations. There is very little that's concrete, and what little there is may lift Pearson from last place to second-last place, but certainly not to the top.

For example, they talked about the A320 noise fix, which is really a very small thing. Many airlines did it years ago, because it's really a cheap fix. Despite that, we have to wait until 2020, and we're not even sure they will all be done, because Air Canada is not the only one.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Thank you, Mr. Natalizio.

Could you provide us with a full copy of your correspondence, just so we can see how the GTAA tends to deal with citizens with concerns such as yours?

Mr. Antonio Natalizio: I would really be delighted to do that.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Also, in your brief—

The Chair: There are 45 seconds remaining.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: —you called the night budget "a strange creation". It's now allowing close to 20,000 night movements per year, which amounts to 53 per night and nine per minute.

You've talked about your personal experiences. How is it impacting the community in general?

Mr. Antonio Natalizio: All you have to do is look at the number of complaints. When I moved into this community—

The Chair: Please give a very brief response, Mr. Natalizio.

• (0940)

Mr. Antonio Natalizio: —there were 250 noise complaints. Now we have 168,000. They have gone up 64,000%.

In 1974, there were 12 complaints per 1,000 flights. Now there is one complaint for every three flights.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We will go on to Mr. Liepert.

Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm going to try to get in two questions, so I'll ask you to try to be as brief as you can.

I represent a Calgary riding that is a half-hour's drive from the airport. However, they opened a new runway a couple of years ago, and they changed the flight path. All of a sudden, I'm getting all of these complaints about aircraft noise.

I decided to organize a town hall meeting so people would have the opportunity to raise these concerns. We had the heads of the airport authority and Nav Canada in attendance. I couldn't believe the number of people who lived on the same street as the individual complaining about aircraft noise who were telling me, "Why am I wasting everybody's time? Yes, sure, there are a few more aircraft, but the noise is just part of life." I don't want to downplay the significance of aircraft noise, because I have full confidence in the people who have made the complaints to me.

How do we, as a committee, balance the views of those folks who seem to be a lot more affected by noise than maybe their neighbours are?

I'll throw in my second question at the same time, and then each of you can respond accordingly.

We've heard a number of presentations asking for banning night flights. I think the other thing that this committee has to balance is the noise issue with the changing economic times. We all know that a high percentage of shopping today is done online. People want their product the next day, whether they are in business or whether they are consumers. That's another thing we have to balance, as a committee, in our recommendations.

I would just ask all three of you, briefly, to comment on what I have just stated.

Mr. Antonio Natalizio: Well, there are those who want overnight deliveries for everything they buy online, and those of us who want a good night's sleep. There are those who would profit from night flights, and there are those who suffer from them. There are both economic benefits and costs.

What if the net benefit is zero, or even negative? Should night flights be allowed if they have a net financial cost to society? More importantly, should night flights be allowed if they have a net benefit to society, even though a segment of society is deprived of sleep, which is a basic human right?

One recent night, 37 planes flew over my house, as I mentioned earlier. Each—

Mr. Ron Liepert: Sir, I'd like you to help us make a recommendation. Is your recommendation, regardless of what I said, that night flights have to be banned?

Mr. Antonio Natalizio: There is a situation at Toronto Pearson that may be unique. The airport offers both Air Canada and WestJet a fixed price deal in lieu of landing fees and other fees. This is like a fixed price, all-you-can-eat buffet for the airlines, and they've really been gorging—

Mr. Ron Liepert: Okay, that's another suggestion we'll take into account.

Dr. Kaiser, go ahead.

Mr. David Kaiser: I'll give two parts in response. One is from a public health perspective. Our goal is to reduce risk to as close to zero as we can. It was mentioned before that there are many other sources of noise. We have to take all of them into account. The objective should be to reduce exposure if we can. With something like airplanes, we can. We could have no more airplanes; there would be no more exposure. It's not like things that are in the environment that we're obliged to live with. We could make a choice and reduce that exposure to zero. That's my public health perspective; I think it has to be that.

The second part is in terms of the committee. Yes, you need to make recommendations. From your intervention, I get that the issue of noise sensitivity, for example, is important. Some people are more sensitive to noise than others. From a scientific perspective, the studies that have looked at that don't necessarily find that it's a major factor when you take the relationship between noise sources and the impacts on health at population level.

Of course, it's important to consider feasibility and to balance benefits and risks. I think that is where data on airplane movements, noise levels and impacts on the population is super important, so you're not relying on anecdote.

• (0945)

Mr. Ron Liepert: I would agree with that.

Mr. David Kaiser: The recommendation that addresses that directly is that if we want to make good choices, we need to have the information necessary to make those choices.

Mr. Ron Liepert: If I had more time, I'd ask you about the data thing.

Do we have time for a brief comment from the gentleman from Montreal?

The Chair: Make it very brief.

Mr. Ron Liepert: Go ahead, sir.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Lachapelle: I would definitely say the curfew.

I don't think the economy is going to suffer because a bottle of perfume or an article of clothing someone ordered on Amazon gets delivered six or 12 hours later than scheduled. Here's the imbalance, as I see it: public health is being sacrificed for the sake of the economy, which is increasingly invasive. We are all for a strong economy, but not at the expense of public health.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Lachapelle.

Thank you to all of our witnesses.

Mr. Jeneroux, were you trying to flag me down?

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Yes, Madam Chair. I will be very brief.

We've heard through the grapevine that there is a possibility that the meeting next Thursday with the minister may not be televised. I just wanted to make sure that... It's on his mandate letter; it's not time-sensitive, and we're flexible on the date of the meeting in order for it to be televised. I wanted to let you, as the Chair, know that.

The Chair: The clerk has been working extensively to try to see if we can get that.

Your suggestion is that if we can't get that, you'd like to hold that meeting off until we can actually televise it.

Mr. Matt Jeneroux: It's not ideal, but yes.

The Chair: Okay. The clerk will attempt to do her magic for us.

Mr. Liepert, go ahead.

Mr. Ron Liepert: I also wanted to ask about where we're at in this particular study, with witnesses and so on.

I think we had asked at some point to have the airlines come before us. Could the clerk give us an update on what we have for witnesses going forward?

The Chair: Yes. Go ahead.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Marie-France Lafleur): It will be December 11 with Air Canada, WestJet and ATAC.

Mr. Ron Liepert: Is that our last meeting?

The Clerk: That would be our last hour of meeting.

The Chair: We've had a fair amount of interest, not only from our colleagues, but from members of the general public. We could hold another two meetings in the new year if the committee would like to do that.

Mr. Ron Liepert: I'm not sure that's necessary. Have you had requests from members for other witnesses? With all due respect, I think we've certainly heard from those who are impacted by it. If we're going to have any extended meetings on this, I would like to hear from people who would actually have some solutions.

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Ron Liepert: Do we have requests for other witnesses?

The Chair: We don't right now.

Mr. Ron Liepert: Then I would suggest we stick with our plan.

The Chair: Mr. Wrzesnewszky, go ahead.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Madam Chair, there seems to be an issue with the response that came back to my question for Transport Canada about the increase on the night budget, compared to the answers given before the committee. Perhaps in the next meeting we could set aside five minutes or so to discuss how we might deal with that particular issue.

The Chair: I don't believe the committee is aware of the discrepancy you're trying to get clarified, between the testimony that was given and some documentation that has been received and that is inconsistent with the testimony.

Leave that with me, and we'll see how we can do some magic to make it all happen from that avenue.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Thank you.

The Chair: I have to suspend this part of the session so we can move on to our M-177 discussion.

Thank you very much to the witnesses for sharing their time and their recommendations with us.

• (0945)

(Pause)

• (0950)

The Chair: I'm calling the meeting to order. Would our witnesses please take their places, and the other conversations exit the room?

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are now commencing our study of the subject matter of M-177.

Mr. Fuhr, as the person who introduced the motion, would you like to speak for a moment before we introduce the witnesses?

• (0955)

Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.): Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I won't take much time, but I want to thank the committee for taking this up so quickly. I don't think this motion passed more than about 19 hours ago, so this is—

The Chair: We're a very efficient committee.

Mr. Stephen Fuhr: I'd have to check to see if there's one that's gone to committee faster.

I thank my colleagues for their support on this motion. It's a very important issue. Air travel, aviation and pilot production are very important to this country. It affects us in a major way. If it's not healthy, it will have economic impacts that I think all of us agree would be very negative.

I'll leave it to you, and hopefully I'll get to answer a question or two. I have to chair the defence committee at 11 a.m., so I'll go back to you.

The Chair: We'll do what we can.

As witnesses, we have Johanne Domingue, President of the Comité antipollution des avions de Longueuil; and Cedric Paillard, President and Chief Executive Officer of Ottawa Aviation Services.

Mr. Paillard, would you like to go first? You have five minutes only.

Mr. Cedric Paillard (President and Chief Executive Officer, Ottawa Aviation Services): Thank you very much. Thank you for your time.

For expediency, I'm going to read my notes. That way will be most efficient.

The Chair: Please.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Good morning. Thank you for inviting Ottawa Aviation Services to be part of the committee's study of flight training schools in Canada.

Our school of professional pilot training is specifically designed for our students to succeed in this industry. The quality of our programs has been recognized by Canadian airlines such as Porter, Jazz, Air Georgian and Keewatin Air. They have formed close partnerships with us now as a result of the quality of the training we're providing.

Thanks to our program, successful graduates who meet the required standards and benchmarks of the course can be put into fast-track paths to a job on the right seat of an airliner, from the CRJ aircraft to Q400 and Boeing 737, a fairly large piece of equipment. I am immensely proud of the graduates and the staff who have actually achieved this training for them. Over the past seven years, we're proud to say, we've had 100% of our graduates employed in the sector as pilots.

OAS is dedicated to good Canadian corporate citizenship. We understand the importance of the aviation sector and its tight link with the socio-economic fabric of Canada, particularly in our northern communities, where aviation is at the centre of their economic development.

I encourage you to review our written brief. It outlines ways in which the federal government and flight training organizations such as OAS can work together to address the pilot shortage to the benefit of our national aviation sector and the Canadian economy as a whole.

No one in this room needs to be convinced of the realities of the impending global pilot shortage. Last year in Montreal, at the ICAO summit of next-generation aviation professionals, the secretary general noted that in 2036, worldwide, 600,000 pilots will be needed to meet the global demand. Within our borders, we are actually talking about an acute pilot shortage that is already creating some issues in specific regions by cancelling flights, and in certain sectors, with some medevac, cargo, and charter flights being cancelled.

For many industries, economies and people, air travel is a necessity, a must. While 2036 seems like a long time from now or a distant future, the reality is that these pilots need about two to four years to be trained and, once they are trained, another three to five years to become captains. The flight schools are uniquely positioned to help face this challenge head on—we see it every day—as long as we are given the tools and the resources to do so.

The first thing we need to focus on is support for our students. Higher education can be expensive, and students want to know that their investment will pay off with a rewarding career. Given the impending labour shortage in the aviation sector, we believe that the federal government has a role in providing leadership in order to encourage more students to choose flight training. This includes taking steps to allow students access to greater financial support through various means, which the Air Transport Association of Canada, of which OAS is a member, is working on. I believe you will be hearing from them sometime next week.

Currently, as an example, time spent in an aircraft, which is what we call “flight time”, is a requirement for all flight training programs, yet this flight time does not qualify towards instructional time. Therefore, students are not able to qualify for as much financial support as they could. While this is somewhat a provincial issue, by amending the terms of the Canada student loan program, the government will show leadership and encourage the provinces to follow suit.

Experienced flight instructors are the next part of the issue. School like ours across the country are reporting backlogs of students wishing to begin their flight training. Today at OAS, we are approaching 55 students who are waiting for flight training, but we are not able to do that due to the shortage of instructors. The reality is that experienced flight instructors are often scooped up by air carriers after only a few months of instructing. The issue of instructor retention needs to be addressed. It's at an all-time low today. Some of my colleagues in the flight training industry are reporting a turnover of way above 100%.

• (1000)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Paillard. I have to move on to our other witnesses.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Okay.

The Chair: Hopefully, you can get in your remaining comments.

Ms. Domingue, you have five minutes, please.

[Translation]

Ms. Johanne Domingue (President, Comité antipollution des avions de Longueuil): Good morning. I just want to make sure you can hear me.

[English]

The Chair: Yes. Thank you very much. Welcome to the committee.

[Translation]

Ms. Johanne Domingue: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Members of the committee, good morning.

The last time I was here, you told me that the effort to train pilots would continue given the severe shortage of pilots going forward. Rest assured, we fully appreciate the situation.

What we have an issue with is not pilot training, but rather the sites chosen for that training. We are concerned about the compatibility between flight schools and their locations, which tend to be densely populated areas.

The increase in aircraft movements in flight school areas generates excessive noise, in our view. It's not that we don't want flight schools in our backyard. We simply don't want all of them.

Right now, pilots are being trained for the Asian, African, European and Canadian markets, all in the same place. In 2006-07, the Saint Hubert airport was ranked fourth or fifth busiest airport in the country in terms of flight training. In 2008, when the airport was able to provide international flight training, it climbed to first place, where it stayed for a number of years. Since then, the Toronto-Buttonville airport has been its main rival.

What makes the situation unique is that, when the Saint Hubert airport reaches 199,000 flights, and the Dorval Airport reaches 212,000, the summer season is in full swing. The busiest time for flight school training is usually between April and September. In January, we might have 2,000 or 3,000 local flights versus 10,000 to 15,000 a month in the summer.

That means touch and go landings are happening every 60 seconds, day and night, over our homes. A touch and go landing is when an aircraft lands and then takes off without stopping. An aircraft merely touches the ground briefly before taking off, so the motor continues to run at full force. It's an awful noise that never ends.

It's nice in Quebec in the summertime. We are told that, when the weather is nice for us, it's nice for others, as well, and we have to share those months of good weather. Flight schools run from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. What part of the day do residents have to enjoy the good weather? I'll spare you the details, but suffice it to say that cargo planes, helicopters and wide-body aircraft use the Saint Hubert airport as well.

In the summer, going outdoors to enjoy an activity or a meal is almost unthinkable. Some days, there are 800 aircraft movements, and they take place at a rate of every three minutes. We are talking about a noise level of 70 decibels. That's far from negligible. It was all measured and included in a 2009 report. The health impact is significant.

The government has a public health responsibility. In Canada, we should have the right to live in a healthy environment. We protect our wetlands and our wildlife, but do we care about protecting our citizens from noise pollution? Noise is an invasive factor causing residents distress because they have no control over the aircraft flying over their homes or the noise they generate. Not only does this create anxiety among residents, but it also disrupts their sleep.

The last time I appeared before the committee, I submitted a public health report listing all the repercussions. I believe the World Health Organization took a stance on the issue as well. I'll spare you the details, but more and more, these small aircraft are running on leaded gasoline. For the past decade, then, we've been in a dispute with the Saint Hubert airport.

Since 2008, when the number of flights increased, 500 complaints have been filed with Transport Canada and a petition containing 2,000 signatures was presented in the House of Commons. It described the problem as well as the effects. A public consultation process was then held. Finally, in 2011, we launched a class action suit, ending in a court settlement in 2015. Now, consider this: the city then decided to spend \$300,000 to have mufflers installed on flight school planes. Taxpayers were the ones who paid for that. We paid for mufflers just so we could get a bit of peace and quiet.

The settlement also set out a second requirement: the creation of a soundscape committee. It met once in 2018. It held a few meetings in 2016 and 2017, but just one in 2018. There is no set plan outlining the priorities, the problem, the ways in which it must be managed or the measures to be implemented. Would it be possible to conduct studies?

In 2018, after all that, we had to file a motion for contempt of court, because the time frames and agreements weren't being respected. The city wants to expand the service, and the schools want to fully develop their training capacity.

● (1005)

The airport really wants to be profitable but we just want to be able to enjoy a peaceful environment. We know very well that we will live together, but how? I think it takes transparency.

[English]

The Chair: Excuse me, Ms. Domingue. I'm sorry to interrupt, but the five minutes are up. Perhaps you could get in your comments in responses to questions.

[Translation]

Ms. Johanne Domingue: All right.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Eglinski, go ahead, please, for five minutes.

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Thank you.

I'd like to thank the witnesses for being here this morning. I'll start with Cedric.

Cedric, I just want to follow through with what the lady was just speaking about, the noise of the training schools and stuff like that.

I haven't done a lot of flying in eastern Canada, but I've been flying since 1968—so I'm dating myself—mostly in western Canada. But in the major flight schools and major flight areas, such as Vancouver and Edmonton, we have training areas where the schools go to do their flight training, such as manoeuvres, as I think you fully know.

Maybe you can explain it to the committee, but most of these areas are designated and are usually fairly far away from urban centres.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: That's correct, yes.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Would you explain a bit why that is, and the cost to you to transition to and from those?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Sure. Obviously, airplanes need to take off from an airport, and they need to come back to an airport. Most of

the exercises we perform during in-flight training are actually done in specific areas that are well defined. They're actually on our map charts, and we do perform those manoeuvres to train our pilots in those areas.

There's actually one here in Ottawa, between Constance Lake and Constance Bay, on the other side of the river there. We use those areas. I think it does cost and it does take time to actually transition to those zones from the airports. Sometimes the airports are not in those areas, so we do fly to those areas.

I think what we are hearing here is that at the airport there are issues with flight training, and although there are solutions available for us to address them, in my brief you will see that we need the support of the federal government, not necessarily in terms of money but in terms of capabilities for us to actually insert technological changes in the way we train. We have tools today that are not being used because we don't have the authorization of Transport Canada, for example, to do this.

Artificial intelligence, virtual reality, augmented reality, electric aircraft.... There's a whole list of technology that we could actually use, not to remove the noise problems being discussed here, but at least to attack the problem and come up with, as you said, a more manageable situation.

Taking off from and landing at an airport are going to be required. There's no way we can train a pilot without him knowing how to land and take off. But there are ways in which we can actually do it that reduce the noise. We just need a little more support from Transport Canada and from the government to actually get into a position where we can adapt those technologies into a business that is cash flow-sensitive and very profit-dependent, and therefore—

● (1010)

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Thank you.

I know I have a few colleagues here who fly. Out of this group, there are at least four or five of us. I noticed that in your brief you mention government assistance. I'm going to go back to 1968. When I went to get my private pilot's licence, it cost \$500 in those days. I got \$100 back if I continued my flight training to an advanced state, to commercial, and then I could write off the whole commercial training if I went into that area.

Now, the reason they did that back in the 1960s was that we were facing a shortage of pilots in the 1960s because those who came out of World War II were getting older, as our aviation people are today. Maybe you could explain whether this would be of assistance to you. I believe it would, and I believe there is a need to give financial aid to the schools to update equipment and to the students who are enrolling in the programs.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: You're preaching to the converted here.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Yes, but maybe you can pitch back [Inaudible—Editor].

Mr. Cedric Paillard: I think it's an issue for us, making sure those students.... For the program today, just to contrast your numbers with our numbers today, you're looking at a program that will actually allow students to go from zero to the right seat of an airliner at Jazz or at Sunwing on the 737 for \$85,000 to \$90,000. I'm not the cheapest one, and I'm not the most expensive one.

For students, \$85,000 in 18 months is a lot of money. So yes, funding to help them would go a long way for us to actually solve that problem.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We're on to Mr. Badawey.

Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I was happy to hear from Ms. Domingue about strategies being established. I want to drill down on those strategies.

We talked a lot with the previous witnesses about how environmental protection, when it comes to lifestyle and health, is recognizable, and that trying to strike a balance with the economy is the order of the day.

My questions for both witnesses are about just that: How do we now make the connection? How do we take the human health risk assessment...? I talked to Mr. Kaiser earlier, who is a medical officer with the Montreal health office, and asked him whether, in fact, they had that. He told me they do in Montreal but not nationally.

How do we connect the human health risk assessment with an assessment on economy? Of course, the impact is the same. How do we do that? Are you already doing that? Finally, if you're not, how do we actually facilitate that process to happen? This is for both of you.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Ms. Domingue, go ahead.

[Translation]

Ms. Johanne Domingue: One of the first steps would be for the Airport Soundscape Consultative Committee to be truly able to establish the priorities and needs of each location. Then, noise monitoring stations should be installed to know what is happening in our community, and to be able to identify problems and take action. Local residents should also be informed of what this airport is doing in this regard. If an air corridor is a problem, NAV CANADA should be able to study the situation and determine what adjustments are required and how to proceed. All this could be done if the committee were operational and efficient.

There is a training school that used to do 70 takeoffs and landings at night, but has changed its programs so that there are only 17. Are these practices known? Are they shared? I think that training should be reviewed in the field of transport. We understand the safety aspect, but if one school can limit itself to 17 landings or takeoffs, why can't other schools do the same? There must be a willingness to address the problem. As such, there should be silencers on the aircraft. Some models are approved, and we should be able to install some. Propellers are noisy because they are old aircraft from the 1980s or 1990s.

Let's give ourselves the means to resolve the situation. Pilot training in Canada is highly rated: why shouldn't we have a centre of excellence? I'll give you another example. The City of Miramichi does not impose any noise restrictions. We should therefore set up training centres there. Let's stop putting these centres in densely populated areas and instead develop the rural environment. That is the problem. That is what we are experiencing now. We provide training all over the world. So let's give ourselves the means and become an international benchmark.

• (1015)

[English]

Mr. Cedric Paillard: I'm not an economist, and I don't try to be. It's difficult to actually assess economic impacts in general, but from a training, safety and competency point of view, based on what the airlines are asking us, what Transport Canada is allowing us to do and what technology is available, I think there are options, solutions, that can be used if we work as a team to solve those problems regarding noise.

I'll give you one example. To be an airline transport pilot today, you need 100 hours of flight time at night. That's a serious number of hours that need to be built up. What we do at OAS is send our students all around the country at night, because Transport Canada is mandating that they need to have 100 hours of flight training at night. I could do way more training and way more efficient training, and they could learn a lot more, if I was putting them into a simulator for 20 hours with a scenario-based training environment, and I could reduce my number of hours at night by half or by three-quarters—by whatever the risk assessment analysis would show.

The problem is that a simulator today is half a million dollars. Ours is a fairly large school, so we have maybe more means to play with, but a school that has 20 or 30 students won't be able to offer a simulator of half a million dollars on the economics presented to them.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Paillard.

We'll go to Mr. Aubin.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'll give my time to my colleague, whose riding is directly affected by a flying school.

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Thank you very much, Mr. Aubin.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses.

Ms. Domingue, I find your presence here extremely valuable. I think you are the example that best illustrates the angle of the coexistence of airports, and flying schools in particular, with a densely populated area. I would like to point out that beyond the six short minutes I have to talk to you, I hope that everyone around the table will listen to your point of view. The NDP had proposed an amendment that stated that a bill should include a study on the public health consequences of noise pollution and demonstrate greater transparency in the distribution of data collected on the issue, as you mentioned earlier. Unfortunately, this amendment was rejected.

To this end, I would like to tell people around the table that Ms. Domingue is a marathon runner when it comes to representing the rights of riverside communities.

Honestly, this is the most obvious case in Canada of mismanagement regarding the establishment of flying schools in a densely populated area. Obviously, Ms. Domingue, you have been faced with poor management of the situation. I will soon give you the floor, but first I would like to remind you of something important. Too many people say that the people of Saint-Hubert knew very well that they were moving close to an airport. I always remind them that Saint-Hubert Airport, located in a very small suburb of Montreal, is the sixth busiest airport in Canada, after Toronto Pearson International Airport, Dorval Airport, probably Edmonton International Airport, Vancouver International Airport and another one that I forget. This is no joke.

Your testimony perfectly illustrates that, if we don't take this into account in advance when planning the arrival of a flying school, we end up with citizens without resources. You fought, you did everything you could to get corrective action. Is the situation better today or is it clearly not?

Ms. Johanne Domingue: We held a public consultation and we had 45 recommendations. All we were asking was to sit down together and look at what could be done.

They just finished installing the silencers. Next summer, we will probably see a difference. They will still have to be evaluated. Silencers are being installed, but what will that do in practice? The solution probably does not lie only in silencers. It is one step in the process to achieve a certain climate.

In fact, the airport has not taken this seriously and has not taken the time to sit down with the public, with NAV CANADA or with Transport Canada. Transport Canada is constantly absent from the meetings of the Soundscape Consultative Committee. It is never represented there, I believe. If it had been, I think we could have found ways to come up with effective action plans.

As citizens, we have managed to solve a small part of the problem, namely with two schools. However, there are other schools and other people who come to do touch and go's. Has the problem been solved in Saint-Hubert, despite the class action suit? No, the problem has not been solved.

• (1020)

Mr. Pierre Nantel: I think everyone here has asked you questions, Ms. Domingue. I also invite you to send us the documents to which you refer, including those relating to the consultation. The government must recognize that a situation like the one in Saint-

Hubert has been going on since flight schools emerged. We will not go over the history, but clearly your life changed in 2008.

Ms. Johanne Domingue: Absolutely.

In 2008 and 2009, there were between 10,000 and 15,000 local movements per month. That's equivalent to one movement every minute. Our lives have changed. As we were saying, we were under attack. Going outside became unthinkable.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: That's very clear.

Ms. Johanne Domingue: We have even heard someone ask whether we were at war, because there were so many flights.

In short, we have the means, but we have no will. When I came here today, I wondered whether there was a willingness to help the people, in the same way as there is to help the various affected areas. When we vote for elected officials, we assume that they will take care of human beings too.

[English]

The Chair: You have 30 seconds remaining, sir.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Ms. Domingue, as I was saying, the government rejected the amendment that we were proposing. I think it must still be at the heart of the legislation. It is well worded in the text, that it is necessary to "determine whether the infrastructure available to flight schools meets the needs of the schools and the communities where they are located".

Do you feel that Transport Canada has the contacts they need to respond to problematic situations such as those of the people of Saint-Hubert?

Ms. Johanne Domingue: I must tell you that Transport Canada has not responded in the quickest and most favourable way to our requests. I even think the department often causes problems. For example, in the case of an agreement with the community and when faced with a Superior Court decision, Transport Canada got involved and tried to overturn the decision by saying that it will not send notices to aviators, which is a much more confrontational attitude.

When we write to Minister Garneau, he tells us to solve the problem locally, and when we do, the minister decides not to issue the notices we ask for, without really responding to our requests for explanations.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: I hope they'll find a solution for the people of Saint-Hubert. Your situation is a clear case of what not to do.

Thank you, Ms. Domingue.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I'm sorry to interrupt. Your time is up.

Mr. Fuhr, you have five minutes.

Mr. Stephen Fuhr: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I did want to address this noise issue, because I appreciate that there is a sensitivity to noise. I appreciate there's also a hypersensitivity to noise, and there are some things that can be done. Engine technologies on new aircraft are way quieter. There are prop technologies you can adapt to the old aircraft that we typically use for training that can reduce some noise. There's approach pass to airports that you can use with GPS technology that can take the plane out of the way of noise-sensitive areas. There are traffic flow patterns. There are lots of things that can be done.

I was looking at Saint-Hubert on ForeFlight with my colleague. There are more than six other airports within 15 nautical miles where, when you're in the takeoff and landing phase, you could deploy to amortize that noise over a bigger footprint. In reality, the odds are that we're probably not going to build new infrastructure to solve the problem, but there are some things that can be done. I wanted to throw that out there.

With regard to pilot training, Mr. Paillard, how many class 4, 3, 2 and 1 instructors do you have right now?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: We're a little bit lucky at OAS. We have three class 1 and two class 2, and we carry 12 class 4 instructors.

• (1025)

Mr. Stephen Fuhr: Can you quickly explain the importance of those class 1 and class 2 flight instructors to your operation and the production of pilots?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Sure.

These are all technical terms. Class 1 instructors are the top of the food chain. They are allowed to teach how to become an instructor. Class 2 instructors are basically the same as class 1, but they're not allowed to teach instructors. They have a lot of experience and they supervise junior instructors. Class 4 is the most junior instructor you will find. They usually come right out of flight school and are trained by us. Class 3 is an intermediate stage, between class 4 and class 2, where they are given a little less supervision.

When we train pilots, we need to spread our instructors over a number of pilots. We do about six students per instructor, which gives us the ability to have the resources to monitor how the training is done and to ensure quality of training. Those instructors are usually class 4 and class 3. The class 2 instructors supervise the class 3 and the class 4. Basically, the class 1 are teaching those instructors on a regular basis how to improve their performance and how to train properly, quality and safety being at the centre of everything we do.

Mr. Stephen Fuhr: Based on what you said, and my knowledge of the operation, you absolutely require class 1 and class 2 instructors.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Yes.

Mr. Stephen Fuhr: What's the turnover rate of your class 1 and class 2 instructors?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: OAS is a bit special, because we're responding to the need for instructors by hiring carrier instructors. We've promoted the status of instructor to that of a manager. We pay them very well to make sure they stay a long time. At other schools, there isn't the capability to do this. They're reporting 100% to 150% turnaround on those class 1 and class 2 instructors—assuming they

go to class 1 and class 2. Most of our colleague schools don't even see the instructors going to class 1 or class 2.

There is a bit of a vicious circle, where the quality of training and the safety aspect are starting to be felt by a lot of the airlines, because the class 4 instructors, obviously, don't have the experience to actually manage—

Mr. Stephen Fuhr: Do you know how much credit military pilots would get if they were to try to get a civilian licence—those who have retired from the military and aren't really interested in the airlines, and maybe have a B category or an A category?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: No. Well, the answer is yes and no. The answer is peanuts. Basically, we can't do anything. Depending on when and how the military pilot comes out of the tour with the military, it's very difficult for us to actually put them into—

Mr. Stephen Fuhr: I have an A2 category licence and used to run the Instrument Check Pilot School for Canada, with about 900 hours of instructional... Would you say that a guy like me would be capable, with minimal training, to get...seeing as I've supervised people going solo on many occasions, and taught other instructors—

Mr. Cedric Paillard: We can't use you.

Mr. Stephen Fuhr: Well, you can't use me, but how much training do you think I would need? Would I have to go through the whole program?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: It would be 35 hours on the ground, assuming that I can convert your licence to a commercial licence.

Mr. Stephen Fuhr: I have that.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: You have that, so then it's 35 hours on the ground and 30 hours in the airplane.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Paillard.

I'm sorry, your time is up.

We will go on to Mr. Graham.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): I'll keep going on Mr. Fuhr's line of questioning. Mr. Fuhr has flown the Atlantic solo a number of times, which is something I think many pilots would like to do.

How do we get these very experienced pilots into these class 1 and class 2 slots? One of the problems I see is that if everybody who gets a licence goes on to get a really interesting job flying for an airline, then there's nobody left to train them.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: I'm lucky enough to have seen both sides of the Atlantic, solo and as a captain on the aircraft as well. I'm also lucky enough that I've actually been trained on both sides of the Atlantic. Maybe I'll use an example of what's going on in the U.K., France or Spain. There is a program in Europe that brings airline pilots back into the flight schools, particularly in their retirement years. There are programs in place, and I strongly encourage the committee to look at this. It actually works very well.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Is there any equivalent to that in Canada?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: No, there's no equivalent in Canada. The only thing we've done on our side is design a program that goes around this. The program is designed so that experienced pilots are teaching in our program on the simulator side of things. It doesn't replace the experience needed at class 1, class 2 for the *ab initio* stage, when the students are learning their key skills. We don't have anybody who actually.... When you're an airline pilot, such as a Boeing 777 captain, flying from Toronto to Hong Kong, you're not going to go back into a Cessna 172, de-icing an aircraft at -60°C. It's hard for them to transition back to that aircraft.

We have to treat our instructors as professionals, and stand the instructor up on the ladder of the pilot profession. Today, everybody sees being a captain of Boeing 777 at Air Canada as the top of the food chain. Yes, it is, to some extent, but I can tell you that I have a lot of respect for my class 1 instructors who are actually teaching these kids today, because they go out every day, even at -20°C in the winter, and they train those kids very well.

• (1030)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Right. Do you agree with the assessment, building on Mr. Fuhr's comments earlier.... Would it be helpful to make it easier for military instructors to be given some credit in the civilian aviation world for their military instruction experience?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Absolutely, yes. Let me add one thing to this. Military pilots are trained to competency. They're trained to mission-specific training. This is exactly what the airlines today are asking us to do, to reduce the training time. Today, it takes 18 months to train an airline pilot in Canada. We need to move, and Transport Canada needs to move, to a point where we can use competency-based training, as they do in Europe today.

Today, it's not unusual to find an 18-year-old or a 19-year-old Airbus 320 first officer at Aer Lingus, British Airways. In Canada, you will never see that, because we don't have competency-based training in place. We're trying other ways to do it. There are a few schools in Canada that are trying to do this, but it is working around Transport Canada, not working with Transport Canada.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: That's interesting.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: It makes a difference.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I do have more questions, and I don't have a lot more time.

I flew with Ottawa Aviation Services once, with Adam Vandeven. I understand he's not with you anymore.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: No, he's gone.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I think he's at Air Georgian now, the last I heard.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Yes.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: What's the demographic of your students? Is it all Canadians looking to become commercial pilots and instructors, or are there a lot of foreign students coming in, who get trained and then leave for other markets?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Fifty per cent of the population at OAS is actually international students, which is about the average of what we find for schools in Canada. Fifty per cent of our CPLs are actually international passport holders.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Of that 50%, how many are contributing to the growth of Canada's own aviation industry after they leave?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Some of them stay in Canada, because we have this articulation that they can work in Canada, so they go and work for airlines or for flight schools as instructors, but I would say this is maybe 50% of the 50%.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: That's 25%.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Yes.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: All right.

What's the dropout rate? As you talked about, we know it's \$85,000 to get there. Of those who start, what percentage complete their training to the right seat?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Eighty-five per cent complete their training, and 90% of the failure rate is due to financials.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: I'm being cut off by the tower, so thank you.

The Chair: Yes. Thank you very much.

Go ahead, Mr. Eglinski.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Thank you.

I think I'll just follow suit with this.

I think you reported in your written document to us that you pay a 13% excise tax on your fuel, and soon your school alone will be close to \$2 million in annual excise tax. Of course, then we have the carbon tax thrown on top of that, which will add to your costs.

There are those types of costs, but there's also the cost for you to bring that instructor from class 4 through to class 1. I wonder if you could just explain what it would cost your flight school to take a person who just finished his commercial pilot's licence, whether it be a retired military person or just a young student coming in.... What is the cost to the aviation school that you must recuperate?

• (1035)

Mr. Cedric Paillard: It costs us \$10,000 to train someone who has a commercial licence to become an instructor.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Is that class 4?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: That's class 4. After that, we basically bury the cost of the upgrade from class 3 to class 1 into the day-to-day training. The one that costs us the most is actually the \$10,000.

I'll come back to the carbon tax. One thing that is interesting for me when I see a committee like this—and this is my first time.... It's very interesting to see that we have solutions in our pocket today that we can implement to solve the noise issue, to solve the carbon tax issue and to solve the training issue, but we cannot use them because we are either constrained by the regulatory constraints or constrained financially because of the nature of what we can actually get from our students; \$85,000 is pretty much the maximum we will get from our students today.

Just by tweaking things around, we'll actually be able to solve Saint-Hubert's issue, and we'll be able to solve our pilot shortage and use those technologies. By using those aspects, such as the electric aircraft that I mentioned in my brief, which make less noise, the carbon footprint is gone.

If the Canadian government gives us the tools to actually implement that, then that works and we can actually find a solution there. However, if you corner us to a point where we can't move, then that's where we're going to need to ask to be removed from the tax or as an exemption on the tax issue for fuel, because we can't move and we can't train anymore. We have no way to play the financial game that we're playing.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: What you're saying to us is that we have an aviation industry that is ready to modernize, but we cannot modernize, because we have a very old and archaic set of regulation rules governing how you can go about your duties. Maybe you can just dwell on this a little more.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: The answer is that Transport Canada's regulations, the CARs, are really good. Now, we need to put modern elements on top of it that will answer the generation Z people we are training today. It will answer the noise issue. It will answer the pilot shortage and ensure that we have the competency-based training that the airlines are asking us to do. We have the ability to do this. We have the infrastructure to do this. We have the technology to do this. We just need the support to do it, and today, it's not there.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll go on to Mr. Hardie for four minutes.

Mr. Ken Hardie: I'll be splitting my time with Mr. Badawey.

Looking at an article that Michael Moore, the filmmaker, wrote in 2010 talking about pilots on food stamps.... Has that situation improved?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Yes, it has improved in the U.S. This was a very U.S.-centric report.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Okay. Very good. Yes, it's pretty shocking.

Is it an issue that you have a lot of candidates wanting to go through the school but there's either no space for them or the cost is prohibitive, or is it simply hard finding candidates who want to be pilots?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: In the past year, we now have candidates who want to be pilots. The press has made very good advertising for us, realizing that there is a pilot shortage. So that helps. The issue is for us to actually find enough instructors and enough airplanes and do it safely so that we can actually train those 55. Because one of the issues—

Mr. Ken Hardie: I'll leave it at that, if I could.

The other piece that we've heard in past studies is that the capabilities within Transport Canada to recertify pilots, etc.... The number of people who actually have the competency to do that kind of work has also gone down. If we were able to lift that capability within Transport Canada, could those people not also be available as trainers?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: I think the issue you're talking about is related to the certification of airline pilots when they stay within the

airline. That is true, but it's not going to impact what we're doing at the grassroots, the initial training when they start. This is purely an issue for us of getting our class 1 and class 2 instructors, and class 4 instructors, enough of them that we can actually train the demand.

Mr. Ken Hardie: All right.

I'll pass the rest of my time to Mr. Badawey.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Thank you, Mr. Hardie.

I want to discuss the comment that you made with respect to regulatory and financial restraints. I think Mr. Eglinski was correct. I also made a comment a couple of meetings ago with respect to the archaic transportation infrastructure and possibly regulations and financial restraints that we do have in place today—hence the reason why we're discussing this today.

I have two questions. One goes to the comment made about the pricing on pollution. Of course, with that, when you come out with a recommendation and a direction, you want to ensure that you're not defaulting the problem to somebody else. Pricing on pollution is very simple. If the polluters don't pay it, the property taxpayer does. It's already there. We're just trying to alleviate that.

To your point in terms of the recommendations that you have at the ready, is it a solution, or is it simply passing the buck onto someone else?

● (1040)

Mr. Cedric Paillard: No, I think it's really a solution, enabling flight schools to actually use technology, and enabling students to be able to pay for this training program. Some of this technology would use the cost of the training program as well. It's part of an ecosystem that actually is a solution to it.

The problem is that you have to put in a stopgap measure. If those technologies are not available right away, then we are forced to actually ask, for example, for a tax reduction on our fuel, because you can't get blood out of stone. It gets to a point where the students don't have \$85,000 or more to pay for it. This is really the constraint. The solution out there is just the stopgap measures that I was trying to define.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Those recommendations that you do have, can you forward those to the committee?

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Yes. They are actually in the brief that we've provided to the committee.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Okay, great. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Now we'll go to Mr. Jeneroux for two minutes, and then we'll get back to Mr. Nantel for the last minute.

Mr. Matt Jeneroux: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I was a bit surprised that, in the motion, the member from Kelowna—Lake Country makes no reference to the challenges they're facing to get more women involved in flight training. I know that in Edmonton there's a school or a program called Elevate Aviation, run in partnership with Nav Canada. I'm wondering if you could comment on some of those challenges, so it can be included in some of the discussion here today. Thanks.

Mr. Cedric Paillard: Let's say one thing clearly: Female pilots are usually better than male pilots. I flew with a female captain, who taught me more and was a better pilot. I can confirm that.

The issue with female pilots is the same issue you have for getting female electrical engineers. I don't want to differentiate between pilots and engineers. It's the same issue. Everything that has been written is true.

At OAS, we have a group called Women at OAS. I encourage you to meet with the ladies behind me; one or two of our pilots are here. Please talk to them.

It's hard to be a female pilot in an industry where only 6% are female. We're trying, but it's a marketing issue. It's pushing and advertising.

We're doing this with females and first nations, aboriginals, to make sure that...because they're going to stay in their northern communities. Any help we can get from the government on that front will help; that's for sure.

It's what we're calling a marketing issue....

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll move on to Mr. Nantel for a very short question or comment.
[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Ms. Domingue, there's no doubt that you did everything possible to reach an agreement with the municipality, airport and flight schools, but that this agreement didn't last because the situation has worsened. What message do you have to convey to the people who will make recommendations and who must take into account both the urgent need for pilots and the need to co-exist with

densely populated areas such as this one. The issue has been well documented by a Quebec agency, which confirmed that aircraft flights affect stress levels and that the exhaust generated by the combustion of leaded fuel contributes to air pollution.

Ms. Johanne Domingue: I think that public consultations should be held to tell communities what's really happening and how to respond. As I was saying, we must live together. Yet things continue to be hidden from us. Journalists let us know what's happening, but we're always the last to know. The airports seem to want to keep us in the dark for fear that the public will react. I think that it would be beneficial to work together, since we need to live together. Can we tell each other the truth and work toward a common solution?

We also need the measurements related to the issue. I can have an idea of the situation. The situation can be improved. However, I won't know this until I can look at scientific evidence and access noise measurements. Show transparency and tell us the truth. We'll come out on top. In addition, please stop establishing noisy air corridors over densely populated residential areas. There are other places for these corridors. After all, car racing circuits aren't built just anywhere. Let's be consistent.

● (1045)

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Thank you, Ms. Domingue.
[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Thank you to both our witnesses today; we appreciate it very much.

The meeting is adjourned.

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