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August 24, 2022

File No. GB-6410-03; 0110-20-LTC Chairs;11-5595-30

Via email: [ssingh@npa.ca](mailto:ssingh@npa.ca)

Capt. Satinder Singh  
VP - Marine Operations & Harbour Master  
Nanaimo Port Authority  
100 Port Drive  
Nanaimo, BC  
V9R 0C7

Dear Captain Singh:

Re: Float Plane Flights over and affecting Gabriola Island

I am writing to you as the Chair of the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee ("Gabriola Island LTC"), part of the Islands Trust Federation created by the Islands Trust Act of BC. The Islands Trust is a unique federation of special-purpose governments (local trust committees and an island municipality) mandated through the provincial *Islands Trust Act* to preserve and protect the unique amenities and environment of the islands and water between the British Columbia Lower Mainland and southern Vancouver Island.

At the LTC meeting of July 28<sup>th</sup>, a motion was passed for the Chair to correspond with the Harbour Authority regarding noise concerns on Gabriola from aircraft departing from and leaving the Nanaimo harbour. I would anticipate this would generally be Harbour Air flights but might be others from time to time.

This is not a new issue as concerns have been raised by Gabriola residents for years. Attached is a letter from November of 2015 raising concerns about noise, sent to the Nanaimo Airport Commission. With increasing flight traffic, there have been increasing numbers of concerns and complaints raised. Here is an extract from a sample complaint we received recently:

***On any average day we experience a huge amount of plane noise from a number of sources: seaplanes, passenger (and other) planes from the Nanaimo airport, and privately owned planes. There are fluctuations from day to day, but generally speaking there is a disturbing amount of noise. Some days will be nearly incessant with hardly 5 minutes between each plane. These planes are not distant low hums, but are often flying quite low and directly overhead of us with a very loud engine buzz and whine. The issue is that the noise constantly intrudes on the quiet of being outside, either surrounding our home or anywhere in nature on the island.***

***Preserving and protecting over 450 islands and surrounding waters in the Salish Sea***

Bowen Denman Hornby Gabriola Galiano Gambier Lasqueti Mayne North Pender Salt Spring Saturna South Pender Thetis

I appreciate that the paragraph references Nanaimo airport as well as seaplanes and we will be writing to the Nanaimo Airport Commission as well, but this is a consistent issue. My understanding is that the protocol is that seaplanes must remain  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a nautical mile from the shores of Gabriola Island but the reports of residents is that if that is so, many seaplanes transgress that requirement.

I write to bring these concerns to your attention and ask that you advise:

- a) What are the current protocols for aircraft approaching or departing Nanaimo Harbour in relation to Gabriola Island? Are there current height and distance requirements? How are those enforced and reinforced for operators of aircraft?
- b) Will you commit to reviewing those protocols and respecting the concerns of residents of Gabriola Island who are often affected by this activity?

I look forward to your positive reply in the near future. Please feel free to attend one of our LTC meetings if you wish to verbally address these concerns.

Best Regards



Dan Rogers  
Chair Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee

cc.

Vanessa Craig, Director Area B, Regional District of Nanaimo  
Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee  
Islands Trust Executive Committee  
Islands Trust Website

Attachment: Letter-Commercial Flights Over Gabriola Island

***Preserving and protecting over 450 islands and surrounding waters in the Salish Sea***

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November 16, 2015

File No. GB-3030-20

Via email: [mhooper@nanaimoairport.com](mailto:mhooper@nanaimoairport.com)

Nanaimo Airport Commission  
3350 Spitfire Road  
Cassidy, BC V0R 1H0

**Attention: Mike Hooper**  
**Airport President and Chief Executive Officer**

Dear Mr. Hooper:

**Re: Commercial Flights Over Gabriola Island**

The Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee is concerned about commercial flights over Gabriola Island, identified by Transport Canada as an island with extreme aircraft noise sensitivity.

Gabriola residents have reported an increased number of flights between 6:30 a.m. and 11:30 p.m., waking residents on a regular basis. The Local Trust Committee has also received specific complaints about an increased number of flights over the north end of the island.

Due to the quiet rural nature of our community, the disruption created by aircraft noise is felt significantly more than it would in an urban area. Gabriola Island belongs to the Islands Trust, a regional government established by the Province in 1974 to “preserve and protect the Trust area and its unique amenities and environment” for the benefit of its residents and all British Columbians.

On Gabriola Island, the Local Trust Committee is responsible for land use decisions in our jurisdiction, including the development of official community plans and zoning bylaws for the community of 4,045 people. The Gabriola Island Official Community Plan contains the following Air Transportation Advocacy Policy:

“The Federal Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities (now Transport Canada) and the Department of National Defense shall be requested to ensure flight paths and practice areas for military and civilian air traffic are directed away from Gabriola.”

We would like to draw your attention to the attached Transport Canada advisories regarding aircraft operations in the vicinity of the Gulf Islands, including Gabriola Island.

While we understand the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee does not have jurisdiction over commercial aircrafts, we are seeking your support in guiding pilots and aircraft operators to follow the Transport Canada advisories and help minimize the impact of flight operations on our small island community.

We thank you for your attention to this matter and invite you to connect with us at the contact information provided.

Best Regards,

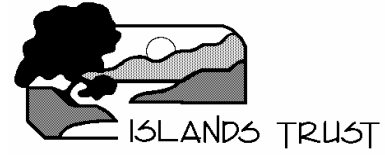


Laura Busheikin  
Chair, Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee

cc. Heather Nicholas, Local Trustee  
Melanie Mamoser, Local Trustee  
Lisa Gordon, Director, Trust Area Services

Attachments:

1. Welcome to the Gulf Islands – Information to Pilots and Aircraft Operators
2. Aircraft Operations in the Vicinity of the Gulf Islands and West Coast Wildlife Sanctuaries, BC
3. Gulf Islands, BC Noise Sensitive Areas Map



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## Welcome to the Gulf Islands

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# Information to Pilots and Aircraft Operators

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### **INTRODUCTION:** (refer to the chart on reverse)

1. The Gulf Islands are a group of islands located in Georgia Strait. These islands are a popular tourist destination and attract many visitors each year. In addition to being home to a number of full-time residents there are also several wildlife sanctuaries located throughout the Islands that protect many varied and endangered species of birds and mammals.
2. The environment surrounding the Gulf Islands is quiet. As a result, aircraft operating at legal altitudes are often audible and such extraneous noise can be extremely annoying to some residents and disruptive to wildlife.
3. It is recognised that aviation is an essential component of the national transportation system and the economic well being of British Columbia. Aviation is an important mode of travel around the Gulf Islands and between Vancouver and Victoria's major airports. With the Gulf Islands being located between these major airports and the demand for air service, a considerable volume of air traffic is inevitable. Nevertheless, with the co-operation of pilots and aircraft operators this volume of traffic need not be onerous on both the residents and the wildlife below.
4. This information sheet has been developed in co-operation with the Islands Trust. The Islands Trust as the local elected government for the residents of the Gulf Islands, has asked for the assistance of all parties in managing aircraft noise.

### **GENERAL ADVISORY:** (refer to the chart on reverse)


1. Aviation safety is foremost. Pilots are responsible for the safe operation of their aircraft and compliance with all aviation regulations. Nothing in this information sheet relieves the pilot-in-command of the aircraft from this responsibility.
2. All Gulf Islands are to be considered noise sensitive. Pilots are requested to give particular consideration to the following islands: Denman, Gabriola, Galiano, Hornby, Mayne, North and South Pender, Salt Spring and Saturna Islands.
3. Pilots are asked to operate their aircraft in the most community friendly manner possible.
4. Pilots not in the process of taking-off or landing should attempt to, where possible, avoid flying in the vicinity of any residential building or area, any marked or designated wildlife sanctuary or any site where bird nesting is known to be located. If flying in the vicinity of one of these locations pilots should attempt to do so at no less than 2000 feet ASL (or 1000 feet AGL where terrain is higher than 1000 feet.).
5. Pilots are asked to refrain from training or practising manoeuvres over the Gulf Islands.

# **A.I.P. CANADA SUPPLEMENT**

## **AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS IN THE VICINITY OF THE GULF ISLANDS AND WEST COAST WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES, BRITISH COLUMBIA**

With the summer flying season approaching it is timely to remind pilots of the procedures for use while in the vicinity of the Gulf Islands of British Columbia. These procedures while not regulatory in nature were developed to encourage pilots to co-operate in addressing the issue of noise and wildlife protection.

These procedures have had a significant effect in reducing the number of complaints. While it is recognized complete elimination of aircraft noise is not feasible it is recognized that with some forethought and care in the operation of aircraft, the degree of noise impact on residents of the Gulf Islands can be greatly reduced. Therefore again this year urge all pilots, in the interest of being a good neighbor, to help us to do whatever we can to minimize noise impact on the public.

The Gulf Islands also have been identified as home to several unique and endangered wildlife species and in this regard Transport Canada has been working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada as well as British Columbia Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection to establish procedures to aid in wildlife protection. These species include several types of birds as well as sea mammals including the Orca whale. The rapidly growing interest in wildlife has caused concern due to encroachment into endangered bird and animal habitat by both surface and air traffic. Therefore pilots are encouraged to avoid low level flight over bird nesting areas marked  on the VFR charts and to avoid, where possible, low flight over any area where bird or sea life activity may be encountered.

This year this reminder has been extended to include the bird sanctuaries south along the coastline from Vancouver International Airport and the area around Boundary and Mud Bay and the Serpentine Nature Reserve east of Boundary Bay Airport.

Any questions or comments may be sent to the Regional Director Civil Aviation (Pacific)



Transport Canada

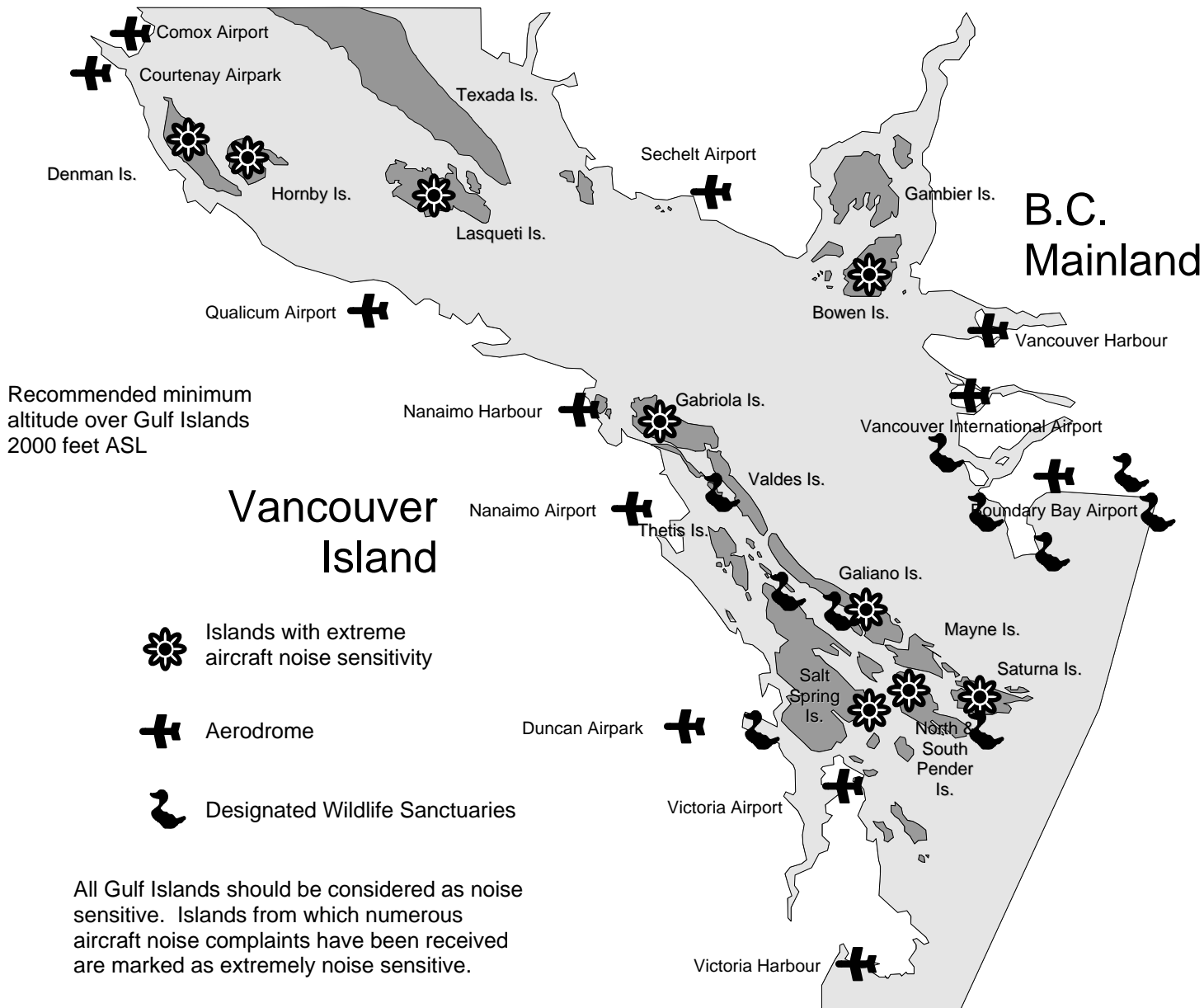
Safety and Security

Transports Canada

Sécurité et Sûreté



ISLANDS TRUST



# Gulf Islands B.C. Noise Sensitive Areas