

A circular collage composed of six triangular segments, each containing a different image related to the airport industry. The segments are arranged in a circle around the central text. The images include: a person wearing a face mask and glasses, a close-up of an aircraft's tail fin with a maple leaf logo, a smiling woman in a dark vest, a person in a hat and mask standing near an airport entrance, a group of people clapping, and the tail of a large commercial airplane on a tarmac.

VANCOUVER  
AIRPORT AUTHORITY

# 2020

## Annual & Sustainability Report



## About this Report

2020 was a year unlike any other. Around the world, commercial aviation continues to face the impacts of COVID-19 with dramatic reductions in passenger and flight volumes.



Vancouver International Airport provides an essential service to the community, remaining open to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of goods and people who need to travel. Vancouver Airport Authority is the non-share capital private corporation that operates the airport in service of our community and economy that supports it. We are situated on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Musqueam people, at the mouth of the Fraser River estuary which grounds us in our unique sense of place. In this report, we also refer to ourselves as YVR – the brand that represents both our airport and our community.

When we looked at how to characterize and report on 2020, we realized that we wanted to document the year in a different way. We also recognize that YVR is a reflection of the thousands of Sea Island employees and businesses as well as our customers and community. Instead of reporting through our own lens, we asked six partners to tell their story in their own words. We then interlaced these stories through our own reporting. This report is much shorter than in years past, but you will find the audited financial statements, as well as operating and business highlights with our accountability data online at [YVR.ca](https://www.yvr.ca).

While this year's report focused on the perspectives of our partners and community, we can't lose sight of the role our Airport Authority employees played in ensuring the airport operated safely during a global pandemic. Our team pivoted daily and, in some cases, hourly to fulfill our mandate to serve the community. From adjusting to working from home to adapting processes and systems to serve our customers remotely, to being onsite and safely interacting with our passengers and partners to ensure those who needed to travel could, our team was flexible, innovative and resilient. Along with those adjustments, many team members also took on new roles by serving our customers on the floor as part of the Care Takers team ensuring safety, cleanliness and



health were top-of-mind. Our community was supported and kept safe by the tireless work of our essential workers, the 24/7 operations and maintenance teams who worked under extremely challenging and changing situations. The circumstances around the pandemic weren't easy to work through, but our Airport Authority team leaned into our culture of teamwork and set the stage for our future, together.

We know the path to a post-pandemic world cannot go over, around, or alongside COVID-19: the only way forward is to go through, which provides us with a once-in-a-generation opportunity to truly re-examine every aspect of our business to ensure it is designed to thrive in the future. We spent the second half of 2020 examining our people and processes, ensuring that our organization was built for purpose to support the needs of our community and our desire to become the gateway to the new economy. Out of this broad engagement and dialogue with partners, stakeholders, community members and employees – our 2021 Strategic Plan was born.



YVR's 2021 Strategic Plan addresses what it means to operate an airport during a global pandemic while maintaining our commitment to safety. Ensuring the safe running of our airport for everyone who works here, as well as safe surroundings for passengers and local residents, is not only essential, it is our license to operate.

If successful by the end of 2021 we will have improved the foundation of our business: from the way we operate our facilities, to the way we include our customers' perspectives in our decisions—from the way we budget, to the way we work. This new strategic direction will also be reflected in our annual reporting moving forward. Next year, expect to see a more data-driven approach to reporting focused on what we have committed to deliver in our strategy while ensuring that we tell the stories of our people who are at the centre of everything we do.

But what won't change is that we are here in service of our community to take care of you.



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## Message from Annalisa King: Chair, Board of Directors

Clearly these are unusual times. 2020 has been a wildly turbulent year, in which we saw our YVR team lead through, arguably, our industry's biggest historical challenge.

The effects of COVID-19 will be with us well into 2021, and beyond. The pandemic has been so comprehensive and widespread, many aspects of our lives will be permanently changed—including the way we work, do business and the way we travel. While YVR remains hyper-focused on navigating the significant impacts of the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, it is also important to reflect on the year that has passed and acknowledge what we overcame and accomplished together in 2020.

Given our responsibility and our potential, we had an obligation and opportunity in 2020 to not only be a leader in British Columbia, but among airports around the world as we all worked to combat COVID-19. As we served our community and the economy that supports it, we focused on doing the right thing, doing it well and doing it sustainably.

To help combat COVID-19, we committed to supporting the provincial and federal governments, and all our partners, to constantly improve the airport experience and address the many challenges of the pandemic, ensuring health and safety were always top-of-mind.

We implemented an industry-leading health and safety campaign, YVR TAKEcare, designed to help people move through the airport safely and with confidence. Supported by our team of Care Takers on the floor, it places health, safety and cleaning practices and protocols at the forefront of airport processes and includes collaboration with the airport's many partners to help support our customers when they needed it most.

In November 2020, we were pleased to work with Vancouver Coastal Health to turn our jetSet parking lot, which was closed at the onset of the pandemic, into a drive-through public testing collection centre—demonstrating true innovation in support of our community.

That same month we launched the WestJet-YVR COVID-19 Testing Study, a collaborative effort between project sponsors WestJet and the Airport Authority and researchers from University of British Columbia and Providence Health Care. The study, the first of its kind in Canada, investigated a method of COVID-19 rapid testing to help inform the safest and most efficient

way of testing departing passengers at YVR. Work continues to ensure we can support ongoing testing needs.

We also looked for opportunities to support our business partners through financial assistance. This included providing rent relief as part of Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance, deferring tenant rent payments, holding steady on aeronautical rates for 2021 and allowing aircraft to park for free.

Unfortunately, the pandemic had a severe impact on the Musqueam community as well as the employment opportunities we had worked together to create at YVR. That's why it's more important than ever to continue deepening the bonds of our friendship, building more resiliency into our existing agreement and finding innovative opportunities to partner that will provide economic and community benefits. We are committed to finding opportunities to bring back jobs for Musqueam employees with the Airport Authority and Sea Island businesses.

I am proud, as YVR's Board Chair, to be a part of such an exceptional organization



that continues to adapt, strengthen its operations and modify its business strategy in order to thrive in the future. And I couldn't be prouder of our team that rallied and came together in so many important ways in 2020 under the stewardship of new President & CEO Tamara Vrooman, who took the reins after Craig Richmond's retirement at the end of June 2020. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank Craig for his leadership through the early days of the pandemic setting us up for success.

Tamara joined YVR on July 1, rolled up her sleeves, dove in and is driving us courageously towards our future. Her first six months were truly people focused, making sure she understood the needs of our customers community and Sea Island team—and aligning the team and our business to support these needs in the future. Her leadership, collaboration and strategic thinking have been, and will continue to be, huge assets to YVR and the communities it serves. Thank you for everything you do, Tamara!

I would also like to extend a sincere thank you to the many people who have contributed to YVR's success during both the bright and challenging times.

Thank you to our employees, community, customers, government and business partners for the ongoing support.

We are at a pivotal point in YVR's history, as our airport works through the challenges of COVID-19 while addressing emerging opportunities. There are major shifts at play in our economy—many of which had the seeds sown pre-COVID—but now COVID has accelerated this change and created a responsibility to ensure YVR keeps pace with it. This is our opportunity to build on our past success as a gateway and align it to the next wave of growth in our region. It is a time we will no doubt remember in the decades to come, marking the constant evolution of our airport.

As I said last year at this time, we are all in this together. YVR and our industry will adapt, overcome and thrive.

*Annalisa King*

**ANNALISA KING**

Chair, Board of Directors  
Vancouver Airport Authority





## Message from Tamara Vrooman: President & CEO

I joined YVR as President and CEO on July 1, 2020. It's been a privilege to learn from and lead our team as we support our industry and community through the pandemic and into a new and bright future.

When the pandemic emerged, I was truly impressed as our teams quickly shifted gears to support staff and partners through a rapidly changing world. I am so proud of, and thankful for, the collaborative work of our teams as they focused on keeping each other safe during the pandemic and providing resources to help manage the change.

Throughout 2020, we constantly asked ourselves how we can be more innovative and sustainable, in service of our region. Our operations and maintenance teams kept the airport operating safely 24/7 throughout the pandemic and decreased the footprint of the terminal to reduce costs. We also kept cargo moving while supply chains were disrupted, online shopping increased dramatically and the need for personal protective equipment (PPE) and other pandemic response goods was critical.

Last year the aviation industry saw a dramatic reduction in traffic—upwards of 95 per cent reduction in flights during our lowest month in April. In total, YVR saw a reduction of 72.3 per cent of traffic culminating in 7.3 million passengers in 2020 when we had welcomed 26.4 million passengers in 2019. Given the drastic

decline of traffic, the Executive Team made the difficult decision—with the Board's support and guidance—to reduce the workforce at the Airport Authority by close to 25 per cent to better align our team to the needs of our airport of the future.

Many of our business partners faced similar, or even more, pressure and had to reduce their workforces dramatically. I want to acknowledge and recognize the employees who we had to say goodbye to and thank them for their service to our airport and community.

The Airport Authority entered the pandemic on solid financial footing and continues to have one of the highest credit ratings of any airport in North America. We also took prudent and early action, successfully obtaining approval through a consent solicitation process to be relieved of short-term obligations to meet or satisfy various interest coverage requirements of our current debt. We then took the additional step of issuing \$600 million worth of debentures. While the short term may be uncertain, I remain bullish about our long-term future.

In March we paused our capital program to reprioritize resources on more immediate infrastructure and health and safety needs. The adjustment of the capital program was one of several steps we took to reduce operating and capital costs to protect the long-term financial health of the airport. This included the subsequent cancellation of our major CORE program, which was designed to provide more parking and utilities capacity as well as a geoexchange system. Reprioritizing our resources allows us to focus on projects that support the recovery and restart of aviation, including trials for health screening and testing. Additionally, the Airport Authority will improve data and technology infrastructure, enhance cargo facilities and pursue projects that are best completed while the airport is less busy, such as airfield infrastructure.

With passenger and flight volumes down and pressures on our existing revenue streams, the post COVID-19 recovery will be challenging for airports. Accepting changes to existing processes can make the recovery easier. Our industry and region are changing, and we plan to be at the leading edge of these innovations—as we were with WestJet-YVR COVID-19 Testing Study.



We are an essential service. Just like roads and bridges, the airport stays open and plays an important role as a critical piece of infrastructure facilitating cargo, emergency air support and helping Canadians travel home. We need to ensure our customers and community continue to inform the decisions we make and that we build an authentic, adaptable and empathetic culture to embrace the short and long-term opportunities in our industry.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, our environmental footprint shrunk significantly in 2020. While much of the footprint reduction was due to less usage in the terminal, we implemented a new auxiliary power unit shutdown procedure so that crews can shut down aircraft engines and plug into B.C.'s clean electricity in December 2020. It's actions like this that we will continue to need to implement as we boldly accelerated our ambition to eliminate carbon emissions by 20 years—to be net-zero in 2030 versus 2050. It's a significant commitment, but we know it's the right thing to do.

Our business model has three simple concepts: do the right thing (follow our purpose), do it well (our commitment to operational excellence and quality) and do it sustainably (do it in a way that allows us to keep doing the right thing and doing it well in the future). Most importantly, at our core, we are a people business. Our employees are at the center of what we do and are our most valuable resource. Every day, I'm energized by our staff who embody our purpose and are driving us towards recovery.

It has been said that weak organizations are destroyed by crises, good organizations survive them and great organizations are improved by them. YVR is a great organization. And you're part of what makes our organization great.



**TAMARA VROOMAN**  
President & CEO  
Vancouver Airport Authority



# Our Leadership

At the core of our success is our people. A key element of our people is the leadership team, whose vision inspires us to deliver an exceptional airport experience. This team works in accordance with the highest standards, supporting a foundation of transparent, ethical and sustainable behaviour.

## DIVERSITY COMMITMENT

On December 10, 2020, the Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, launched the 50 – 30 Challenge to advance and recognize diversity, inclusion and economic prosperity across Canada. The Airport Authority put our hand up as an early adopter and will be sharing our progress in the 2021 report.

The two goals of the 50 – 30 Challenge are to achieve, at the board and senior management levels of each organization, gender parity (50 per cent) and significant representation (30 per cent) of under-represented groups including racialized persons, people who identify as LGBTQ2, people living with disabilities, as well as First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Vancouver Airport Authority's community-based Board of Directors seeks to foster the long-term success of YVR. Our Board reviews and approves the Strategic Plan, long-term financial plans and annual budgets. It also selects the President & CEO, oversees senior management succession, identifies risks, manages the integrity of internal controls, monitors health and safety management systems and ensures we have a comprehensive public Communications Policy. The Board follows the Board of Directors Governance Rules and Practice Manual, available at [yvr.ca/board](https://yvr.ca/board), which includes terms of reference, guidelines and policies.

Vancouver Airport Authority would like to extend a warm welcome to Ken M. Kramer, Dan Nomura and Juggy Sihota who joined the Board in 2020, and a sincere thank you to Howard Jampolsky and Joseph Caron who left the Board in 2020.



**Annalisa King**  
Chair, Director at Large

Annalisa King serves on multiple TSX boards and was formerly the Chief Financial Officer and Senior Vice President at Best Buy Canada Ltd. Prior to that, she was Senior Vice President of Business Transformation at Maple Leaf Foods Ltd. As one of Canada's most respected business executives, she was recognized in 2012 as BC's CFO of the Year and in 2019 she received a Peak Award honoring Women in Finance in the category of Significant Board Contribution.



**Haydn Acheson**  
Government of Canada

Haydn Acheson has extensive senior leadership experience in the transportation sector and is an accomplished airline captain with thousands of hours of flight time.



**John Currie**

Nominated by Chartered  
Professional Accountants of  
British Columbia

John Currie is a respected business leader, with previous experience as Executive Vice President and CFO of lululemon athletica Inc. and CFO of Intrawest Corporation.

**Mary Anne Davidson**

Nominated by Greater Vancouver  
Board of Trade

Mary Anne Davidson brings extensive experience in human resources management, including policy development, expansion leadership, change management and succession planning. She previously served as Vice President of Human Resources for ACCIONA Canada Inc.

**Frances Fiorillo**

Director at Large

Frances Fiorillo brings extensive airline industry experience in the areas of human resources management, operational strategy, and customer service.

**Kenneth Goosen**

Nominated by Association of  
Professional Engineers and  
Geoscientists of British Columbia

Kenneth Goosen has more than 30 years of experience in senior management, engineering and operations positions with Canada's major airlines.

**Kevin Howlett**

Director at Large

Kevin Howlett brings 40 years of experience in the airline industry with expertise in human resources and operational management and corporate and government affairs.

**Ken M. Kramer, QC**

Nominated by Law Society of British Columbia

Ken M. Kramer is the founder and principal of KMK Law, a boutique firm specializing in the areas of estates, trusts and elder law. Ken has served on numerous boards and committees with missions focused on people living with disabilities and seniors' issues and currently serves as Vice Chair of the College of Chiropractors of BC.

**Jill Leversage**

Nominated by Government of Canada

Jill Leversage is a corporate director with over 25 years' experience in corporate finance and investment banking. She holds the Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Professional Accounts of B.C. designation and is a retired Chartered Business Valuator.

**Dan Nomura**

Nominated by City of Richmond

Dan Nomura is President of the Canadian Fishing Company (Canfisco), which operates a fully integrated, sustainable seafood business including fishing, processing and sales. In addition to his extensive leadership experience in the industry, he is active in the community serving on the Board of the Richmond Olympic Oval, previously on the Board of the Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Centre and on several cultural, educational and sport committees.

**Kush Panatch**

Director at Large

Kush Panatch brings over 25 years of knowledge in real estate development and is the principal owner of a group of real estate companies involved in acquisition, management and development.

**Juggy Sihota**

Nominated by City of Vancouver

Juggy Sihota is Vice President, Consumer Health, at TELUS where she leads the national strategy, execution and operation of the Consumer Health business. Juggy has more than 25 years of telecom leadership experience including leading several emerging technology businesses and operations across TELUS.

**Tamara Vrooman**

President and Chief Executive Officer

Tamara Vrooman is an award-winning leader, known for her exemplary track record leading large, complex institutions in both the private and public sectors and her bold positions on sustainability and inclusion. Prior to joining YVR as President & CEO, she served for nine years on YVR's Board and for 13 years as the President & CEO of Vancity, Canada's largest community credit union, transforming the business into a global reference point for values-based banking. She currently serves as Simon Fraser University's 12th Chancellor, chairs the board of the Rick Hansen Foundation and is the recipient of the Order of British Columbia (2019), Peter Lougheed Award for Leadership in Public Policy (2016) and BC CEO of the Year Award – Major Private Company, Business in Vancouver (2015), among many other citations.

**Wayne Wright**

Nominated by Metro Vancouver (GVRD)

Wayne Wright served as Mayor of New Westminster from 2002 to 2014. For more than 30 years, he supported local organizations and was named New Westminster's Citizen of the Year.





Craig Richmond stepped down in June 2020 after serving seven years as President & CEO. Craig led the Airport Authority team through a period of rapid growth that saw passenger traffic increase by 46 per cent. He was a huge advocate for diversity and inclusion, and one of his proudest achievements was working closely with Musqueam to create the historic **Musqueam Indian Band–YVR Airport Sustainability & Friendship Agreement**. We thank Craig for his immense contributions to YVR, we are a better airport for it.



# EXECUTIVE TEAM

Our Executive Team guides our organization and ensures we operate the airport in a safe, efficient and reliable manner.



**Tamara Vrooman**  
President & Chief Executive Officer



**Bill Bakk**  
Vice President,  
Business Development



**Richard Beed**  
Vice President,  
People and Brand





**Gerry Bruno**  
Executive Advisor



**Lynette DuJohn**  
Vice President, Innovation and  
Chief Information Officer



**Argiro Kotsalis**  
Vice President, Legal Services  
& Chief Governance Officer—  
Office of the CEO



**Andy Margolis**  
Vice President Airport Capacity  
& Systems Design



**Robyn McVicker**  
Vice President,  
Passenger Journey



**Scott Norris**  
Vice President, Strategic  
Customer Relationships



**Christoph Rufenacht**  
Vice President, Airport Development  
& Asset Optimization



**Diana Vuong**  
Vice President, Finance and  
Chief Financial Officer



# 2020 IN REVIEW

## Financial Highlights



Total Consolidated Revenue:  
**\$279,755,000**



Consolidated EROE:  
**(\$380,144,000)**



Consolidated EBITDA:  
**(\$173,366,000)**

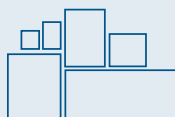
**AA-** CREDIT  
RATING

down from AA in 2019

## Flight and Cargo Highlights



**7.3M** passengers,  
decrease of 72.3%



**239,332** tonnes of  
cargo (19% decrease overall but  
24% increase in Integrator)

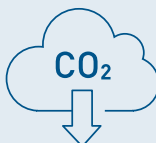


**157,563** aircraft  
movements, decrease of 48%



**50** repatriation flights  
supported by 13 airlines

## Environment and Climate Highlights



Carbon Neutral 2020  
**-5%** from 2019.  
Airport Carbon Accredited



Total water use decreased by  
**47%**



Total waste decreased by  
**65%** resulting in less  
garbage sent to landfill.  
**52%** waste diversion

## Our People Highlights



**40** employee Care Takers  
**600** hours of care



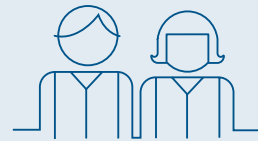
**25** people running  
**125km** on the  
runway for our first ever  
Terry Fox Runway Run

## Customer Care and Operational Highlights



**4.33/5**

overall customer satisfaction



**13,000**

Greencoat volunteer hours

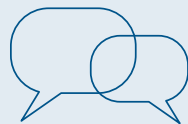


**4.6/5**

Terminal cleanliness  
(up from 4.4 in 2019)

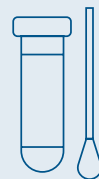


**80** hand sanitizers and over  
**2,000** litres of hand  
sanitizer solution



**238,933**

customer enquiries at our  
information counters and  
34,269 through call centre

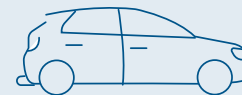


**200** research participants  
in COVID Testing Study  
**100%** negative result

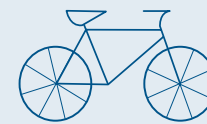
## Ground Transportation Highlights



**3.21M** boardings  
and alightings at the three  
stations on Sea Island

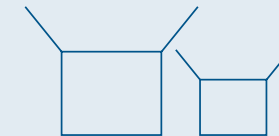


**193,000**  
rideshare trips (new in 2020)



**135,215** km biked on  
Sea Island (35,000km more  
than in 2019)

## Community Highlights



**434** hampers to Quest  
**200** hampers to Musqueam



**24** grants offered to  
community organizations



**\$571,662** donated



# Our People, Our Partners, Our Stories



## OUR COVID RESPONSE

# Provincial COVID-19 Response at YVR

Written by our partners at the B.C. Government



The COVID-19 pandemic was one of the B.C. Government's highest priorities throughout 2020. Under the guidance of Dr. Bonnie Henry, the B.C. Government implemented many protocols and restrictions to keep British Columbians safe and to limit the risk of transmission.

Understandably, COVID-19 had a huge impact on YVR, one of Canada's largest international airports. To address the COVID-19 pandemic, the Province and YVR worked closely with partners to implement directives, share information and inform the public. The safety and security of passengers, partners, employees and airport visitors were the top priorities.

## Self-isolation plan

On April 8, 2020, B.C. Premier John Horgan announced new measures to make sure British Columbians returning home from international destinations had the support they needed to self-isolate and keep their communities safe from COVID-19. While any person entering Canada was already required, under federal orders to self-isolate for 14 days immediately on return, British Columbia was the first province to require an approved self-isolation plan as part of the traveller's return.



## OUR COVID RESPONSE

**“Dealing with a fast-moving virus with a high degree of risk and exposure, and therefore transmission, was unlike anything we had dealt with in the past,” said Lori Halls, Deputy Minister with Emergency Management B.C. “The collaboration, speed and efficiency of the team to get the self-isolation program in place was beyond impressive.”**



Lori Halls

A provincial health order required international travellers to self-isolate for 14 days upon returning to British Columbia and to submit a self-isolation plan. The Province developed and implemented an on-line tool for travellers to register their self-isolation plans prior to their arrival.

“We are very proud to have led the country by developing a well-supported program to help people self-isolate and reduce transmissions,” said Halls.

Travellers unable to present appropriate self-isolation plans were provided accommodation and support services by the Province. All returning travellers received and continue to receive wellness and compliance follow-up calls in support of the self-isolation requirements. To date, 161,228 calls have been processed by the Ministry of Citizens’ Services.

### **Airport checkpoints and traveller support**

The Province re-deployed public servants to staff checkpoints at YVR for the purposes of administering enhanced traveller self-isolation support as part of COVID-19 response.

This re-deployment required a daily roster of 80 employees at its peak to provide oversight and staff a 24/7 shift pattern rotation. With collaboration from the Canada Border Services Agency, the Province was successful in implementing a complex initiative.

**“This operation led by the Ministry of Transportation was an incredible inter-agency effort with staff and volunteers from 16 different ministries,” said Katrina Estoque, Operations Manager for the Provincial YVR self-isolation checkpoint. “This was something that hadn’t been done before. It was a historic moment and effort.”**

“I saw firsthand how proud the team was to welcome travellers home and support health and safety efforts on the ground,” said Estoque. “The team was brave and selfless in a time of



Katrina Estoque



## OUR COVID RESPONSE

uncertainty. It was amazing to work with such a large group that wanted to help ensure our citizens were safe.”

A steady pool of 150 public servants was required to manage and maintain checkpoints daily. During the April to June period in 2020, the province processed a total of 37,013 passengers.

In addition to checkpoints at YVR, the Province also re-deployed public servants to 17 land border crossings. From April to June, the Province processed a total of 42,991 travellers.

“As we followed the advice and guidance of our provincial health officer, it was also important to take care of one another,” said Halls. “To be part of the pandemic response on the ground truly brought the public service together in a common service.”

### Ground support of temporary foreign workers

In order to work in B.C., all temporary foreign workers in the agricultural, food and seafood sectors arriving in B.C. are required to quarantine in provincially-managed accommodations for 14 days.

“Our work with YVR to help process agriculture workers arriving to B.C. is important in terms of contributing to containing the virus, supporting our farmers, and safeguarding food security,” said Cheryl Wiens, who manages ground support for agriculture workers at YVR as Labour Operations Officer for the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. “As a team, we are aware that this might be a particularly stressful journey for the workers, so we are focused on supporting their arrival in an empathic way.”

“The relationship with YVR was collaborative, accommodating and generous,” said Wiens. “It was clear that YVR did everything possible to help make things as easy as possible for our team and the workers in what has been a challenging and ever-evolving situation.”

Employers have to ensure a safe workplace and demonstrate proof of an infection prevention and control protocol before workers can be released from quarantine.

Out of the 5,000 temporary foreign workers who arrived between April 13, 2020 and December 31, 2020, 64 COVID-19 positive cases were detected.



Cheryl Wiens





## OUR COVID RESPONSE



All recovered while under the care and supervision of the provincial quarantine program. Without the TFW Quarantine Program, these workers would have gone to separate farms and posed a transmission risk, possibly causing multiple community outbreaks.

The program also strengthened existing relationships between various consulates and the provincial government, allowing for immediate communication to address urgent and emerging situations. This flow of candid and collegial communication has allowed the program to be flexible and responsive to challenges as they arise.

### Collaboration and leadership

The B.C. Government's leadership with these initiatives proved to be a key measure in the fight to keep British Columbians safe. Canada learned from B.C.'s efforts and subsequently implemented comparable measures at the border across Canada, administered by the Public Health Agency of Canada. This allowed B.C. to close its border checkpoints on June 20, 2020.

Throughout 2020, the Province and YVR worked closely to provide a strong, united front to British Columbians and remained committed to doing everything possible to limit the transmission of COVID-19. YVR was quick to action all requirements set out by the provincial health officer and government.

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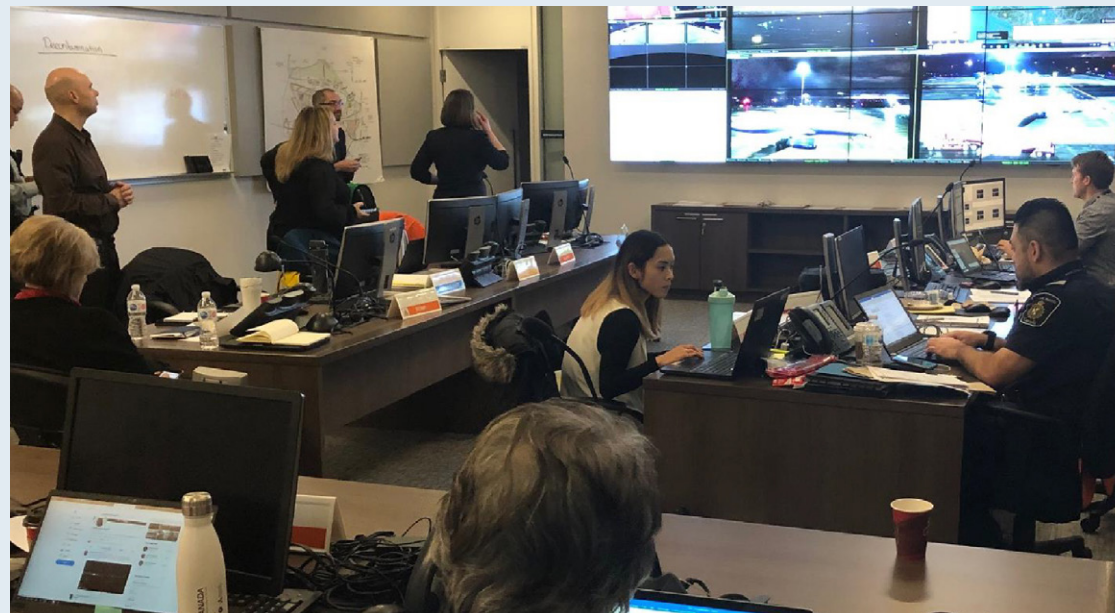
**“Often relationships can be formed during an emergency, but the test of them is how they continue to grow,” said Halls. “The partnership and collaboration between the Province, YVR and partners continues to this day and is vital as we work to stay connected and support new initiatives during this evolving pandemic.”**

# Navigating COVID-19 at YVR

2020 was a year that required us to learn, adapt, partner and activate on multiple fronts to ensure passengers, partners and cargo could move through the airport with confidence. While it would be impossible to be completely prepared for an evolving global pandemic, we have experience in how to manage through emerging health crises like SARS and had a pandemic response plan in place.

Many strategic efforts were made to combat the spread of COVID-19 and keep our airport community safe, including activating a pandemic response unit in January 2020—before the COVID-19 pandemic was declared.

We played a critical role in bringing the broader community and aviation together to ensure critical delivery of PPE and help travellers return home, which included a crucial role in supporting repatriation flights.



# Repatriation Flights

Repatriation flights were organized by governments and airlines to ensure that citizens could return home. YVR not only helped facilitate many flights for Canadians returning to Canada, but also “tech stops” for airlines and countries who needed to make brief stops to refuel before getting their citizens home.

By mid-May 2020 the airport was already up to approximately 36 round-trip repatriation flights across 10 airlines and have since surpassed 50 flights supported by 13 airlines.

The flights primarily helped repatriate eight major nationality groups (Chinese, Korean, German, Filipino, Vietnamese, Indian, American, and Canadian); many other nationalities took advantage of regularly scheduled service, but those major groups were supported by special flights as a result of air space restrictions or lack of a direct air service.

Coordination to support these flights included correspondence with the foreign embassies, Global Affairs Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada, Canada Border Services Agency, Transport Canada, ground handlers, when they were on site: the Province of B.C., and a few others such as British Columbia Ambulance Service, Department of National Defence, Health Emergency Management BC, Public Safety Canada when specifically supporting the Wuhan flights.



## OUR AIRLINE PARTNERS

# Air Canada and its Trans-Pacific Hub

Written by our partners at Air Canada



During the bleakest year in the history of commercial aviation, the global airline industry faced an immediate, severe drop in traffic and demand as a result of the catastrophic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic—even after completing several years of record growth at Air Canada including the strategic development of its phenomenal hub at YVR over four years. From 2016-2019, Air Canada's international, transborder and domestic flights that radiated from and interconnected at its Trans-Pacific hub resulted in cumulative growth of more than four million passengers at YVR.

Given the unprecedented effects of the pandemic in 2020, Air Canada

made several difficult, gut-wrenching decisions to adjust capacity throughout its entire network in response to stifled demand as a result of dynamic health warnings, ever changing travel bans and restrictions, varying quarantine requirements, border closures and various regulatory conditions.

### Pivoting to air cargo opportunities

As demand for passenger travel was diminishing in the first quarter, demand for urgent air cargo, however, was sustained. To meet the global spike in demand for air cargo including urgent requirements for transporting PPE such as face masks and other medical supplies for front-line responders, Air





## OUR AIRLINE PARTNERS

**“As an airline, we met COVID-19 challenges by finding solutions and maximizing our resources available. Air Canada operated more than 4,000 cargo-only flights worldwide in 2020, transporting vital PPE, vaccines, medicines, fresh produce including mushrooms, Okanagan fruit and Pacific seafood to and from Canada globally,” said Bill Devlin, Sr. Director, Airport Development & Charges for Air Canada. “This sustained a vital link in international supply chains that helped keep the domestic and world economy moving, and YVR is positioned well geographically for Air Canada to evaluate new opportunities.”**

Canada introduced cargo-only flights on international routes. These cargo-only flights began operating in mid-March with the airline’s widebody aircraft without passengers.

In April, Air Canada became the first airline globally to leverage its aircraft assets by quickly transforming some of its largest aircraft—four Boeing 777-300ERs and three A330-300s—to transport cargo in the passenger cabin by removing up to 422 seats and doubling freight capacity.

In May, Air Canada was proud to be part of the country’s yearly farming industries by giving metal wings to multiple living queen bee shipments that had arrived in YVR, transporting them across Canada to aid in crop pollination. And in November, Air Canada operated a special cargo flight transporting 70 cats and dogs onboard a converted Boeing 777-300 aircraft from YVR to Melbourne, reuniting the furry family members who had been separated from their owners for months due to the pandemic.

With the International Air Transport Association’s (IATA) outlook that air cargo demand will continue increasing

due to a recovering global economy, Air Canada is expanding its cargo business with plans to convert and utilize its own Boeing 767 aircraft as dedicated freighters beginning later in 2021. YVR has the potential for a number of exciting commercial expansion opportunities for airlines. This potential stems from the airport’s geographical location and Air Canada’s global reach, which includes an integrated, intermodal ground transport network to airports as well as leading expertise and cutting edge services — such as a partnership with Drone Delivery Canada, offering cost-effective drone delivery services for non-traditional markets such as remote communities; and, holding certificates for IATA’s Live Animal Transport and the Center of Excellence for Independent Validators in Pharmaceutical Logistics (CEIV Pharma) to facilitate complex, highly specialized deliveries.

### YVR and Air Canada joint collaborations

Prior to COVID-19, Skytrax named Air Canada best airline in North America for eight of 10 years and North America’s only Four-Star network



## OUR AIRLINE PARTNERS

carrier. Skytrax also named YVR best airport in North America every year for the past 11 years. In response to the pandemic, Air Canada and YVR's joint focus in continuing to provide shared customers an industry-leading safe journey led to achievements such as Transport Canada's Flight Plan for Navigating COVID-19's clear endorsement of both Air Canada's and YVR's multi-layered biosafety programs that earlier had been put in place.

The joint collaborations between YVR and Air Canada also led to new airport service innovations in 2020 such as implementation of touchless bag drop and the pilot testing of biometric boarding, reflecting an ongoing shared vision to continually advance technology improvements and enhance the travel journey for customers.

### Synergies to effectively compete globally

Air Canada expects the VFR "Visiting Friends and Relatives" leisure market to rebound first when the time to travel resumes. Its YVR hub is well-positioned geographically to capture global traffic flows in the US-to-Pacific markets

which, together with a strong, local, multicultural population base will sustain its international network with both origin and destination traffic.

Investments at YVR include three Maple Leaf Lounges and the airline's second only Signature Suite located on the second floor of the International Maple Leaf Lounge—products that will position Air Canada as a preferred carrier for business and premium travel when these customers are ready to travel.

Additionally, the enhancements that Air Canada and YVR have operationalized for easy and efficient connections including international-to-domestic and international-to-international flights are important, key success factors that are foundational to setting YVR and Air Canada apart and as preferred travel options over other North American hubs and airlines.

"This is an example of how we, together with our airport partners show how Canada, as a country, can compete effectively in the global aviation market," said Devlin.





## OUR AIRLINE PARTNERS



Bill Devlin

Just as Air Canada quickly responded to the pandemic by maintaining key trunk routes and pivoting to new opportunities, it will certainly be nimble in its recovery plan when rebuilding its global network with its range of aircraft comprising a wide-body fleet with the right size capacity for various markets and, importantly, a renewed, modern narrow-body fleet with the lowest greenhouse gas emissions, greater fuel efficiency and flexibility to deploy onto North American markets.

**“This pandemic will end, and with vaccine availability, other medical advances including effective testing capacities and other developments, we look forward to the end of a very dark tunnel, towards a safe restart of aviation with effective strategies based in science rather than blanket policies,”** said Bill Devlin, Sr. Director, Airport Development & Charges for Air Canada. **“As we exit this crisis, we will once again rebuild our global Trans-Pacific hub together with YVR.”**



OUR AIRLINE PARTNERS

Air Services and Airline Partnerships at YVR

Vancouver International Airport provides critical and strategic links to markets all over the world. Every day, our airline partners connect people and businesses to destinations worldwide.

While YVR provides the facilities, airlines provide the right transportation and passenger choices which drive our decision-making. We would like to thank our airline partners for the collaboration and support in 2020, which was one of most challenging years in history for the aviation industry.

Airlines were hit by the pandemic in different ways and this impacted the number of airlines serving YVR. At its peak, YVR had 49 airlines, five cargo operators and five float plane operators. At year-end, YVR had 36 airlines, five cargo operators and five float plane operators. The number of destinations served from YVR in 2020 was also impacted. At its peak, 122 destinations were being served from YVR. At year-end, 69 destinations were being served from YVR.



2020 WestJet-YVR COVID-19 Testing Study

While YVR worked with many different airline partners in 2020, a highlight was the partnership with WestJet on the WestJet-YVR COVID-19 Testing Study, a collaborative effort between researchers from UBC and Providence Health Care and project sponsors WestJet and Vancouver Airport Authority.

The study launched in November 2020 and its purpose was to evaluate COVID-19 rapid antigen testing as it relates to air travel, and more specifically, to help inform the safest and most efficient way to screen departing passengers at YVR for COVID-19.

The research team provided interim results based on 200 participants that met the full eligibility criteria and provided informed consent between November 23 and December 17, 2020. To date, more than 300 passengers have participated in the testing study. Based on the interim results, 100 per cent of the participants tested negative with the rapid antigen tests that use nasopharyngeal (back of nose) swabs and oral rinses. The tests were later verified in a lab using a sensitive Health Canada approved RT-PCR diagnostic test, which indicated that no participants had a false negative rapid antigen test. The interim results showed promise that transmissible infection in airline passengers departing from YVR is likely to be extremely low (less than one per cent).

## OUR CLIMATE COMMITMENT

# BioPortYVR working towards a made-in-BC clean fuel supply chain

Written by our partners at BioPortYVR



## BioPortYVR

Canadian airports, airlines and the wider aviation industry are actively looking for ways to reduce carbon emissions associated with air travel.

As part of its commitment to environmental stewardship, YVR is at the forefront of creating a more sustainable future for aviation with its support of BioPortYVR, an industry-led project to increase the supply of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF). A 'bioport' is the collaboration of key stakeholders to establish the enabling conditions for consistent SAF uptake in a specific (air)port.

BioPortYVR is led by a team experienced in SAF initiative

development and airport sustainability: Vancouver International Airport (YVR), The Green Aviation Research and Development Network (GARDN), SkyNRG and Waterfall Group. The project supports provincial and federal government climate action commitments and is an important step towards a made-in-B.C. solution for the introduction of SAF across Canada.

The BioPortYVR partners pledged to play a leadership role in supporting the establishment of a made-in-B.C. clean fuel supply chain that will help create good jobs in B.C. that bridge value-added resource development with the clean tech sector.



## OUR CLIMATE COMMITMENT

**“YVR is leading the sustainable aviation fuel conversation,” said Fred Ghatala, a partner in Waterfall Group and the Director of Carbon and Sustainability for Advanced Biofuels Canada, a national industry association. “YVR’s major airline partners—including Air Canada and WestJet—have long supported and advocated for the development of a regional and collaborative approach to the production of sustainable alternative fuels in Canada to make travel more sustainable.”**

Fred Ghatala



### **What is Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)?**

SAF is defined as a certified ‘drop-in’ fuel that satisfies jet fuel form, fit and function requirements, while meeting verifiable sustainability standards.

As aviation is expected to remain dependent on liquid jet fuel for at least the next decade, substituting liquid fossil-derived hydrocarbon fuels with lower carbon options is the most viable solution to reach the sector’s GHG emission targets in the short-to-medium-term.

Demand for SAF is growing as the airline industry looks to reduce its carbon footprint. IATA lists SAF as one of the key elements to help the aviation industry achieve its ambitious 2050 emissions reduction goals.

SAF can be produced through a variety of technologies using diverse feedstocks. Production pathways range from those in the process of being technically confirmed at laboratory scale through to those already deployed and being used in commercial operation. For commercial adoption it is essential

that SAF is certifiable as jet fuel in accordance with international standards.

By February 2021 SAF fuelled more than 315,000 commercial flights. Despite the growing demand for SAF, it is not currently widely available in Canada and there is no domestic SAF supply chain in Canada. BioPortYVR is working towards changing that.

### **Feasibility Study**

The first step of the BioPortYVR project was a comprehensive study to determine the elements required to introduce an ongoing supply of SAF at YVR to fulfill airline demand in response to Environmental, Social and Governance strategies and emerging clean fuel regulations.

BioPortYVR evaluated the viability of implementing regional options to distribute SAF to airlines at YVR and surrounding airports through the bioport’s demand centre. This work was developed through engagement with industry, government and other key stakeholders.

**“Sustainable aviation fuel is produced from a wide range of sustainable sources and can result in more than 85 per cent reduction of CO2 emissions compared to conventional jet fuel,” said Ghatala. “Certified SAF can be blended with conventional jet fuel and does not require changes to aircraft or special infrastructure at airports, since it meets applicable regulatory and technical requirements.”**



## OUR CLIMATE COMMITMENT

Completed in March 2020, the study found that YVR is a highly suitable location from which to concentrate activities to encourage SAF production and use. There are strong enabling factors in British Columbia including suitable logistical infrastructure, expanding transportation options and regionally available sustainable feedstock (sustainable canola, waste oils and fats today, as well as biomass residues, including cellulosic feedstock from B.C.'s forestry industry, in the future).

No new fuel distribution-related infrastructure investments are needed for YVR to receive SAF. The Vancouver Airport Fuel Facilities Corporation is currently building a new fuel delivery system to YVR, which includes a Marine Terminal and Fuel Receiving Facility on the south arm of the Fraser River and a 13-kilometre underground pipeline to YVR. The project is on track to be in service in 2022 and can facilitate the delivery of SAF to the airport.

### Environmental leadership at YVR

YVR is a recognized leader in sustainability and has recently

accelerated its commitment to achieving net zero emissions by 2030, 20 years faster than originally targeted. Supporting industry advances to enable use of SAF at YVR and low-carbon air travel is a key priority in YVR's carbon reduction roadmap.

### Impacts of COVID-19

The impacts of COVID-19 are being felt around the world, and the commercial aviation industry is no different. Although airports and airlines are grappling with a starkly different market reality from one that existed just months ago, it remains true that aviation is a fundamental part of our global society. It is a key contributor to economic development, social progress and human interaction and provides the most accessible global transportation network.

The BioPortYVR project will follow the stabilization of the Canadian aviation sector and the overall economy. As the macro-economic conditions created by COVID-19 improve and the commercial aviation sector resumes operations, the BioPortYVR partners will position this initiative to proceed towards full activation.

Looking ahead, BioPortYVR has defined the magnitude of the opportunity and the path forward to support a more sustainable aviation industry through the creation of an enduring supply and distribution system of SAF use based in Vancouver.

The use of SAF can enhance British Columbia and YVR's market appeal to the global environmentally-conscious traveller by helping passengers fly with confidence and with a lower carbon footprint. This will support a stronger and greener post-COVID-19 industry recovery as YVR connects British Columbia to more markets around the world.

**“BioPortYVR is a natural extension of YVR's ongoing sustainability leadership,” says Ghatala. “It is evident that the Airport Authority is authentically committed to reducing its aviation emissions, which is one of the reasons why YVR was selected as the project location.”**



## OUR CLIMATE COMMITMENT

# YVR's Climate Commitment

Vancouver Airport Authority's commitment to sustainability is an integral part of our strategy and it measures its social, environmental, governance and financial performance every day.

Environmental stewardship is central to how we operate. In 2020, YVR outlined its environmental priorities through a multi-year Environmental Management Plan (EMP) which sets measurable targets in four key areas: carbon reduction, water conservation, waste reduction and ecosystem health.

The EMP is part of a journey to engage with employees, passengers and the hundreds of businesses operating on Sea Island to reduce the impact of airport operations on the environment and care for resources while connecting British Columbia proudly to the world.

### Journey to carbon neutrality in 2020 & net-zero by 2030

To complement the EMP in 2020, YVR added a new Carbon Reduction Roadmap that articulated the airport's path to carbon neutrality and eventually net zero emissions. As part of the Roadmap, we made a multi-decade commitment to be carbon neutral in 2020. We are proud to have achieved this with the purchase of carbon offsets for direct, indirect, and corporate travel emissions from the Darkwoods Forest Offset Project, located in B.C. In 2020, YVR reduced these emissions by five per cent over 2019.





## OUR CLIMATE COMMITMENT



YVR also committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions from airport operations by 2050. However, as part of our 2021 Strategic Plan, we decided to accelerate our ambition to eliminate carbon emissions by 20 years—to be net-zero in 2030 versus 2050. There are six decarbonization pathways that need to be pursued to achieve net zero emissions:

1. Renewable Fuels
2. Fleet (electrification & renewable fuels)
3. Green electrification
4. On-site renewable energy supply
5. Conservation and retrofits
6. Closing the gap—Carbon removals

### Zero carbon airport community

While YVR's commitment to net-zero operations is focused on our own airport operations, its aspiration is to be a zero-carbon airport community.

To help advance this commitment, in November 2020, the Airport Authority implemented a new Auxiliary Power Unit shutdown procedure to encourage crews to shut down aircraft engines and plug into B.C.'s clean electricity. This was possible due to investments made over the past decade by the Airport Authority to equip gates with ground power units and pre-conditioned air to power the aircraft and provide heating and cooling while at the gate. These are the types of actions that need to be taken collectively as the airport community, working together to help reduce carbon in innovative ways.

The Airport Authority also works with partners on how we can influence and aid reducing emissions from Sea Island business partners and their supply chains. This includes advancing options for Sustainable Aviation Fuel as part of the BioPortYVR project, as well as several other important initiatives and ongoing collaborations.



## OUR CARGO NETWORK

# STEMCELL Technologies' global deliveries

Written by our partners at STEMCELL Technologies



YVR has many unique partners it helps connect with companies and products across Canada and around the world to the benefit of the airport and the region. One of those is STEMCELL Technologies, a leading, local life science company and Canada's largest biotechnology company.

Rooted in scientific expertise and rigour, STEMCELL provides high-quality cell culture media, cell separation technologies, instruments, accessory products and educational resources to scientists around the world working in stem cell, immunology, cancer, regenerative medicine and cellular therapy research.

Founded in 1993, STEMCELL currently employs more than 1,400 individuals globally, with 1,000 employees located in Canada. The company is dedicated to improving lives through advanced knowledge and scientific discovery, through its commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion in STEM and the life sciences industry, and through its investments in sustainability, community and social responsibility.

Advanced manufacturers like STEMCELL, which require a highly skilled workforce, play an important role in our region as they further diversify the local economy and support YVR as they scale and grow.



## OUR CARGO NETWORK

### Importance of cargo

Air cargo capacity and infrastructure at YVR play an important role in STEMCELL's process because STEMCELL ships most end products by air. The majority of its manufacturing takes place in Vancouver, from which products are shipped to STEMCELL facilities and customers in over 80 countries.

The company's vision is to have their products used in research labs around the world. To achieve this, STEMCELL relies on frequent and timely flights from Vancouver and other locations to accommodate a high volume of temperature-sensitive global freight.

STEMCELL has distribution centres in the USA, France, China, Singapore and Australia to support its global markets. It regularly ships to these destinations as well as many others. To ensure customers receive their desired products on time, STEMCELL looks to its freight partners to schedule regular, reliable international cargo flights.

**"YVR is a critical global transportation partner for STEMCELL Technologies," said Carly Fryer, Manager of Global Logistics for STEMCELL Technologies. "YVR's partnerships with airlines enable us to serve our customer needs in over 80 countries and achieve our mission to advance the pursuit of scientific knowledge."**

### Impacts of COVID-19

Like it was for many companies, 2020 was a challenging but important year for STEMCELL.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic started to impact countries around the world, airlines have needed to alter several flight schedules. Staying up-to-date on these changing schedules and being adaptable has been crucial to maintaining STEMCELL's global supply

chain and replenishing its international distribution centres.

Throughout the pandemic, STEMCELL and YVR have worked together on logistical challenges, allowing the team to proactively understand the ever-evolving flight schedule changes as well as to provide feedback.

**"The COVID-19 pandemic presented STEMCELL Technologies with several new challenges in 2020," said Fryer. "Regular communication and updates from the YVR team instilled trust that essential services were safely maintained and disruptions to our customers and operations were minimal."**

STEMCELL services 80 countries and its global presence is constantly expanding. The ability to ship from YVR

# OUR CARGO NETWORK

to global hubs, and then onto more remote regions, is incredibly important to serving its customers and scientists around the world.

Despite the challenges associated with the pandemic, in 2020 YVR helped STEMCELL advance its mission to advance the pursuit of scientific knowledge by supplying high quality, innovative reagents, tools and services that enable life science research.

“Having STEMCELL and other companies like this in the advanced manufacturing space are key to our local economy we are very happy to be part of their logistics and distribution network,” said Jason Tse, Manager of Commercial Leasing—Cargo at YVR. “By helping connect their products with key markets and looking at how—as we grow cargo and passenger flights, which also include cargo—we can increase their global links.”



Jason Tse





# Critical Role of Cargo

While Cargo is always an important driver for YVR's business, it took centre stage throughout 2020 as the Airport Authority supported the community in cargo shipments of PPE, medical supplies and vaccines.

Between March and July, YVR saw close to a 30 per cent increase in cargo-only operations, peaking in May when the airport saw close to 240 additional cargo-only departures. Unlike the significant declines seen in the passenger market during the pandemic, the cargo markets fared relatively better. However, since 50 per cent of global cargo flies in the belly of passenger aircraft, the reduction of passenger flights had a material impact on capacity.

At airports like YVR where about 70 per cent of cargo is in the belly of passenger aircraft, the decline of passenger flights was a significant factor but in part was

offset by some 1,000 flights that were passenger aircraft operating as freighter aircraft. Overall cargo at YVR was down 20 per cent compared to 2019 led by a 37 per cent decline on general cargo, but mitigated by a 24 per cent increase in express or integrator traffic, which reached record levels in 2020.

Canadian e-commerce sales by value increased by 60 per cent in 2020 as consumers rapidly embraced online buying during the pandemic. As e-commerce grows this significantly benefits express carriers at YVR such as FedEx, UPS, CargoJet, and their associated partners. In spring 2020, YVR also saw the urgent shipment of critical PPE from China, at the outset almost exclusively by air and an excellent show of collaboration between its cargo community partners locally and abroad. With the first shipments of vaccines delivered in December 2020, we expect to see ongoing shipments as a key driver of air cargo into 2021.



## OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

# Iskwew Air charts its own path

Written by our partners at Iskwew Air



**ISKWEW AIR**  
Δ^9.0

In normal times, Teara Fraser—Founder and Lead Executive of Iskwew Air—would be focused on providing a reliable, 24-hour charter airline service throughout British Columbia, and on growing her business and relationships with key partners and stakeholders.

Instead, like so many businesses, Iskwew Air—Fraser's one-aircraft airline out of YVR and Canada's first Indigenous woman-owned airline—continues to navigate the havoc COVID-19 caused to the aviation and tourism sectors. Passenger and flight volumes are down significantly, and Fraser's plans to offer scheduled flights have been put on hold.

Facing COVID-19's devastating challenges to its business and the industries it serves, Iskwew Air continues to be innovative and plan for the future to ensure the airline remains viable and sustainable. Despite these setbacks, Fraser noted that COVID-19 has also offered some time for Iskwew Air, YVR and the aviation sector as a whole to focus on reimagining and rebuilding the industry. Fraser remains determined to ensure Iskwew Air is a part of creating a sustainable aviation future.





## OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

“In many ways, 2020 offered an opportunity to reevaluate everything. Rethink everything,” said Teara Fraser, Founder and Lead Executive Officer of Iskwew Air. “What I noticed was an increased level of innovation and creativity, as well as a willingness to move out of old ways and into more expansive thinking from our whole industry. The aviation industry came together in a way it never has.”

Fraser feels strongly that the air transportation system is vital to our way of life and is so much more than commercial flights.

“Everyone in the air transportation ecosystem has worked hard during COVID-19 to ensure we can deliver goods and connect people with the medical attention they need,” said Fraser. “We understand the importance of air transportation in society and that every single Canadian depends on it.”

### An airline created with purpose

Becoming Canada’s first Indigenous, woman-owned airline was no easy feat; it took founder Teara Fraser a long time from ideation and getting the blessing of the Musqueam Indian Band, to launching the airline and taking its first flight. Creating Iskwew Air was a huge challenge, but also a cause for celebration.

Starting an airline from scratch was only part of the puzzle. Iskwew Air got its name from the Cree word for “woman” and was chosen as an act of reclamation of womanhood and matriarchal leadership, and





## OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

to celebrate all those who identify as women. Iskwew Air is changing the status quo in aviation culture. Its Indigenous roots and woman leadership team is a bold move in a traditionally male-dominated industry.

“Iskwew Air is committed to decolonizing, decarbonizing and transforming the aviation industry for all humans, for all of our relatives and for Mother Earth,” said Fraser. “Imagine a world where woman-identifying, non-binary and Indigenous peoples lead in this innovative space.”

### Strong relationship with YVR

Iskwew has been flying passengers out of YVR since September 2019. When the COVID-19 pandemic began significantly affecting British Columbians, Iskwew Air not only worked with YVR to mitigate the impact on airlines and its staff, it also joined forces with AirLIFT to raise funds to fly care packages to Indigenous communities across the province.

Fraser and YVR have a decades-old relationship; one of her first jobs was at YVR almost 30 years ago, and she had been a YVR employee three times before launching Iskwew Air. She is

proud of her work at and with YVR and considers herself one of the airport’s biggest cheerleaders. Iskwew Air is excited to be part of the YVR community and be part of what the aviation community will be able to accomplish and create in the future.

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**“I’m very proud of my business, but I also have a deep sense of gratitude to all the people, communities and organizations that helped make Iskwew Air happen,” said Fraser. “I want to be in real partnership with YVR to rebuild aviation in a way where we can walk more gently on the earth and where everyone belongs.”**

Teara Fraser



## OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

### Supporting reconciliation and Indigenous entrepreneurship

Reconciliation and reclamation are at the heart of Iskwew Air, whose Cree name was chosen specifically as an act of reclamation of womanhood, matriarchal leadership and language. The name is also a conversation starter and helps to normalize and celebrate Indigenous languages.

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**“I consider running an Indigenous woman-owned airline to be a great responsibility,” said Fraser. “I need to ensure that Iskwew Air perseveres through the challenges and goes on to prosper. Girls and young people are watching, and I want to be an example of the possibilities and success they can achieve.”**

In 2020, YVR conducted 12 Days of Giving to support and spotlight local community organizations doing important work. One of those was the Indigenous LIFT Collective, founded by Fraser. YVR donated to one of the organization’s initiatives, the LIFT Circle of Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs, which brings together Indigenous entrepreneurs who identify as women to help each other thrive in Canada through the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.

Fraser says the Indigenous LIFT Collective and initiatives like the LIFT Circle are incredible ways to support economic reconciliation and reclamation, and the team was very appreciative of YVR’s support of the LIFT Collective and grateful for their dedication to reconciliation overall. Fraser also acknowledges the other steps YVR has taken to drive reconciliation within the organization and its communities.

“I commend YVR on the jobs that have been created for Indigenous peoples at the airport. The most natural, effective and swift pathway to economic

reconciliation is to cocreate the conditions for Indigenous businesses to thrive,” said Fraser. “I look forward to seeing YVR take the opportunity to expand its reconciliation efforts through supporting Indigenous owned and led businesses and welcoming them into the business community on Sea Island.”





## OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

# Reflecting the Needs of our Community

Last year was a challenging year for community organizations, with reduced funding and higher needs. YVR reduced its Community Investment program early in 2020 because of the financial pressure from the impacts of COVID-19, committing to support only partners that had existing agreements in place.

By the end of the year, we were able to reopen our program, offering support to existing and new community organizations. YVR offered community grants for organizations that provided benefit to those who had been impacted through the pandemic. More than 90 organizations applied, and we recognize that there were many more we were not able to support during an incredibly challenging year for other community, not-for-profit and charitable organizations.

In 2020, the Airport Authority supported 24 partners through \$571,662 in donations in support of a variety of different organizations and causes, including providing \$10,000 grants to seven organizations that were doing work to help meet the challenges the community faced from COVID-19.

And while we weren't able to contribute as much support financially, we were able to innovate our community program to support in different ways. For the first time ever, YVR opened up our runway to the Terry Fox Runway Run. 50 team members and airport business partners participated at a social distance raising \$3,500 for the foundation. We also opened up our terminal, offering our space to community groups including our Pacific Assistance Dogs (PADs) who did their training in a safe and socially distanced way. The puppies learned to climb stairs, perch and heel as part of the training at YVR.





# OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



During these stressful times, we were also able to bring a bit of joy to our passengers through a pilot busking program that saw great local musicians highlight our local arts scene to the travelling public.

YVR also partnered with Vancouver Coastal Health to turn the jetSet parking lot, which was closed at the onset of the pandemic, into a public testing collection centre to help support the community. Opened in November 2020, the drive-through facility is available to Richmond residents as well as British Columbians exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19. And while not a highlight in 2020, we were pleased to help Vancouver Coastal Health expand this to a vaccine delivery site, and then partner with the Province of British Columbia in 2021 to help support our community in its vaccination efforts, staffing Richmond’s mass vaccination site.



Although health regulations meant the annual Holiday Hamper Drive with Quest Food Exchange could not move forward as an event, the team created a unique drive-through experience that saw more than 400 community members—from residents of Burkeville to business partners and Green Coat volunteers—drop off hampers at the YVR curb. We were also proud to extend our hamper program and donate 200 hampers to the Musqueam community, ensuring that families who needed it could have a holiday meal.

## OUR TERMINAL TRANSFORMATION

# Retail realities of COVID-19 at YVR

Written by our partners at World Duty Free Vancouver



There are many economic victims of the global COVID-19 pandemic, but the retail sector was hit particularly hard in 2020. The significant reductions in flights and passengers at YVR made things especially difficult on the storefronts at the airport.

World Duty Free Vancouver (WDF), a Dufry company, is the largest walk-through duty-free store in Canada and has been operating more than 5,500 square meters of retail space at YVR since 2007. Among the twenty shops at YVR, eighteen of them are located in the International Terminal and two are in the U.S. Trans-Border departure

area, all providing travelers with a wide selection of duty-free products in perfumery and cosmetics, liquor, tobacco, confectionery and local food, luxury brand leathers and textiles, watches and jewelry, and of course, Canadian souvenirs.

Unfortunately, the realities of COVID-19 spared no retailer at YVR. In March 2020, sales dropped dramatically at WDF stores across the country, a sign that COVID-19 was turning into a bigger, worldwide problem.





# OUR TERMINAL TRANSFORMATION

“While the decreasing sales were shocking, we had an advantage from reading early warning signs from China eight weeks before the pandemic came to Canada,” said Freda Cheung, EVP US and Canada with Dufry Group. “This enabled our team to get a head start on preparing and taking action, including sourcing masks, disposable gloves, hand sanitizers and other equipment to keep our staff safe.”



Sales continued to drop in the following weeks, with sales almost completely disappearing when the federal government shut down Canada’s borders. The impact on employees was more than just financial, workers were nervous and adjusting to the evolving situation while still operating the stores 24/7.

## Managing stores during COVID-19

YVR and WDF worked closely to maintain their partnership amidst the challenges of COVID-19 and the significant decrease in the number of passengers frequenting the airport and, by extension, a decline in foot traffic to WDF’s shops.

WDF worked tirelessly to follow all government and WorkSafeBC guidelines and doing all it could to keep its employees and customers safe from COVID-19. The team began preparing early, listening to precautionary updates from other countries as they shared news of the pandemic progression and was able to source face masks and other PPE items at the time when supplies were limited. WDF was part of Dufry’s larger





## OUR TERMINAL TRANSFORMATION

Tracy Wong



emergency response team that met seven days a week to keep the lines of communication open and took initiative to ensure health and safety procedures were in place.

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**“The health and safety of our employees was our top priority,” said Tracy Wong, the Regional VP of Dufry. “Government guidelines weren’t very clear at the beginning, but we did the best we could. We actually mandated masks, temperature checks and hand sanitizer in our stores before the government released these actions as requirements.”**

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The beginning of the pandemic was a huge learning curve for the organization and staff. The company focused on doing what it did best, providing proactive service and

adapting to the changing environment. WDFG continued to recalibrate and finetune its procedures as it learned along the way. While it eventually settled into the “new normal,” it continued to readjust to the ever-evolving situation.

Despite the new procedures and adopting new processes, WDFG had to reduce its workforce and furlough some employees at the height of the pandemic; but it worked hard to keep its employees informed every step of the way. The staff were naturally worried, but they understood the situation and recognized efforts from the company to help staff to get through this.

### Partnership with YVR

YVR and WDF conducted daily calls from the beginning of the pandemic through to the end of 2020 to discuss the situation and ensure employees were healthy and safe. Both organizations stayed closely connected as they tried to anticipate and control the impact to businesses on Sea Island. WDF knew YVR had its best interests in mind and would relay as much information to the businesses as possible.

# OUR TERMINAL TRANSFORMATION



“Our partnership with YVR remained strong through all the challenges. We knew this pandemic would not be over anytime soon, so we needed to work together to manage it effectively and adapt,” said Wong. “One bright spot in all this was learning to share and collaborate more with YVR.”

WDF’s partnership with YVR never faltered and YVR’s role played a big part in keeping WDF stores operating.

## Significant Milestones in 2020

Despite 2020 being a very challenging year, WDF still reached some significant milestones. Not only is their relationship with YVR stronger than ever, WDF continued its diversity and inclusion, sustainability, accessibility and community efforts.

WDF put a focus on being an inclusive company, establishing a diversity and inclusion committee to educate and remove barriers for potential and current staff and took steps to create a diversified workplace. In addition to its diversity and inclusion work, WDFG completed the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) and achieved a certification level of Rick Hanson Accessibility Certified Gold in retail stores and office locations.

Despite financial difficulty, WDF continued its community commitment of \$8,500 to Richmond Hospital Foundation in 2020, as well as efforts to be a climate smart business.

“2020 was a hard year for our team,” said Wong. “But we worked to try and minimize surprises for the team and company as best as possible. In the end, we are proud of where we landed and what we achieved as a group.”



OUR TERMINAL TRANSFORMATION

# Safety First & Adapting to Reduced Demand

Throughout the pandemic, YVR worked to keep our community safe. We had the health and safety of passengers, partners and community top of mind from the outset of the pandemic. YVR refined and streamlined airport processes while investing in new technologies to ensure a seamless, low-touch and physically distanced travel experience.

## YVR TAKEcare

YVR’s TAKEcare health and safety program was designed to help those who need to travel move through the airport safely and with confidence. It places industry-leading health, safety and cleaning practices and protocols at the forefront of airport processes. The program was assessed and accredited by global aviation organization Airports Council International under its Airport Health Accreditation system, meeting the most stringent health and safety standards.

One part of this program includes YVR’s Caretakers. This group of airport employees helps to ensure passengers have everything they need to feel safe while travelling. The Caretaker team includes more than 40 members from multiple Airport Authority departments, including Operations, Maintenance, Security, Legal and Marketing Communications. This group does everything from helping people find their way around the airport to ensuring hand sanitizer stations are well-stocked and that everyone has a face mask on.



## OUR TERMINAL TRANSFORMATION

Airport tenants and business partners were engaged regularly to ensure they were active participants in the TAKEcare program. More than 80 hand sanitizers were deployed throughout the airport and over 2,000 litres of hand sanitizer solution used in 2020. The airport also installed an electrostatic sprayer that kills 99.9 per cent of bacteria in five seconds and can clean 18,000 square feet coverage on things like jet bridges and food courts.

### Terminal Consolidation and Investment in Future

An important element of our pivot in 2020 was to minimize the Airport Authority's operating costs wherever possible to be more in line with reduced passenger demand. The Airport Authority took steps to reduce its terminal footprint. In April 2020, YVR consolidated operations and shut 22 per cent of its terminal. YVR also consolidated our domestic and international passenger check-ins and outbound baggage handling into its international facilities—allowing for the closure of the Domestic Terminal Building check-in and bag halls.

While we consolidated many parts of the terminal, work continued on the Pier D Expansion project which was officially completed in February 2021. The new terminal expansion features eight new gates, a glassed-in island forest with access to the outdoors, an immersive digital experience and a yoga, prayer and quiet room. This was a significant project in the history of YVR and its largest expansion since 1996.

Due to COVID-19, plans to open the facility are on hold. The Pier D Expansion is a strong investment in the future of YVR and positions the airport well for when air traffic rebounds to pre-pandemic levels. We look forward to welcoming you to Pier-D and showcasing the magic of B.C. in the future.

### Commercial Changes

YVR's business partners and commercial partners like World Duty Free adapted to the impacts of the pandemic and the decreases in passenger volume at the airport. Many retail stores were closed in 2020, with only some reopening. The Airport Authority worked closely with its business partners to help them navigate the challenging time.

In January 2020 there were 147 stores open at YVR which includes duty free, retail, food and beverage and service offerings. This number was reduced to 84 and then further reduced for the summer period during the consolidation of our terminal to 78 locations. The openings and closures were often very challenging for our commercial partners and we want to recognize and thank them for their ongoing adaptability and collaboration during these months.







## TAKE CARE!

Our purpose is to serve our community and the economy that supports it. As we close the chapter on 2020, we also appreciate the tremendous support from all of you—our community, our partners and our employees. Here's to our shared future, laying the groundwork for 2021 and beyond. And most importantly, take care.