



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** General Purposes Committee

**Date:** February 25, 2019

**From:** Barry Konkin  
Manager, Policy Planning

**File:** 01-0153-04-01/2019-  
Vol 01

**Re:** **2018 Report from City Citizen Representatives to the Vancouver International Airport Aeronautical Noise Management Committee (YVR ANMC)**

### Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled "2018 Report from the City Citizen Representatives to the Vancouver International Airport Aeronautical Noise Management Committee (YVR ANMC)" dated February 25, 2019 from the Manager, Policy Planning, be received for information.

Barry Konkin  
Manager, Policy Planning  
(604-276-4139)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
<b>ROUTED TO:</b>  Transportation	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>  
<b>REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE</b>	<b>INITIALS:</b>  W	<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b>  

## Staff Report

### Origin

As directed by Council, the City's two citizen appointees to the Vancouver International Airport Aeronautical Noise Management Committee (YVR ANMC) provide annual updates directly to the General Purposes Committee on the annual work undertaken by the YVR ANMC. This report provides the 2018 update through a status report prepared by the City's appointees to the YVR ANMC (Attachment 1). The Vancouver International Airport Aeronautical Noise Management Committee is not a committee of Council, but is a committee struck by the Airport Authority and members are independently appointed by respective stakeholder groups that include citizen representatives, municipal governments, the Musqueam Indian Band, airlines, NAV CANADA, Transport Canada and the Airport Authority. Council appoints the two citizen representatives on the committee.

### Analysis

#### YVR Aeronautical Noise Management Committee

Through its ground lease with the Federal Government, the Vancouver International Airport Authority (Airport Authority) has responsibility for noise management activities at YVR, and has a comprehensive noise management program to undertake this responsibility. The purpose of the YVR ANMC is to provide a forum where parties with an interest in noise management issues can discuss aeronautical noise management at YVR. Each year, the City Citizen representatives – as directed by Council – provide an update directly to the General Purposes Committee on agenda items discussed at the YVR ANMC meetings during the previous year.

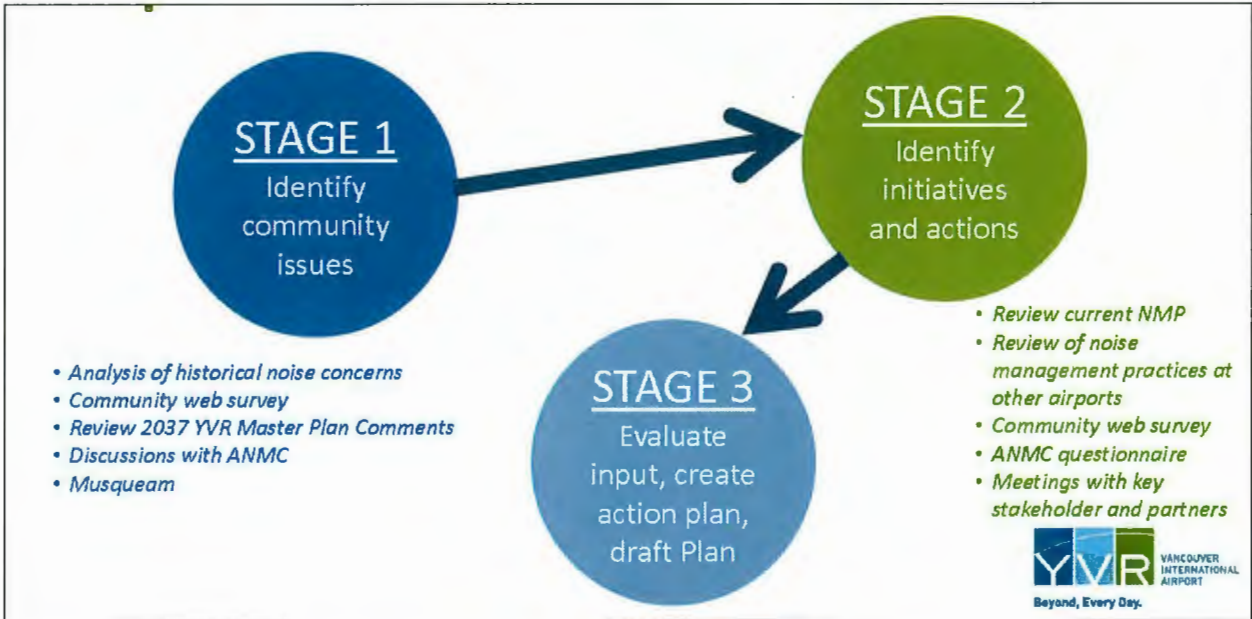
The attached status report (Attachment 1) from the two Richmond's citizen appointees provides a summary of the key items discussed at three Committee meetings held in February, June and December 2018. Additionally, a special joint meeting was held in October 2018 with the YVR Environmental Advisory Committee to assign relative importance to 34 "draft material topics for sustainability reporting", including aeronautical noise.

In addition to the status report submitted by Richmond's citizen representatives on the YVR ANMC (Attachment 1), this report provides some additional staff comments on YVR noise related issues.

#### 2019-2023 YVR Noise Management Plan

Under the provisions of Vancouver Airport Authority's (VAA) federal ground lease, VAA is required to have a Noise Management Plan that is approved by the Minister of Transport. The Noise Management Plan serves to document YVR's Aeronautical Noise Management Program and identifies key areas of work over a five-year period. As the 2014-2018 Plan had expired, a new 2019-2023 Plan and associated initiatives was developed in 2018 in consultation with the YVR ANMC and the broader commercial and residential community, including a web-based survey. Figure 1, as provided by YVR, describes the process utilized in creating the 2019-2023 YVR Noise Management Plan.

**Figure 1: Process to Creating the 2019-2023 YVR Noise Management Plan**

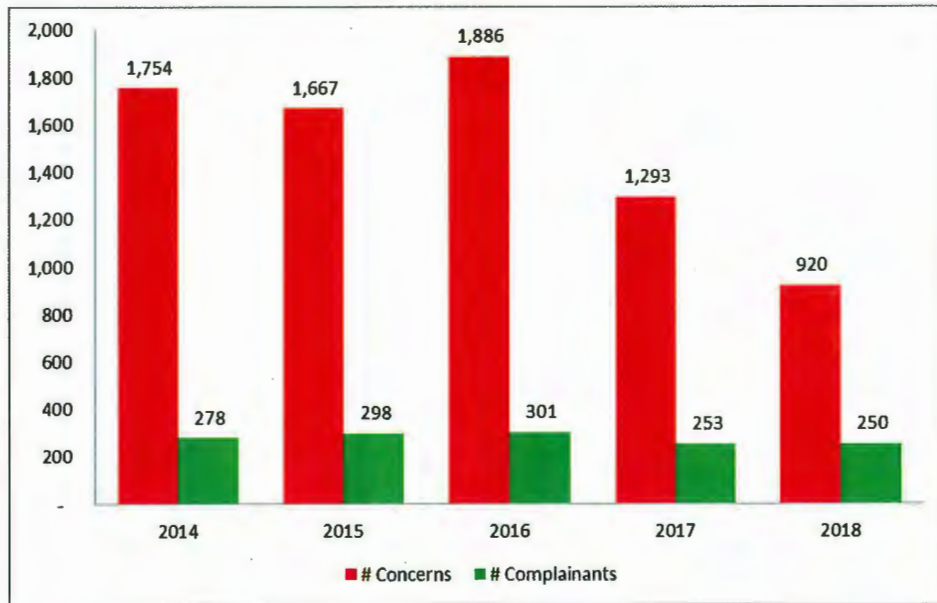


In September 2018, staff and Council provided comments on the draft 2019-2023 YVR Noise Management Plan including the need to have more community awareness/education with affected residents and businesses, improved noise reduction techniques, and consideration of a regional airport strategy. The Noise Management Plan received approval from the YVR Board of Directors in late 2018, and was accepted by Transport Canada in February 2019. YVR staff have indicated that a copy of the new Noise Management Plan will be publicly available by the end of March 2019.

2018 Aeronautical Noise Management – Summary Report

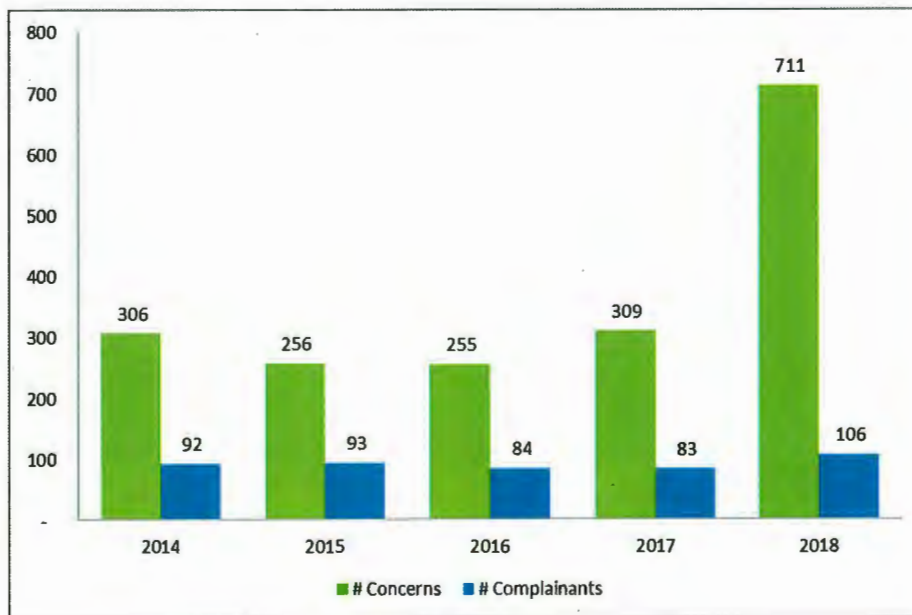
Between January 1 to December 31, 2018, YVR received a total of 920 noise concerns from 250 individuals across Metro Vancouver. This represents a 29% decrease in the number of concerns and no change in the number of complainants over the same time period in 2017 (Figure 2). Almost 50% of the total concerns (457 out of 920 concerns) were registered by three individuals in Richmond regarding jet departures and run-ups during the night-time hours. Of the balance of 463 concerns, 71 were received regarding engine run-up activities, including 66 concerns from 19 individuals in Richmond.

**Figure 2: Region-wide Aeronautical Noise Concerns and Complainants**



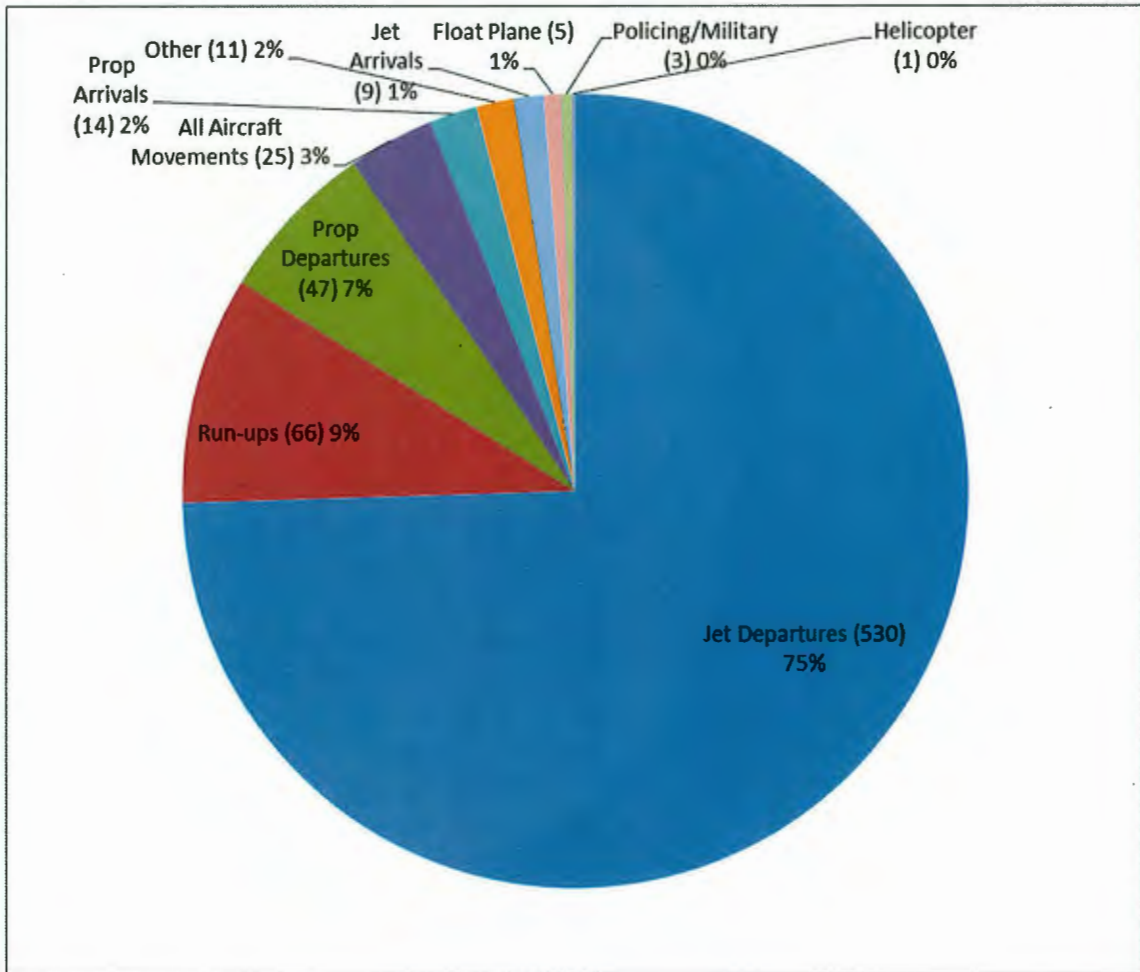
A total of 711 concerns were received by YVR from 106 Richmond residents during 2018, which is a 130% increase in the number of concerns and a 28% increase in the number of complainants versus 2017 (Figure 3). This increase is largely due to three individuals in Richmond who registered 457 of the 711 concerns in 2018 (64% of all Richmond concerns). Two of these individuals registered 290 concerns regarding jet departures over the city whereas one individual registered 167 concerns regarding jet departures over the city and run-ups during the night-time hours.

**Figure 3: Noise Concerns and Complainants by Richmond Residents**



As shown in Figure 4, 75% of concerns (530 out of 711) in Richmond included jet departures. Of those 530 concerns, 457 were from three individuals in Richmond. Other concerns shown in Figure 4 include engine run-ups (9%), propeller departures (7%), and all aircraft movements (3%).

**Figure 4: Total Number and Per Cent of Richmond-Related Noise Concerns by Operational Category**



Through YVR’s Noise Management Plan, in consultation with the YVR AMNC, YVR is committed to minimizing the environmental and noise impacts associated with airport operations. As part of the Noise Management Plan, YVR is focused on minimizing noise disturbances while recognizing the need for 24-hour airport operations. All concerns received by YVR are logged in the YVR noise complaint database. Personal information is treated confidentially and information in the database is used to analyze trends, create reports for the YVR ANMC, and to report to the community via the annual noise report and the annual sustainability report.

**Financial Impact**

None.

**Conclusion**

The YVR ANMC remains a valuable forum for addressing aeronautical noise impacts on Richmond. The City's citizen representatives to the YVR ANMC continue to uphold Richmond's interest at the Committee and contribute positively to discussions. The provision of input regarding VAA's new 2019-2023 Noise Management Plan will provide an opportunity for the City and the City's representatives to the YVR ANMC to ensure that the initiatives are consistent with a goal of minimizing aeronautical noise impacts to the community and enhancing residents' quality of life.



John Hopkins  
Planner 3  
(604-276-4279)

In collaboration with: Gary Abrams and Ihsan Malik  
City Citizen Representatives to the YVR ANMC

JH:cas

Att. 1: 2018 Report from City Citizen Representatives to the YVR ANMC

**Date:** January, 2019

**To:** City of Richmond General Purposes Committee

**From:** G.W.D. Abrams  
Ihsan Malik  
City of Richmond Citizen YVR ANMC Representatives

**2018 Status Report: YVR Aeronautical Noise Management Committee**

**City Appointees (there are two current City citizen representatives):**

Gary W.D. Abrams, a Richmond lawyer with military and civil flying experience and involvement in the British Columbia Aviation Council and other aviation organizations, has acted as Citizen Representative from the beginning of 2015. He was reappointed in December, 2017, for a two-year term ending December 31, 2019.

Ihsan Malik, a retired aircraft maintenance engineer with Air Canada, was appointed at the beginning of 2017 for a two-year term which ended on December 31, 2018.

Arvind Sharma, an aircraft maintenance engineering at YVR, has been recently appointed at the beginning of 2019 for a two-year term ending on December 31, 2020.

**Past Year at the YVR Aeronautical Noise Management Committee**

1. The ANMC met on March 28, June 14, and December 6, 2018.
2. The March 2018 meeting opened with an update by Mark Cheng, Supervisor Noise Abatement and Air Quality at Vancouver International Airport (YVR), on the YVR Noise Management Plan (NMP) 2019-2023 to be completed by the end of 2018, for submission to Transport Canada.
3. YVR was also engaged in a Noise Management Practice Review, in the course of which it had commissioned a consulting company, AIRBIZ, to review current practices at two Canadian and five other international airports. Three of the persons who conducted the review summarized their findings at the March 28 meeting, while observing that geographic and other conditions at these airports might render their experience of limited application to YVR.
4. The full results of a community web questionnaire launched in March, 2018, would not be available until July.
5. Rachel Min, an environmental analyst working under Mark Cheng, presented a summary of YVR's recent analysis of historical noise "concerns" for the years 2014 to 2017. The concerns totaled 6,458, registered by 903 residents of Richmond and three other municipalities.

6. Mark Cheng listed the seven criteria against which comments received from the community and members of the ANMC would be assessed. Safety came first. The seventh was “alignment with YVR’s mandate to provide 24-hour air service for the region”.
7. Mark Cheng then presented the results of an analysis of take-off noise levels generated by the most modern aircraft, such as the Boeing 787, and older models, many of which will continue to operate from YVR for some years. The measured difference, of 3 DBA (decibels), he regarded as significant, especially given that the latest aircraft carry more passengers than their predecessors.
8. Rachel Min summarized the 2017 statistics for YVR. These disclosed about 330,000 movements, including floatplanes and helicopters, and 24.2 million passengers (a record number). The number of passengers had grown, because of the increase in aircraft size, much faster than the number of aircraft movements.

There were 1,293 concerns, registered by 253 persons, in 2017, 776 (60 per cent) of which emanated from three persons. The total number of concerns was nearly 600 lower than in 2016.

9. The second meeting of the YVRANMC in 2018 took place on June 14.
10. Mark Cheng reviewed progress on the 2019-2023 YVR Noise Management Plan and referred to the Noise Management Practice Review discussed at the March 28 meeting.
11. Interim results of the Community Web Questionnaire also were presented. More than 600 persons had so far responded. Their principal suggestions were to change flight paths, restrict engine run-ups further, impose night-time curfews, and move traffic to regional airports.
12. Responses were still being received to the ANMC questionnaire, which would be reviewed in the course of drafting the Noise Management Plan by the end of 2018.
13. Mark Cheng reviewed, at some length, the hazard created by night-time snow goose activity on the west foreshore of Sea Island immediately to the west of the two main runways (08L – 26R and 08R – 26L). Changes were about to be made in the Noise Abatement Procedure (NAP) instituted by Transport Canada, to be effective from October to April. These would alter the provisions on Preferential Runway Use, between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m., to require, in conditions including a tailwind component not exceeding 5 knots, both arrivals and departures on Runway 26L, so that aircraft on approach in the opposite direction (Runway 08R) would not enter the offshore area below 300 feet where snow geese are most likely to be found. The effect of the new rule on the community is expected to be minimal.



14. Mark Cheng reviewed the Airport Authority's plan to redevelop 44 acres of land immediately to the west of the community of Burkeville to enable a new cargo and logistics facility to be installed. Some changes had been made following consultations with a community advisory committee.
15. Don McLeay, the representative on the ANMC of the National Airlines Council of Canada, outlined the results of an action plan instituted in 2012 by the aviation industry and Transport Canada to improve fuel efficiency by at least 2 per cent per year from 2005 to 2020. The results to date have been somewhat below the target, but upgrading of fleets will bring about further reductions in both emissions and noise.
16. Rachel Min presented the Noise Management Report for the period January 1 to May 31, 2018. No consistent pattern was apparent. The number of concerns had decreased by 69 per cent from the same period in 2017, but these came from 23 per cent more persons. Three individuals in Richmond (of 47) accounted for 30 per cent of the concerns from that city.
17. In the spring of 2018 a resident of North Richmond, who had complained to the City of Richmond of noise from departing aircraft, was referred to Gary Abrams. A number of telephone discussions followed, but not the in-office visit suggested, and there were no calls after early September. The man said, however, that he knew of more than 200 residents who were prepared to undertake a class action against the Vancouver Airport Authority concerning aircraft noise.
18. Had the caller responded to the invitation to meet, he would have been informed of proceedings in the Supreme Court of British Columbia in the late 1990s, shortly after the north runway was opened, by a number of residents of the Bridgeport area. Their main complaint was of noise from arrivals, on the new runway 26R, of aircraft considerably noisier than those in use today. The claimants were successful at trial. The Airport Authority, however, immediately appealed the decision, with the result that it was overturned by the British Columbia Court of Appeal on the ground that the Airport Authority had statutory authority to operate the runway (and other facilities) as it was doing. The unsuccessful claim was framed in nuisance, which is a legal wrong by the owner or occupant of one piece of land causing damage to the owners or occupants of other real estate.
19. A second resident of North Richmond (near Tait School) was put in touch, through the same channel, with Gary Abrams in September, 2018. He professed to know of 100 or more persons living there who were prepared to undertake legal proceedings over noise against the Airport Authority. The same invitation, to discuss the matter, has yet to be followed up.

20. These complaints, and some personal observations of Gary Abrams, were put before the Committee near the end of the December 6 meeting. Gary Abrams, a resident of central Richmond, had since the spring of 2018 heard a considerable number of jet departures on runway 08R in what had until recently been the quiet period from 10.00 p.m. to 7.00 a.m. He recalled, from the mid-1990s (just before the north runway was opened), an occasion on which 14 aircraft (of the quiet kind) were lined up for departure on runway 08 (now 08R) well before 7.00 a.m., yet were not permitted to depart before that time. As recently as 2016, the then Director of Operations at YVR had spoken to the ANMC of the strictness with which the no jet departures between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. rule was enforced, that is, that only in compelling circumstances were these allowed. The public had, so far as Gary Abrams was aware, not been told that this long standing rule had been abrogated. He referred also to a number of European airports, having for more airline traffic than Vancouver, which continued to enforce night-time curfews. London Heathrow and London Gatwick were two examples. There had recently been controversies at Frankfurt and Munich, Germany, where, despite the demands of freight carriers, complete night-time closures had been imposed.
21. Mark Cheng, having been alerted to these complaints, responded in detail at the December 6 meeting. He was not, he said, aware of any assurances to the public by Transport Canada or the Airport Authority regarding night departures. The draft 2019-2023 YVR Noise Management Plan referred to YVR as “Canada’s second busiest airport, open 24 hours to support the travel and business demands of the region”, and stated:
- “YVR is committed to minimizing the environmental and noise impacts associated with airport operations. As part of the Noise Management Program, YVR is focused on minimizing noise disturbances while recognizing the need for 24-hour airport operations.”
- One of twelve subjects under the “Action Plan – List of Initiatives” provided at the meeting concerned “night-time operations”. The Airport Authority was to monitor and report on the number of night operations, review annually the Airport Authority’s “guidelines for approving operations at night to ensure the guidelines remain relevant,” report annually on the number of night operations, report to Transport Canada any suspected violations of the night-time approval requirement, and “assess and communicate the benefits and economic contribution of 24-hour operations.”
22. Only one Canadian airport, he said, had a complete ban on night operations. That was Toronto Billy Bishop. Only about 3 per cent of airline departures from Vancouver were at night. Most of these were international flights to points in Asia, in most cases involving the latest, and quietest, types of aircraft. The only proposed night operations which YVR often refused to permit were those, such as

repositioning of sports or other charter aircraft, involving no or only a small number of passengers.

23. Gary Abrams said, however, that in Richmond there were 230,000 people living in proximity to the airport, and that a substantial number of these had a genuine grievance about night jet departures of which the Airport Authority ought to take need. One indication of these concerns was the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2018 YVR noise management report, which mentioned 584 “concerns”, 74 per cent of the total, emanating from Richmond. 44 per cent of the Richmond concerns were from three individuals. One complained 142 times about night departures on Runway 08R and run-ups. Two persons registered 205 concerns about jet departures over the City. Whether one of the authors of 205 concerns (departures over the city) is the same person who registered 142 concerns (08R departure) is unknown. Likewise unknown is whether these persons are those who had the discussions with Gary Abrams referred to in paras. 17 and 19 of this report.
24. At the close of the meeting, the Director Environment for the Vancouver Airport Authority, who presides over all meetings of the ANMC, assured Gary Abrams that his complaint would be considered by the Airport Authority.

#### **Recommendations to the General Purposes Committee**

No specific recommendations are made. The work of the Committee will continue.

Gary Abrams  
Ihsan Malik