

See what Allstream Small Business telecommunications can do for you.

LEARN MORE



Pearson disputes report finding airport inefficient

March 24, 2008

DEAN BEEBY
THE CANADIAN PRESS

OTTAWA—Pearson airport is being dropped from a global review of airport efficiency after a complaint about its embarrassingly low ranking.

The president and CEO of the Greater Toronto Airports Authority demanded the removal of Pearson from the annual survey of more than 150 major airports in a toughly worded letter last August.

"Should you decline this request, I see no other recourse than to pursue all means at our disposal to receive fair treatment," Lloyd McCoomb warned the lead researcher at the University of British Columbia.

McCoomb cited a "total lack of academic rigour" and "unsupported findings" in the survey, saying the research was "threatening potential harm to our reputation."

The 2007 edition of the report found that Pearson was among the least efficient airports in the world, and that its cost competitiveness was low.

The survey noted that aircraft landing fees at Pearson – Canada's largest airport – are the highest in the world.

The survey is published by an international research group of 13 academics, headed by Tae Oum, a business professor at UBC. Detailed results are available for a fee of

'ACRID ODOUR' FORCES AIR CANADA JET TO MAKE STOP IN CALGARY

CALGARY—An Air Canada jumbo jet with 279 people on board made an unscheduled landing in Calgary yesterday after a flight attendant smelled an "acrid odour."

Flight 34 was on its way from Vancouver to Toronto when the incident occurred.

Wayne Reimer of the Calgary Airport Authority says the Boeing 777 landed

\$500, to help underwrite research costs, though a free summary is posted on the Internet (www.atrsworld.org/publications.html).

Oum said McCoomb's "intimidating" letter rattled him, and fearing legal action, he consulted the university's lawyer and others. In the end, the research group agreed to cut Pearson from the efficiency analysis in the 2008 edition of the survey, due in late May.

"I have to protect myself," Oum said in an interview.

The 2008 survey, however, will continue to rank Pearson's landing fees and other factual information that is generally available from public sources.

Oum declined to comment on his latest internal findings about Pearson's efficiency, citing McCoomb's letter, but said the airport's ranking has been relatively low for several years.

A spokesperson for McCoomb said the president was not threatening legal action, but as a former professor of civil engineering at the University of Toronto, was simply speaking "academic to academic."

"There's no attempt to shut down research," Scott Armstrong said in an interview. "Academic freedom is not an issue.

"What's at issue is we're simply asking that if someone is going to go around making accusations about our company, as any business would be, we're concerned about that, so we want to know where they're coming from."

McCoomb challenged Oum's methodology and asked for access to the raw data so that a third party, hired by the GTAA, could make an independent assessment, Armstrong said. "That request was not honoured."

Oum says the research group decided "to keep the (international) data in-house for competitive reasons," but offered to provide McCoomb all the raw data about Pearson, most of which the GTAA itself supplied last summer.

without incident.

Air Canada spokesperson John Reber said last night he didn't know yet whether the odour was caused by smoke. The captain opted to land as a precaution.

There was a similar incident last Wednesday, when reports of an "electrical odour" forced an Air Canada flight to Toronto from Beijing to land in Calgary.

The Canadian Press

Ads by Google

Invest in Costa Rica

Costa Rica Successful Developer
Offering Home Sites from 20k Down
www.CostaLandSales.com

Toronto Hotels

Up to 70% Off Top Toronto Hotels.
Prices Include Breakfast & Taxes!
www.GTAHotels.com/Toronto

Toronto Baseball Tickets

Buy Toronto Baseball Tickets Here
Great Tickets at Great Prices
FanXchange.com