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Toronto Pearson

TAKING OFF TOGETHER

Toronto Pearson's Workforce Strategy and Playbook

MARCH 2022



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Foreword

Deborah Flint, President and CEO of Toronto Pearson

The future is ours to build. To do so, we need to enable the workforce of the future to bring our Airport of the Future vision to life. As Canada's largest airport and its main gateway, our airport should be a true reflection of Canada and Toronto's diversity, and our shared commitment to equity and inclusion. Every employee at Toronto Pearson should believe their career aspirations are achievable and that the breadth of their human experience is valued.

Knowing that our workforce is key to building a stronger Pearson, and by extension a stronger region, province and country, in 2019 we undertook a full airport workforce survey, the first of its kind in Canada. Through the survey, we identified the need for a comprehensive workforce development plan to help Pearson workers—numbering 50,000 strong at the time of the survey—reach their fullest potential.

During the course of this work, we learned that the airport provides a strong and stable work environment with opportunities for employee growth and development.

Of course, COVID-19 threw us a curveball, but we used our time wisely and seized the opportunity to rethink our role as the airport operator at the nexus of so much talent and potential. The aviation, air travel and tourism sectors have faced unprecedented job loss due to travel restrictions. While airport workers faced layoffs, unemployment or underemployment due to the pandemic, at Pearson we recognize our responsibility to step up and create the best possible environment and conditions for success to support our vision of creating the Airport of the Future.

It is incredibly important to me that the people who work at Pearson, and those in neighbouring communities, have equitable access to jobs to create prosperity that starts with individuals and families but propagates throughout the communities we serve. This is just the kind of opportunity that can be further developed with the insight provided in this playbook.

I am encouraged by the findings of this research. We are already on the right path and taking good steps with the initiatives we have been undertaking over the last few years. However, our work is not done yet. Opportunities are best seized when they're shared, but to create the opportunities in the first place, we must collaborate—the GTAA, our airport employers, our unions, and our workforce—to build strategies that ensure Pearson is an employer of choice where Ontarians believe they can build their careers. We can only do it together—and we will do it together.

This work will be a roadmap for other airports and industries around Canada and the world to learn from and replicate. We must keep innovating and pushing forward so that our airport can return to its prior stature as one of the largest economic anchors for the region. Our economic impact on Ontario and Canada must not be taken lightly.

Thank you to everyone who has engaged in the consultation process for this report.

Building a strong Pearson for a better tomorrow,



Deborah Flint



Foreword

Jan De Silva, CEO Toronto Region Board of Trade

Toronto Pearson is a place of connection.

That's not just true for families and friends reuniting, business partners greeting each other, or cargo completing another leg of travel. When the airport was first built nearly a century ago, it connected our region to the future – an era of flight that would enable unprecedented expansion and travel. Then, as the airport evolved to become Toronto Pearson, it adopted an international mandate, connecting us to a new phase of globalization and international partnership.

From then onwards, its connecting power only grew. Toronto Pearson brought more and more jobs into our region, becoming the epicentre of Canada's second largest employment zone. It is now the heart of a booming goods production and distribution district, the arteries of which span across the Greater Toronto, Hamilton, and Waterloo metropolitan areas. Long considered "Canada's front door," the airport built a foundation upon which our cities, businesses, and economy could flourish.

The Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA) operates the airport and is a long-time partner of the Toronto Region Board of Trade. We have a shared desire to see the region grow and prosper. Our organizations' mandates and resources truly became united when GTAA's Propeller Project – which uses the airport's position in the region to connect local communities with greater opportunity – contributed to the creation of the Board's Economic Blueprint Institute. A believer in the potential for regional data to better guide and instigate strategic investment, GTAA was an early partner in our unique research work.

This report is just one by-product of the Economic Blueprint Institute, and it addresses an issue of increasing importance in today's economy: workforce development. Within the context of the unique talent ecosystem at the airport, this workforce strategy and playbook proposes a set of high-impact initiatives with one overarching goal: to make Toronto Pearson one of the best places for Ontarians to work and grow their career.

As the tether between the region and the world, Toronto Pearson can be the link between the workforce of today and of tomorrow – a workforce that is more skilled, adaptable, connected, and supported. We strive to foster a workforce where the pathways of training and advancement are clearer, and where employers can easily find local talent that is prepared for the new economy.

The journey to create that kind of workforce will be long, with stops and necessary enablers along the way – many of which are highlighted in this report. But as with all journeys at Toronto Pearson, it's one we can take with confidence.

Janet De Silva

Jan De Silva



Executive Summary

The Toronto Pearson International Airport sits at the epicentre of Canada's second largest employment zone. Through its global connectiveness and its role as a driver of economic opportunity, particularly for nearby communities, the airport plays a vital role in the Toronto region's economy.

However, the airport suffers from a common challenge: attracting and retaining talent. This report details workforce trends and challenges seen at the airport and presents a set of considerations and recommendations that form a go-forward workforce strategy and playbook.

The recommendations presented in this report reflect the airport's unique conditions. Toronto Pearson is a multi-union and multi-employer environment representing nearly 50,000 workers with diverse backgrounds and skill sets, and more than 400 employers spanning a variety of industries. It is also subject to a regulatory environment governed by all three levels of government, with varying impacts on its workforce.

The research conducted focuses on four major occupation groups at the airport: above the wing; below the wing; facilities cleaning and maintenance; and food & beverage and retail services. The analysis demonstrates that the workforce challenges faced by workers at the airport today haven't changed significantly since before the pandemic. In fact, some of the same challenges have been further exacerbated. Key challenges include labour shortages in specific occupations, barriers to career advancement, lack of transportation accessibility to the airport, need for training in high-demand skills, access to worker supports, and other airport-specific factors that make it more difficult to retain or attract talent.

To address the key challenges that we have highlighted, this report proposes a set of opportunities which build on the airport's strengths and leverage existing relationships in the ecosystem. These strategic opportunities include:

- 1. Invest in Partnerships, Shared Leadership, and Backbone Support;**
- 2. Build Connections and Opportunities Through Airport-wide Programs;**
- 3. Promote and Enable Pathways to Employment and Career Advancement;**
- 4. Invest in Skills Development for All;**
- 5. Enable a Supportive Environment for Workers; and**
- 6. Advance a Good Jobs Agenda.**

Workers are the backbone of the airport's success and central to Toronto Pearson's aspirations to transform itself into the 'airport of the future'. Now is an opportune moment for the Greater Toronto Airport Authority (GTAA) to double down on its leadership role in the community by developing and executing a renewed vision of workforce development at Toronto Pearson and boost the airport's attractiveness as a place of work for residents across the region.

Why does Toronto Pearson need a Workforce Strategy?

The socio-economic significance of the Toronto Pearson International Airport and its broader ecosystem cannot be understated. Prior to the pandemic, the airport was a key driver of job growth in Canada's second largest employment zone. The largest airport in Canada, Toronto Pearson inched up the ranks to become the 6th most globally connected airport¹, serving 50.5 million passengers in 2019.² As a hub of connectivity, it also generates considerable economic benefits to the wider region by fueling the visitor economy, supporting trade and investment, and facilitating the movement of goods in and out of the region. With nearly 50,000 workers within its boundaries, the airport is also a coveted place of work for nearby residents, many of whom exhibit a strong sense of community, pride, and affinity for working at the airport.

Despite its attractiveness as a place of work, the airport faces its fair share of challenges to attract and retain workers. As the airport community transitions towards recovery, there is an urgent need to help people find work, but also to address the concerns of employees and employers alike. The airport's pre-pandemic workforce related challenges – including limited transit connectivity³ and worker successor rights with new contractors⁴ – have only been exacerbated by the pandemic and compounded by new challenges. Ultimately, its workers are the backbone of the airport's operations and key enablers of Toronto Pearson's competitive positioning and future aspirations as an 'airport of the future'.

Despite its attractiveness as a place of work, the airport faces its fair share of challenges to attract and retain workers.

Toronto Pearson's growth over the past two decades and economic success paved the way for the Greater Toronto Authority (GTAA) to play an active leadership role in workforce development. This includes establishing the Propeller Project, a community investment program dedicated to addressing underemployment in the region. The COVID-19 pandemic and the rebound of the aviation sector presents a notable opportunity for the GTAA to further cement its leadership role by providing a forward-looking workforce development strategy and playbook for the airport. This report provides a set of considerations and recommendations based on qualitative and quantitative analysis of workforce conditions and challenges at the airport – including several interviews with key airport stakeholders (see Appendix A for a detailed methodology for the approach and Appendix B for a list of interviewees consulted).

As the operator of Toronto Pearson and a recognized business and community leader, the GTAA is uniquely positioned to develop and execute a workforce development strategy for the airport – one that enhances access to services, builds career pathways, promotes development opportunities, and generally makes meaningful contributions to enhance the experience of workers at Toronto Pearson.

The largest
airport in
Canada



6th
most globally
connected



50.5m
passengers



50,000
workers



400
employers

Toronto Pearson's Unique Talent Ecosystem

Toronto Pearson is a truly unique workplace. Prior to the pandemic, close to 50,000 workers came to work at the airport. A highly unionized workforce, these workers represent a diversity of backgrounds, with broad representation across different age groups, ethnicities, educational levels, and neighbouring immigrant communities. At the airport, more than 400 employers across a range of industries work in close collaboration to ensure the smooth movement of goods and people in and out of the region, all the while looking to create good jobs for local residents. The airport is also subject to a mixture of federal, provincial, and municipal regulations that add to the complexity of the work environment at Toronto Pearson. While the area's uniqueness supports workforce comradery, it also requires a distinctive lens and approach to better understand and address its workforce needs.

Airport Workforce Landscape

Often used to describe a theory of firm-specific talent management, a "talent ecosystem" broadly recognizes the interrelated and interdependent contributors to effective workforce development. Applied to Toronto Pearson, the talent ecosystem consists of a network of public, private, labour, and not-for-profit organizations. This network includes employers, post-secondary education institutions and other education and training providers, all levels of governments, unions, service providers and community agencies, and, of course, workers themselves. Each of these stakeholders plays an integral role in attracting, training, deploying, and retaining a skilled, agile, thriving, and dynamic workforce that meets the current and future demands of businesses and workers at Toronto Pearson.

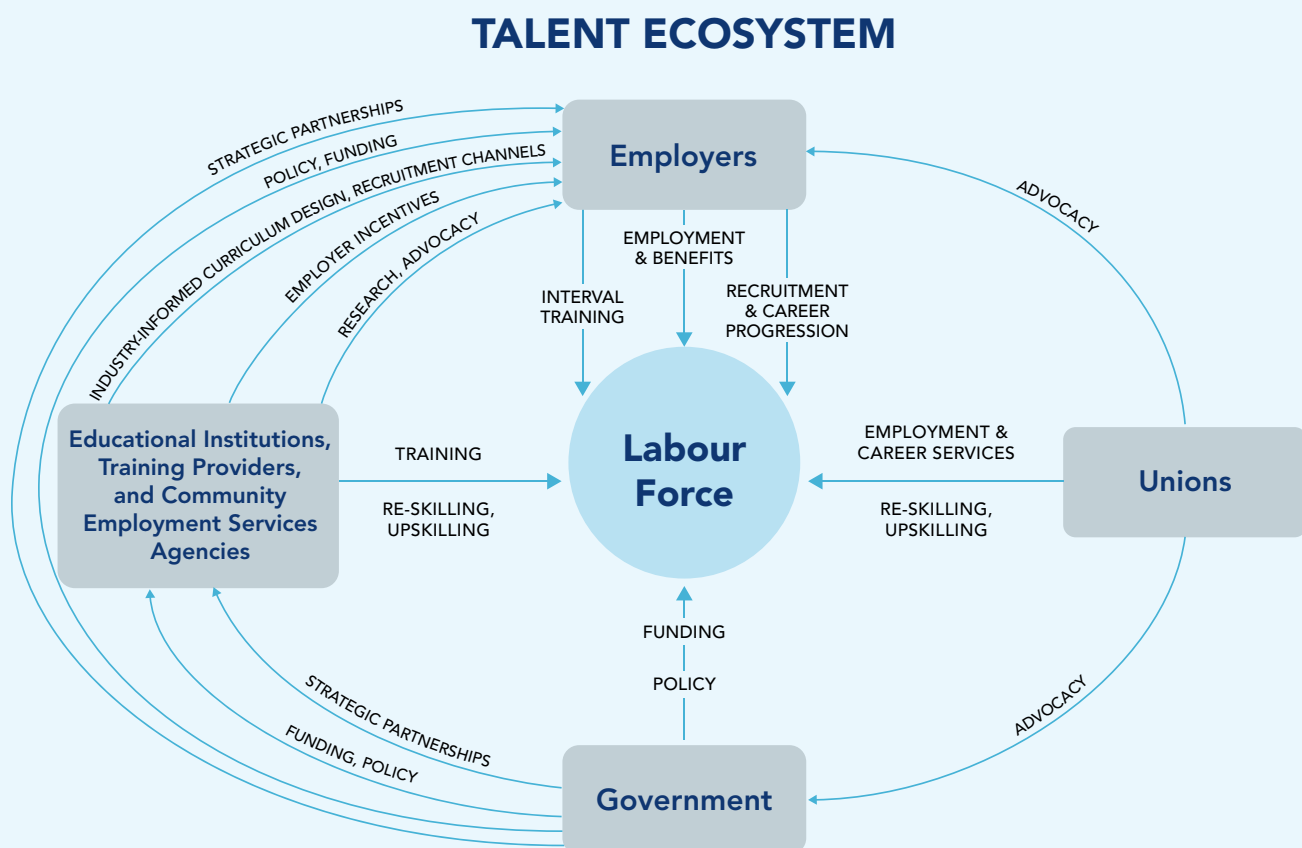


Diagram adapted from the TRBOT report, *Unlocking Talent: A collective approach for workforce development in the Toronto Region*

LABOUR FORCE

Prior to the pandemic, nearly 50,000 people worked at Toronto Pearson for over 400 employers, including the GTAA, airlines, airport service providers, retail partners, and government agencies.⁵ At the height of the pandemic (April 2020), Toronto Pearson's passenger traffic dropped by 97% compared to the same period in 2019, prompting many industries to face furloughs, layoffs, and early retirements.⁶ All employers interviewed (between July and September 2021) were in the process of recalling employees, and some were even looking to hire additional workers as travel restrictions are relaxed and flight frequencies continue to recover. However, key stakeholders at Toronto Pearson estimate that operations may take up to 3-5 years to reach pre-pandemic levels.

Toronto Pearson is home to a diverse and dynamic set of employers and workforce. According to the 2019 survey of Toronto Pearson's workforce, about half of workers had immigrated to Canada and around 40% have lived in Canada for over 20 years.⁷ The number of immigrants and non-permanent residents who work in the Toronto Pearson employment area (see Appendix C for the geographic coverage) grew by 10% and 89%, respectively, between 2011 and 2016. Additionally, the census data indicates that the workforce aged 15-24 years in the region is increasing. However, there is a more significant increase in the volume of the workers aged 55 or above (see Appendix D: Table 1 for percent change by age group).⁸ This suggests that even though many younger workers are entering the region, the overall workforce is aging. The 2019 snapshot of the Toronto Pearson workforce reported that the average age of a Toronto Pearson employee in 2019 was slightly over 40.

Key stakeholders at Toronto Pearson estimate that operations may take up to 3-5 years to reach pre-pandemic levels.

Between 2011 and 2016, total employment in the airport employment area grew by 8%. Higher than average job growth was seen in retail salespersons (10%), transport ramp attendants (51%), security guards and related security service occupations (13%), and pursers and flight attendants (25%).⁹ These trends align with consistent growth in passenger traffic, as well as continual investments in infrastructure in the airport and the surrounding region during this period.¹⁰

The Toronto Pearson workforce generally has a high level of education. In 2019, three-quarters of employees held a college or university-level education. However, dissecting this further reveals wide variation in the levels of education by occupation groups. For example, approximately 30% of workers employed by airport service providers and approximately a quarter of those in retail had a high school education or less. In comparison, those working at the GTAA (30%), for an airline (32%), or an agency partner (37%) were the most likely to have a university education.¹¹

Employment growth by occupation (2011 to 2016)



51%
transport ramp attendants



25%
pursers and flight attendants



13%
security service occupations



10%
retail salespersons



EMPLOYERS

The over 400 companies at the airport can be grouped into four distinct categories:

1) GTAA

The Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA) is the non-share, non-capital, private not-for-profit operator of Toronto Pearson Airport. It is a major employer at the airport, covering management, technical, administrative, and general labour activities. The GTAA also contracts airport service providers to assist with operational activities at the airport (e.g., construction, maintenance).

2) Airport Tenants (Airlines and Retail)

AIRLINES

The airlines employ their own workers and contract airport service providers to assist with different aspects of their operations (e.g., baggage handling and ramp services). Toronto Pearson serves as a hub for Air Canada and WestJet. It also serves as the base of operations for a number of courier and cargo airlines.

Examples: Air Canada, WestJet, Air Transat, Sunwing Airlines

RETAIL (INCLUDING FOOD AND BEVERAGE) PARTNERS

The airport premises include several retail entities that provide shopping, eating, recreation activities, and other services such as money exchange. Some organizations serve passengers directly, while others provide services to airlines and other airport partners.

Examples: Host Food Services (HMS Host), SSP Group, OTG, Nuance, LS Travel

3) Airport Service Providers/Contractors

A host of organizations provide various services at the airport. These services cover, but are not limited to: aircraft ground handling, fuelling, maintenance, security, and passenger services such as check-in, baggage handling, and other services.

Examples: Menzies Aviation, Gate Gourmet, CLS Catering Services, Garda GTA DNATA, Airport Terminal Services (ATS), Swissport, Prime Flight, Gazzola Paving Ltd., NAV Canada, AAI Solutions, Dufferin, Dexterra, Indigo Park

4) Agency partners

Airport operations also involve services overseen by government agencies, such as security, customs, and border control. In addition, the Peel Regional Police and firefighters also provide essential services to the airport.

Examples: Canadian Border Service Agency, Peel Regional Police, ASP Security, US Customs and Border Police

Among the many services and responsibilities under municipal jurisdiction, a handful directly impact the economic prospects and workforce development outcomes at the airport.

UNIONS

Unions are a key component of the talent ecosystem, considering that 72% of the workforce at the airport is unionized¹² and the workforce is collectively represented by more than 10 unions. The Toronto Airport Workforce Council is a key stakeholder within this group, consisting of a coalition of the airport's 11 largest unions.

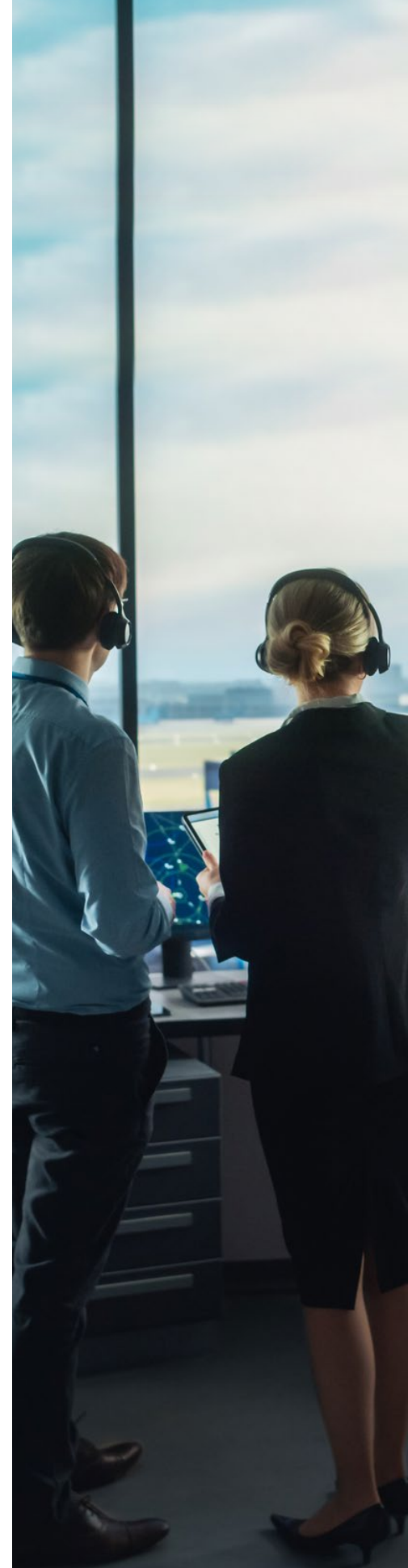
Examples: ALPA, ACPA, CUPE, CUPW, IAMAW, LIUNA, PSAC – CIU, SEIU, Steelworkers, Teamsters, UFCW, Unifor

GOVERNMENT

The three levels of government in Canada influence the talent ecosystem through three critical levers: (a) funding; (b) policy; and (c) collaboration and partnerships. Whether to employers, community organizations, or directly to employees, funding provides the means for investment in programs and initiatives that can help improve workforce outcomes. Policy can achieve similar outcomes, through labour legislation and investments in transit infrastructure for better airport connectivity, among other measures.

1) Municipal

Located in the City of Mississauga, the airport has a close working relationship with the municipalities that comprise the Greater Toronto Area. In December 2019, the GTAA and the City of Mississauga signed the 'Municipality Authority Agreement' – a cooperative agreement to better align the airport's development and overall planning objectives with the City of Mississauga.¹³ Bonnie Crombie, the mayor of Mississauga, and other mayors and regional chairs are members of the Southern Ontario Airport Network (SOAN), a council launched by the airport to attract and coordinate investment in the aviation industry for the Southern Ontario region.¹⁴ Five of the 15 elected Board of Directors at the airport are from candidates nominated by York, Halton, Peel, Durham, and the City of Toronto.¹⁵ Among the many services and responsibilities under municipal jurisdiction, a handful directly impact the economic prospects and workforce development outcomes at the airport. These include transit services feeding into the airport and local planning decisions influencing the development of land adjacent to Toronto Pearson.





2) Provincial

Many facets of the airport's operations also intersect with the province's role in the region. As a place of work for thousands of employees across various industries, many of the employers operating at the airport are regulated by the province's labour laws. These employers would, for example, be subject to the minimum wage set at the provincial level. The provincial government also funds and delivers transit infrastructure in Ontario, which directly impacts the ability for employees at the airport to get to and from work. This is in addition to supports and collaborations with the airport's COVID-19 testing and public health programs.¹⁶ Many of the skills and training related programs that can be leveraged by employers and employees at the airport are also provincial programs. The provincial government is also responsible for nominating one individual on the GTAA's Board of Directors.

3) Federal

The aviation industry is federally regulated. Consequently, the airport and many other employers operating at the airport are subject to related regulations, including the federal minimum wage, which rose to \$15/hr in December 2021¹⁷, and regulations related to occupational health and safety. The Canadian Border Service Agency (a federal agency) and the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (a federal crown corporation) both operate at the airport and are among the major employers at Toronto Pearson. The federal government also provides funding for major infrastructure projects that impact the airport, including the funding put towards COVID-19 testing and screening infrastructure that was announced through Transport

Canada's 'Airport Critical Infrastructure Program'.¹⁸ The Government of Canada also provided rent relief to the airport through the 'Ground Lease Agreement' and 'Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Program'.¹⁹

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, TRAINING PROVIDERS, AND COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AGENCIES

Universities, colleges, trade schools, training providers, and community employment service agencies are critical players within the workforce ecosystem. Many of these organizations act as recruiting channels for firms at the airport, particularly for entry-level positions. Roles related to policing and security, aviation, and trades are some of the occupations that are hired directly from colleges and trade schools. Other education and training providers offer upskilling opportunities for employees or provide employer-specific training.

Several community organizations support employers and employees to address labour market needs. Whether through direct employment, career services and active training, or advocacy, these public interest entities engage with, or on behalf of, the labour force to enable their growth and success. They often also work with employers as partners, providing incentives and training programs, among other supports, to address their workforce challenges. At the airport, some of these organizations include: workforce and industry associations, newcomer services providers, boards of trade, and civic organizations.

Examples: Seneca, University of Toronto, University of Waterloo, Sheridan College, Georgian College, Achev, ACCES Employment, Job Skills, NPower Canada, Skills for Change

In recognition of its Healthy Airport program, Airports Council International awarded Toronto Pearson the “Best Hygiene Measures in North America” award.

Toronto Pearson's Workforce Development Initiatives

The workforce strategy detailed in this report is intended to complement and build on the airport's existing workforce-related initiatives. Leading up to and after the pandemic, the GTAA enacted a number of programs and policies to better understand and address the challenges faced by workers at the airport. These included:

GTAA SPECIFIC INITIATIVES

Contracting and Procurement Policies

Between 2017 and 2018, the GTAA implemented a benchmark review of how other multi-employer and multi-union environments managed their contracts, labour forums, and workforce needs. At the conclusion of this review, the GTAA identified and executed on key opportunities to improve their own vendor contracts and practices.²⁰ This included changes to contracting language and successor regulations around worker pay.

Management Training and Apprenticeship Programs

The GTAA offered an 18-month management training program that provided employees the opportunity to complete three six-month rotations in different departments. The program was run twice and resulted in 70% of participants being hired. The GTAA also developed and sponsored a skilled trades apprenticeship program for electricians, millwrights, and plumbers to address potential talent shortages and help build a strong talent pipeline.

AIRPORT-WIDE INITIATIVES

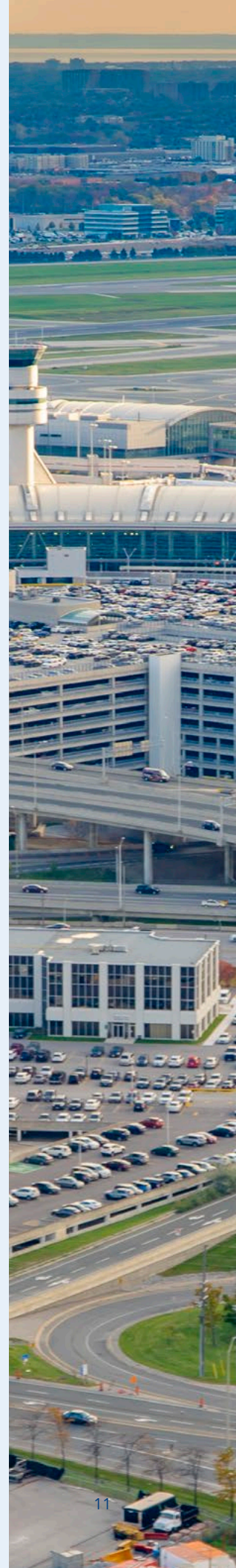
Healthy Airport

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the airport launched its ‘Healthy Airport’ initiative. The program outlines the measures that the airport and its partners have enacted to ensure the safety of workers and travellers at the airport. These commitments include:

- Maintaining the highest standards for cleaning and hygiene;
- Clear communications and the introduction of innovative technological advancements, including touchless check-in;
- A disinfection corridor for airport workers;
- Facility monitoring for congestion; and
- Autonomous floor cleaning machines and air quality monitors.²¹

In recognition of its Healthy Airport program, Airports Council International awarded Toronto Pearson the “Best Hygiene Measures in North America” award. Toronto Pearson was the first Canadian airport to receive ACI's global health accreditation for its response to COVID-19.

The airport also hosts a Health and Safety Forum with representation from GTAA, other airport employers, and employees on the board. The objective of this forum is to provide a platform for all health and safety issues or regulatory concerns to be raised and addressed accordingly.





Pearson Works!

Initiated before the pandemic, 'Pearson Works!' was envisioned as a cross-stakeholder collaborative platform. The purpose of the platform has been to promote the benefits of airport careers, encourage the acquisition and retention of talent, and guide the airport to prepare for future needs. The platform is meant to demonstrate the GTAA's commitment to airport employees through supporting careers and training opportunities, and to enhance airport employers' experiences through programming and collaboration that can reduce the cost of business. Based on best practices in other international airports, the initiative was designed to help individuals find jobs, promote career progression, leverage existing education programs to address future workforce needs, and improve the general health and well-being of the workforce.

After the pandemic hit, the GTAA, in collaboration with the Toronto Airport Workers Council (TAWC), developed and executed the Pearson Works! Online platform. The platform began as a space to share information and resources with employees and employers, including employment services and training programs provided by community organizations. Services provided through the platform expanded to job search support, training, essential skills development programs, and career pathing for airport jobs.²²

The GTAA hosted a series of workshops to assist individuals at the airport who were affected by job losses due to the pandemic. The program was designed to deliver high-quality workshops and one-on-one counselling sessions to assist workers with career exploration, job searches, mental health, financial planning, and interview strategies. A total of 34 training workshops were delivered to laid-off employees. Participants were connected to a relevant Employment Ontario employment services provider to receive additional assistance if required.²³

The initiative is now noted as an industry standard adopted by international airports in England, Denmark, US, and Australia.

The purpose of the platform has been to promote the benefits of airport careers, encourage the acquisition and retention of talent, and guide the airport to prepare for future needs.

Comprehensive Workforce Survey

The airport published its first comprehensive demographic study of its workforce in 2019. This study addressed key gaps in understanding the composition, challenges, ambitions, and needs of the employees at the airport, helping to better position the GTAA in guiding their workforce-related efforts.²⁴ Some of the findings from this study can be found in the airport labour force profile in this report.

I am Toronto Pearson

The GTAA launched its 'I am Toronto Pearson' campaign in 2016 as an engagement and culture-building movement for employees at the airport. Employees from across the airport were rallied to join the movement to help create a shared workplace community, driven by a desire to pursue customer service excellence.

Research and Findings: Understanding Workforce Trends and Challenges

Approach

The analysis of workforce trends and challenges first and foremost focuses on overall findings which apply to airport employees as a collective. Subsequently, the research and analysis hones in on challenges and opportunities for prominent occupation groups at the airport. Airlines and government agencies were excluded from the research as their operations are governed by policies and regulations beyond the scope of Toronto Pearson. Consequently, the impact that airport-wide workforce solutions can have on them is limited.



Research and Findings

In addition to understanding overall workforce trends and challenges, four occupations groups were identified for in-depth exploration. These four occupation groups employ a significant proportion of the workforce at the airport. Key informants highlighted that several entry-level occupations under these groupings face notable hiring and retention challenges.

The **four major occupation groups covered in this research** include:



1) Above the Wing

Above-wing services generally include assisting crew/passengers through customs, immigration, quarantine processes, and transporting passengers from the aircraft to the terminal and back. Also included are services such as in-flight catering, local transportation, and concierge services to meet crew or passenger needs.

Examples of types of roles: Customer/passenger service agents, aircraft cleaner/cabin services.

Examples of types of functions: Ticketing, check-in, lobby management, gate assignment, boarding, disembarking, baggage services.



2) Below the Wing

Below-wing services are comprised of functions that take place under the wings of the planes at the airport. They include services such as aircraft push-back and towing, baggage handling, lavatory and water services, fueling coordination, and provisioning of ground support equipment, including tow bars, stairs, and ground power units.

Examples of types of roles: Ramp attendant, ground handler/ground crew, ramp fueller.

Examples of types of functions: Marshalling, checking and connection, disconnection of ground services, baggage and freight handling, aircraft towing, refuelling, aircraft cleaning, de-icing.



3) Facilities Cleaning and Maintenance

Facility cleaning and maintenance services vary from janitorial and waste management services to more technical services involving maintaining fixtures and heating and ventilation systems.

Examples of types of roles: Cleaner, waste management, building mechanic.

Examples of types of functions: Cleaning and sanitizing surfaces, ensuring fixtures are in working order.



4) Food & Beverage and Retail

The staff involved in food and beverage and retail concessions are responsible for running the storefronts, providing ancillary services to airport partners, and serving passengers.

Examples of types of roles: Line cook, chef, food production worker, washer, salesperson, cashier, foreign exchange teller.

Examples of types of functions: Inventory management, cooking, sales, customer service, clearing and cleaning service areas.



The airport work environment is unique and dynamic, which is reflected in the challenges and experiences of the workforce.

Findings

Much like the labour market as a whole, and mirroring the workforce situation at other airports, the Toronto Pearson Airport workforce is a tale of two experiences. The airport workforce is partially composed of very long-tenured workers, who contrast with a group of highly transient workers with exceptionally high initial turnover. Benefits and perks related to health, pension, travel, and job security are not experienced or available equally among airport workers. In some roles, workers performing similar work experience significant wage discrepancies among different employers. The airport work environment is unique and dynamic, which is reflected in the challenges and experiences of the workforce.

The interviews revealed that there haven't been significant changes in the types of challenges that employers face compared to pre-pandemic times. However, some challenges have been exacerbated. For example, the roles that were difficult to recruit for prior to the pandemic are even harder to fill due to increased competition for the same labour pool, reduced availability of childcare services, and other factors.

The pandemic did result in some new operations, such as health and safety initiatives and protocols (e.g., additional cleaning routines, distancing), that will most likely continue into the foreseeable future.

As part of the GTAA's 'Health Airport Initiative', many cleaning and screening processes have been automated to make interactions safer and contactless. Employers have indicated that the introduction of new technology has not affected the number of jobs but instead changed some of the roles and functions of employees. For example, instead of having staff at the ticket counter, automatic ticket kiosks are now accompanied by staff to assist passengers through the process. Employers shared that they had to make changes to their operations to accommodate distancing and promote safety, although the workforce adaptation to updated processes and responsibilities has not been an issue. For example, workers in security and sanitation, where activities have evolved to incorporate COVID-related precautionary measures, had the experience and soft skills necessary to incorporate any changes in their day-to-day responsibilities. However, workers retained during this period have shared that the reduction in staff has led to increased responsibilities and reduced flexibility in their schedules.

The sections below discuss prominent themes that emerged from conversations with stakeholders at Toronto Pearson.



DIFFICULTIES IN HIRING FOR SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONS

Several occupations were identified by senior and HR executives as being in high demand. These occupations have been difficult to fill due to factors ranging from increased competition by employers to high turnover rates. The competition for these workers is fueled by demand from different organizations at the airport, some of which offer attractive wages and benefits, and from organizations across the region that can potentially provide better work schedules and easier access to and from work. These occupations include:



Tradespeople (specifically mechanics, plumbers, HVAC mechanics, electricians, and millwrights)

As business levels recover, there is significant competition amongst employers for workers within and external to the airport (in particular, for skilled tradespeople). Moreover, fewer new graduates are pursuing apprenticeships, trades certificates, or diplomas in the region. These are emblematic of nation-wide cultural and systematic challenges wherein younger individuals often have a negative perception of trades, and existing career and education systems offer limited exposure to careers in these fields.²⁵



Drivers and heavy equipment operators (notably ground handling, airplane fueling, security escorts, cleaning, and maintenance)

Difficulty finding candidates with existing permits/licenses or who can successfully complete training and maintain their credentials (notably for those who require a DZ license and/or a "D" Airside Vehicle Operator's Permits – or AVOP – to operate vehicles and equipment airside); obtaining a D AVOP permit requires the completion of complex training.



Cooks

A lack of desired experience and technical skills in a catered versus restaurant environment by employers, as well as low preparedness to work within the kitchen environment (hot, fast-paced).



Cleaners

A low interest in the role, as well as heightened safety concerns for employees and their families during the pandemic.



Security and screening

Higher demand due to increased health and security protocols adopted by many businesses during the pandemic, low job security and low wages (hours depend on flight patterns and construction projects, and several roles are considered entry level and pay minimum wage), increased competition due to lack of security credentials or clearances required at the airport (such as a Restricted Area Identity Card or 'RAIC'), and similar wages offered by employers outside of the airport who do not require these credentials.

Research and Findings

Some employer respondents mentioned that they had little trouble hiring, retaining, and even recalling laid-off workers. Respondents who did not face significant hiring and retention challenges attributed it to a positive workplace culture where leadership and advancement opportunities were commonplace and openly discussed with workers. Better training to support managers and supervisors in developing a positive and supportive culture was highlighted as a tactic that employers could use to address high attrition rates and support a positive workplace culture.

Roles that presented opportunities to network with other workers and employers, as well as providing advancement opportunities with increased pay and benefits, were seen as valuable by airport employees, resulting in low attrition and few hiring issues within these roles. Workers in roles that were less connected to the airport community expressed interest in more networking opportunities. Many workers indicated that they aspire to find jobs with airlines, government agencies, and the GTAA because they offer better job security, wages, and benefits.

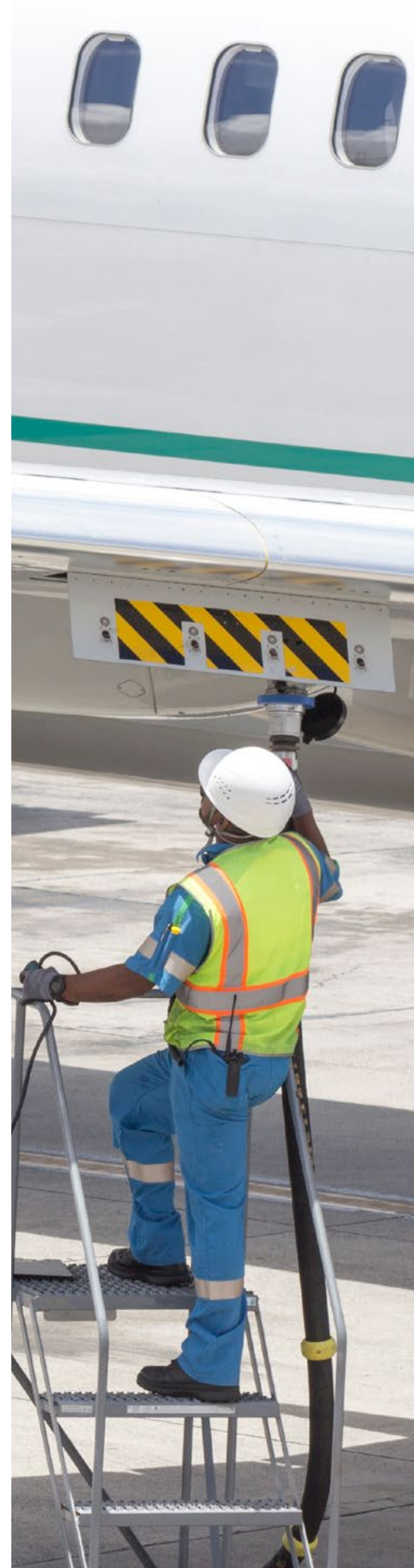
Seniority plays a role in some unionized companies for advancement opportunities, while in other organizations there are no formal pathways or resources for workers to understand what opportunities or career pathways are available to them.

CAREER ADVANCEMENT

All employers indicated that internal promotion is preferred when hiring for advanced positions as existing employees are familiar with the organization and airport environment and have their RAIC. Seniority plays a role in some unionized companies for advancement opportunities, while in other organizations there are no formal pathways or resources for workers to understand what opportunities or career pathways are available to them.

Contrary to the practices described above, both airport employers and workers noted that many entry-level workers show a lack of interest in advancing. Some of this reluctance can be attributed to the comfort level in their current role, language barriers, intimidation, lack of confidence, and fear of administrative work and reporting failure. Greater openness to having transparent conversations about leadership between employees and HR was noted as an effective tactic to increase workers' interest in advancement.

Additional barriers to career advancement may include language proficiency and basic digital skills, which are often requirements for leadership roles. Although workers may be aware of opportunities for advancement in their organization, many are concerned about negative impacts related to losing seniority, and some workers also feel that the pay increase is not commensurate with the added responsibility of a management role.



Several of the roles at the airport can be emotionally draining, with the pandemic amplifying pre-existing pressures and stressors, especially in customer-facing roles.

TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY

The GTAA has been working alongside public stakeholders to advocate for improved connectivity and transit accessibility in support of the regional economy. For example, the GTAA partnered with Metrolinx to study the value of investments into potential connections to and from the airport employment area. As of 2021, the GTAA continues to work in different capacities, including as a funder, collaborator, and vocal champion of regional connectivity. Despite the ongoing progress and incremental improvements, the airport's geography and lack of connecting public transport infrastructure continue to pose several challenges for workers, such as increasing unpaid travel time. In 2019, a large majority (78%) of the workers at Toronto Pearson relied solely on cars.²⁶ Feedback on commuting challenges for employees getting to the airport has been mixed.

Commuting was highlighted as a challenge by some organizations for the following reasons:

- Lack of public transportation available to employees during operating hours (e.g., holidays or past midnight); employers consider the candidate's access to a vehicle when hiring for certain shifts
- Additional unpaid commute time for employees who have to travel from airport parking to their designated workplace
- The additional expense of paying for parking; some organizations pay for employee parking or employees receive a discounted parking rate

TRAINING

All employers that were interviewed offer some form of onboarding or training. Many employers highlighted the need for training to build leadership and language skills. However, uptake for voluntary training offered by GTAA, unions, and employers has historically been low.

When employers consider workers for leadership positions, they look for workers with good communication, delegation, and conflict resolution skills. These qualities were noted to be in short supply by some employers.

Employers also noted English language proficiency and strong verbal communication as an asset, especially for advancement opportunities. For customer-facing jobs (e.g., passenger service agent), French language training was identified as a need by employers, as bilingualism creates a seamless passenger experience for Francophone customers. English is not the first language for many workers at the airport, so employers have indicated that English as a Second Language (ESL) training would provide workers with opportunities to strengthen their English proficiency to advance into more senior roles.

WORKER SUPPORTS

Many workers expressed the belief that their job responsibilities resemble those of frontline workers, but that, in contrast to frontline workers, they lack visibility (e.g., cleaners). Employers who express their appreciation and value for the work employees do are more likely to see a boost in employee morale. Access to childcare services has been cited as a major concern for employees across multiple organizations and has hindered their ability to return to work, especially for occupations that do not have set schedules (e.g., below the wing and above the wing occupations). Several of the roles at the airport can be emotionally draining, with the pandemic amplifying pre-existing pressures and stressors, especially in customer-facing roles. Mental health supports have also been identified by unions as a high-priority need for employees and their families. Some employers are currently offering training for HR employees and access to webinars for workers and their families.

While many workers enjoy the freedom provided by flexible scheduling, some indicated that limited childcare facilities and operational hours directly impact their ability to respond to last-minute changes.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Several factors contribute to a favourable or unfavourable perception of the work environment at the airport. Workers generally enjoy working at the airport and feel a strong connection with the Toronto Pearson community. Many have been at the airport for long periods (some 20 or more years) and prefer the airport's work atmosphere over other places of employment. This sentiment was shared by employers as well. However, some workers feel that people are stuck in their silos and that more networking opportunities and team-building events with all the employers would be beneficial.

Other factors related to the nature of the work and processes at the airport, such as scheduling and security screenings for potential job applicants, were often identified as critical factors influencing hiring and turnover. While employers acknowledge that around-the-clock operations and proper screening processes are essential components of the work environment, they also hope to find solutions that increase flexibility and ease administrative processes.

Some employers identified inconsistencies in how different airlines notify them regarding changes in flight schedules, which often results in scheduling issues for their workers. As a potential solution, they proposed

standardizing processes to offer more transparent and timely communication. While many workers enjoy the freedom provided by flexible scheduling, some indicated that limited childcare facilities and operational hours directly impact their ability to respond to last-minute changes.

As part of airport security screening, many workers are required to obtain a Restricted Area Identity Card (RAIC). The card must be carried and displayed by all airport workers who have Transportation Security Clearance from Transport Canada. Many employers look for and prefer workers that have their RAIC; it is considered an asset. However, acquiring a RAIC currently requires a lengthy application process that can take anywhere from 3-6 months or longer, creating many hiring challenges for employers and workers. For employers, the wait time leads to a drop-off in potential applicants and makes it difficult to react to changing workforce demands in a timely manner. While these administrative processes are not directly in GTAA's control, employers expressed that additional support with filing applications, scheduling appointments, and tracking applications would aid both workers and employers at Toronto Pearson.



Workforce Strategy and Playbook

Toronto Pearson is home to a diverse set of services that keep the airport operating smoothly 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Its workforce experiences a strong sense of community, pride, and affinity for the shared mission and mandate of working at Toronto Pearson. However, as discussed in the research, there are opportunities to enhance access, connection, services, and improve conditions for the Toronto Pearson workforce. The recommendations outlined in this section build on the findings of the research, as well as several initiatives that are currently underway, and aim to augment Toronto Pearson’s existing strengths, address key challenges, and leverage important opportunities.

Strategic Opportunities

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <div>1</div> <div> Invest in partnerships, shared leadership, and backbone support</div> | <div>2</div> <div> Build connections and opportunities through airport-wide programs</div> | <div>3</div> <div> Promote and enable airport pathways to employment and career advancement</div> |
| <div>4</div> <div> Invest in skills development for all</div> | <div>5</div> <div> Enable a supportive environment for workers</div> | <div>6</div> <div> Advance a good jobs agenda</div> |



1

Invest in Partnerships, Shared Leadership, and Backbone Support

Partnerships, shared leadership, collaboration, consultation, and continuous improvement are integral to the recommendations included in the strategy and playbook. To implement this work most effectively, it is recommended that the GTAA develop a standing leadership table composed of key stakeholders to guide and steer the implementation and monitoring of the strategy. There should be ongoing engagement with airport stakeholders to inform specific programs and initiatives.



VISION

Workforce solutions and innovation at Toronto Pearson Airport are driven and stewarded jointly by employers, workers, and labour, representing operations across the airport. As such, solutions are informed by on-the-ground experience and expertise and have tight feedback loops in implementation. Through this leadership, the Toronto Pearson Airport Workforce Strategy and solutions strive for operational excellence, are implemented intentionally, measure impact, and embed continuous improvement informed by on-the-ground learning and experience.

HIGH-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Establish a leadership table made up of employers, unions, workers, and the GTAA to lead the implementation of the strategy.

2

Establish a partnership pledge for employers and unions across the airport to work collaboratively to fulfill the goals of this strategy.

3

Dedicate staff resources at the GTAA to lead the implementation and monitoring of the strategy and seek input to improve continuously.

4

Establish strategic key performance indicators (KPIs) with the leadership table to monitor implementation, outcomes, and impacts of the strategy.



CALLS TO ACTION

Actor	Actor Recommendation
<i>The following recommendations are suggested in chronological order.</i> <i>* represent foundational recommendations that will support the following recommendations</i>	
GTAA	Establish a Toronto Pearson Workforce Leadership Table* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Terms of Reference with specific roles and responsibilities for a Toronto Pearson Workforce Leadership Table. Include objectives, targeted representation, term lengths, meeting frequency, and minimum requirements for members. Engage prospective members and establish the table.
Leadership Table	Establish a draft “Toronto Pearson Workforce Pledge” for employers, unions, and other partners to affirm their joint commitment to supporting the implementation of the strategy’s recommendations.
	Develop a communication plan for workers, employers, and other airport stakeholders regarding the rollout of strategy and pledge.
Airport Employers, Unions, and other partners	Endorse and sign the Toronto Pearson Workforce Pledge and participate in rollout and implementation of the strategy.
External Non-Government / Government Leaders	Participate in Toronto Pearson Workforce Leadership Table <i>(if desired)</i> . Champion, enable, and support the implementation of the strategy and playbook. Leverage and connect parallel initiatives to foster a healthy and competitive workforce and business environment within the Toronto Pearson Employment Zone. Enable and support regional connectivity.

Actions marked with an asterisk () suggest that the highlighted step is a necessary precursor to others in the table.

ENABLING FACTORS

- **Building buy-in of employers, unions, workers, and governmental partners** on the ground and involving them in implementation planning will foster programming uptake and effectiveness.
- **Engaging workers and employers throughout the design of all solutions** will mitigate the risks of poor uptake and inform communications and dissemination strategies.
- **Report annually to airport workers, employers, and other stakeholders on progress** made against the strategy, learnings, and plans for the following year.



2

Build Connections and Opportunities Through Airport-wide Programs

There is a shared sense of pride, community, and purpose in working at the airport. However, workers are also disconnected by the silos created inadvertently by the many companies operating at the airport. These workers cannot easily connect to broader initiatives. There is an opportunity to expand communication and connect workers at Toronto Pearson through airport-wide programs, such as 'I Am Toronto Pearson'.



VISION

Workers at the airport are connected to each other, as well as to the airport's broader vision and operations, in very tangible ways. All workers know what the airport's key goals are and participate in programs that advance Toronto Pearson's vision. Workers have opportunities to contribute to shared goals and improvements and feel that they have a voice and that their expertise and experience are operationalized. Toronto Pearson International Airport is recognized for operational and customer service excellence.

HIGH-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Develop airport-wide communication infrastructure, allowing workers to opt-in to GTAA communications to learn about airport programs, benefits, and job opportunities.

2

Develop airport-wide programs based on operational excellence goals on topics such as health and safety, customer service, public safety, and sustainability. Engage workers through training, continuous improvement, and incentives.



CALLS TO ACTION

This recommendation builds on multi-partner strategies underway at Toronto Pearson International Airport, including the 'I Am Pearson Toronto' and 'Healthy Airport Initiative', which engage employers and workers across the airport to advance health and safety and customer service goals.

Actor	Recommendation
	<i>The following recommendations are suggested in chronological order.</i> <i>* represent foundational recommendations that will support the following recommendations</i>
GTAA	<p>Develop a communication tool (using email and text) to engage with workers at the airport about airport programs and opportunities. Explore an employee-only communication channel with information about programs, services, and resources. <i>NOTE: This can be connected to the job portal/worker hub detailed in Strategic Opportunity #3.*</i></p> <p>Develop airport-wide operational programs based on operational excellence goals on topics such as health and safety, customer service, public safety, and sustainability, with specific goals, incentives, and KPIs. Engage businesses and workers across the airport in implementation and continuous improvement.</p> <p>Profile worker contributions and ideas related to airport programs.</p> <p>Develop an internal and external campaign profiling the importance of specific jobs at the airport, while profiling workers for their contributions. <i>NOTE: This can support external recruitment and attraction.</i></p>
Airport Employers	Participate in the design and promotion of airport-wide programs to workers and facilitate communication list sign-up during hiring and orientation.

Actions marked with an asterisk () suggest that the highlighted step is a necessary precursor to others in the table.

ENABLING FACTORS

- **Engage workers and employers in the design** of programs and communication infrastructure. Seek feedback on communication tactics in advance of launching.
- **Create an advisory group** of workers, employers, and unions to advise on the implementation of specific programs.
- **Provide honoraria** for workers to participate in advisory groups.



3

Promote and Enable Airport Pathways to Employment and Career Advancement

Working at the airport is often dynamic, engaging, and exciting. Workers and employers note that people who love the airport are there to stay, describing themselves as “Pearson People”. This is reflected by the long tenures enjoyed by a significant segment of the workforce. There are also many opportunities for internal growth, advancement, and lateral movement for workers at the airport. Most employers prefer to hire and promote internally and have less success hiring external candidates for advanced positions. However, employers and workers also identify challenges that can prevent workers from accessing internal opportunities. In some cases, these challenges are related to skills, confidence, and fear of losing existing security and benefits. In other cases, there are no formal pathways or specific information or resources for workers to understand what opportunities or career pathways are available.

Additionally, although the airport is a coveted place for many to work, some employers still have trouble hiring for key positions and experience high turnover.



VISION

All work at Toronto Pearson International Airport is recognized as critical and essential to the connection of people and goods across Canada and to the rest of the world. All workers at Toronto Pearson are aware of internal skill development and advancement pathways at the airport. For job seekers in Toronto, there are clear and seamless entries into jobs and career pathways at Toronto Pearson. Employers have access to a talent pool of workers who are interested in building careers at the airport.

HIGH-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Promote specific advancement pathways and job opportunities to airport workers and job seekers through an airport careers portal (linked to job postings).

2

Promote and facilitate access to training that supports advancement opportunities.

3

Provide opportunities for career exploration and leadership development to all airport workers.

4

Partner with local organizations and employers to create local recruitment and training programs to build talent pipelines for in-demand jobs.



CALLS TO ACTION

These recommendations build on initiatives already underway at the airport. One such initiative is 'Pearson Works!', which, in addition to its other programming, provides a workshop series designed to support workers impacted by the pandemic.

Actor	Recommendation
	<i>* represent foundational recommendations that will support the following recommendations</i>
GTAA	Develop an airport-wide job portal available to all employers to post job opportunities within Toronto Pearson.
	Establish a working group of employers, workers, and unions to advise on the objectives and operations of an internal job portal. Work with partners to identify specific KPIs, risks, and blockers to uptake.*
	Profile specific occupations, workers, and airport programs to external candidates.
	Develop a marketing campaign and partnership plan to promote the portal to local employment partners, communities, and local service providers and community agencies through social media.
	Identify accessible resources and potential training solutions based on research and insights from partner employers and unions on internal advancement pathways at the airport, including required training and certifications.
	Promote advancement pathways on the job portal.
	Collaborate with employers and unions to promote available training (whether offered within the airport or externally) that is required for internal positions. Promotion can be done through the intranet or job portal.
	Partner with local service providers to identify and promote available training.
	Expand access to the GTAA's Leadership Program to all airport workers.
	Develop a working group of airport employers who have identified a need for leadership training. Engage employers on defining learning outcomes and the delivery format of the expanded program. Engage a group of workers interested in participating in the delivery format (schedule, medium, etc.) to increase access and uptake.
	Pilot the program.
	Provide regular career development sessions for airport workers, promoting internal opportunities and available training opportunities to support career mobility, including application and interview support.
	Establish a working group of employers and unions to pilot a career exploration program. Explore options to allow workers to job shadow/trial without losing union seniority in their current positions, including cross-airport mentoring opportunities.

3. Promote and Enable Airport Pathways to Employment and Career Advancement



GTAA / Airport Employers / Local Service Providers and Community Agencies	<p>Partner with employers that have trouble hiring for targeted positions, as well as others interested in creating a community recruitment and talent development program.</p> <p>Establish working groups of employers who share specific talent needs to inform the criteria of local recruitment and training programming. Work with hiring employers to design recruitment criteria around competencies and not previous experience. Explore opportunities for increasing access to traditionally underrepresented groups, like Persons with Disabilities, Indigenous People and low-income youth who are not in education, employment, or training.</p> <p>Identify local workforce partners who are well suited to perform local recruitment, screening, and training where required to build a pipeline of candidates for in-demand jobs.</p> <p>Establish project terms of reference and a project plan, including roles and responsibilities and lead organizations, specific goals, and key performance indicators for each recruitment and training partnership.</p> <p>Map a process in collaboration with employers, local recruitment partners, and airport security to eliminate the wait time involved in gaining security clearance.</p> <p>Pilot 1-2 local recruitment and training partnerships. Monitor success and implement continuous improvement.</p> <p>Explore opportunities for expansion across the airport.</p>
Airport Employers	<p>Inform the development of the airport careers portal, post jobs, and monitor success.</p> <p>Partner with GTAA to promote opportunities and training for in-demand positions.</p> <p>Participate in the design of the leadership and career exploration program.</p>

Actions marked with an asterisk () suggest that the highlighted step is a necessary precursor to others in the table.

ENABLING FACTORS

- **Engage employers and workers in the design of the airport job portal** to support useability and uptake.
- When designing programming, **engage workers and employers to capture learning needs, schedule availability, and other access considerations** that create barriers to participation.
- **Establish specific KPIs** for job portal and job training. Monitor and share progress with partners.



4

Invest in Skills Development for All

Workers take pride in working at the airport and providing excellent customer service. There is an opportunity to support skill development for all airport workers, to advance operational goals, and to also support the internal advancement of the workforce. Employers identified a need for building leadership, language, and digital skills. These skills were seen as critical for supporting internal advancement. Additionally, for customer-facing jobs (e.g., passenger service agent), French language training was identified as an opportunity to create a seamless passenger experience for French-language speakers.



VISION

All workers at Toronto Pearson are given support to develop and advance their skills. Skills development is part of the culture and operational strategy at Toronto Pearson. Workers are supported and enabled to participate in skills development initiatives that further career development and operational goals. All skills training offered at the airport is of high quality and accessible.

HIGH-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Offer and promote airport-wide skills development opportunities to support personal and professional workforce development.

2

Offer airport-wide programs that provide skills training and align with business operations and airport priorities. Explore the potential for skills badges aligned with airport initiatives.



CALLS TO ACTION

Actor	Recommendation
	<i>* represent foundational recommendations that will support the following recommendations</i>
GTAA	<p>Establish a skills development working group (note: this could also be a labour management committee) of employers and unions to identify ongoing workplace skills needs.*</p> <hr/> <p>Develop workplace training badges to support airport-wide operational programs. Explore opportunities to integrate language and digital skills development in operational training. Explore the potential for stackable or graduated badges or credentials specific to language proficiency or related to specific airport programs.</p> <hr/> <p>Offer airport-wide skills development programs, including English and French Language Training. This programming can be offered in partnership with ESL/FSL providers in school boards, through internal delivery or third-party contractors.</p> <hr/> <p>Explore other language training options.</p>

Actions marked with an asterisk () suggest that the highlighted step is a necessary precursor to others in the table.

ENABLING FACTORS

- **Proactively consult employers and workers** in advance of designing or promoting training. Seek buy-in in advance to support promotion.
- **Ensure that training delivery will be accessible and maximize uptake.** Consider factors such as schedules, locations, and access to specific technology if delivered remotely.



5

Enable a Supportive Environment for Workers

Toronto Pearson Airport is a 24/7 operation, where thousands of people travel to work every day. Although the airport is a dynamic and exciting place to work for many, its internal security and geography can create challenges for workers. For example, many workers face significant unpaid travel time to get to work and wait times to receive a security clearance. Moreover, airport workers are on the frontline of customer experience and crisis management at the airport, which can create stressful work conditions. Efforts to alleviate ease of access and reduce stress for workers will increase the quality of life at work.



VISION

Working at Toronto Pearson Airport is as accessible as it is rewarding. There is committed action that ensures that airport workers are not burdened with unnecessary barriers to get to work. Workers can access services and supports that enable their success, health, and continued employment at the airport. Through partnerships, the airport has become an example of effective regional connectivity, service integration, coordination, and innovation. The airport has created an enabling environment for workers to have what they need to thrive in a healthy workplace.

HIGH-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Establish a standing leadership working group to address worker experience and worker quality of life at the airport, composed of workers, unions, employers, and the GTAA. Prioritize solutions to address the RAIC wait times, internal airport transportation, and the availability of mental health services for workers.

2

Establish external partnerships to advance regional connectivity and public transit to the airport and accessible childcare services for airport workers.



CALLS TO ACTION

These recommendations build on work underway to enhance regional connectivity supported by the GTAA, provincial government, Toronto Region Board of Trade, and others. For example, GTAA commissioned a study with Metrolinx in 2018 and has since continued its involvement in developing plans for a future multi-transit line station located on airport lands. In addition, the GTAA continues to actively engage municipal and provincial partners to highlight the opportunity for potential investment in the region.

Actor	Actor Recommendation
	<i>* represent foundational recommendations that will support the following recommendations</i>
GTAA	Establish an operational working group, composed of employers, workers, and unions to address issues of internal transportation and security at the airport. These issues currently result in long wait periods and airport commute times.*
	Establish a partnership table with regional leaders to advance regional connectivity and public transit to the airport.
	Provide a quiet space at each airport terminal, which workers can access for rest and other forms of recuperation. Administer surveys to seek feedback upon implementation.
	Make provisions to help employees at the airport access groceries and other essential products. Engage workers in the design of these services. Administer surveys to seek feedback upon implementation.
	Partner with employers, unions, airport workers, and third parties to create an open dialogue about mental health. Offer in-house mental health resources as well as external referrals to available resources.
	Conduct a childcare needs assessment and feasibility study among airport workers, employers, unions, and regional partners to explore the potential of local, accessible childcare that can accommodate the airport's hours of operations.
	Use findings from the study to engage local and provincial government agencies to explore opportunities for wrap-around supports for the regional workforce.
	Engage workers through periodic feedback surveys on quality of life, services, and opportunities to enhance the work environment. Publish survey results and hold town halls with all airport workers to discuss results and directions.

Actions marked with an asterisk () suggest that the highlighted step is a necessary precursor to others in the table.

ENABLING FACTORS

- **Engage and leverage the Workforce Leadership Table** to help drive these action areas, especially those internal to the airport.
- **Dedicate staff resources to support external partnership development and engagement** with public and private stakeholders, which can then support issues related to regional connectivity and childcare. Anticipate a longer planning phase for this work. Dedicate resources to initial research and pilot feasibility planning.



6

Advance a Good Jobs Agenda

Similar to the labour market as a whole, the Toronto Pearson Airport workforce is divided into two worlds. One part of the airport workforce is very long-tenured. In contrast, another part is highly transient, with some workers experiencing very high initial turnover. Benefits and perks are neither equally experienced nor equally available among airport workers. This includes wages, health and pension benefits, travel perks, and job security. Some workers employed by contractors perceive a threat to their employment and seniority when contracts change hands among providers. Workers doing similar work also experience significant wage discrepancies in some roles. This is attributed to higher turnover in some positions. Additionally, some workers experience challenges due to airport shift scheduling, which requires 24/7 coverage.



VISION

Toronto Pearson Airport is a regional employment hub offering quality jobs to workers in all positions. All workers have access to equitable benefits, job security, and scheduling conditions. The Greater Toronto Airports Authority is known as a leader for advancing standards for quality work and giving a voice to the many employees and employers operating within the airport premises.

HIGH-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1** **Adopt contract procurement standards**, which include an airport minimum standard for all airport jobs.
- 2** **Ensure job continuity for current employees** in contract tenders, ensuring that workers retain their jobs and seniority.
- 3** **Establish a task force** composed of the GTAA, other airport employers, and workers to address issues of scheduling, especially for occupations and services which are most significantly impacted, like security and below the wing positions.
- 4** **Explore options to provide benefits**, offer discounts, and travel perks to workers across the airport.



CALLS TO ACTION

These recommendations build on a benchmark review led by the GTAA, which examined how other multi-employer and multi-union environments manage contracting. As a result of that review, the GTAA made changes to its contract language with the intent of improving vendor contracts and practices at Toronto Pearson Airport.²⁷ This included changes to contracting language and successor regulations around worker pay.

Actor	Actor Recommendation
	<i>The following recommendations are suggested in chronological order.</i> <i>* represent foundational recommendations that will support the following recommendations</i>
GTAA	<p>Establish a working group composed of: (i) service providers who are seeking an airport minimum wage; and (ii) unions. The working group will then establish procurement language and standards.*</p> <hr/> <p>Conduct a needs assessment with workers and employers, in collaboration with unions, to understand: (i) the experience related to scheduling for jobs that are dependent on flights patterns; and (ii) what actionable solutions can improve the scheduling experience for workers and employers.*</p> <hr/> <p>Establish a working group composed of the GTAA, employers, unions, and workers in specific occupations and sectors. Informed by the aforementioned needs assessment, this working group will develop a time-bound action plan to address scheduling.</p> <hr/> <p>Explore opportunities to increase communication and transparency between the GTAA and contracted services to inform scheduling needs. Explore a minimum standard for scheduling communication at the airport.</p> <hr/> <p>Establish a working group of employers, unions, and workers to conduct an analysis of benefits currently available to workers at Toronto Pearson. Explore options for improving benefit access and quality through a centralized strategy.</p>

Actions marked with an asterisk () suggest that the highlighted step is a necessary precursor to others in the table.

ENABLING FACTORS

- **Engage in dialogue and develop working partnerships** with employers and unions to explore workable solutions and also explore unintended consequences to potential actions.
- **Engage workers directly** in understanding current pain points and to inform new approaches, services, and solutions.

Appendix

APPENDIX A: APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

While the airport's economic reach stretches to the broader Toronto Pearson Airport Employment Zone and beyond, this workforce strategy is targeted towards the workers and employers operating at the airport itself.

This report uses a mixed-methods approach, employing a range of qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data. The research approach was designed to understand changes to business operations, skills needs, overall workforce pain points, opportunities, and drivers of change and recovery for workers and employers at the airport. The research was undertaken in multiple phases, starting with interviews with senior-level stakeholders and subject matter experts, and then iteratively diving deeper to unpack early insights. It must be noted that this research is not a comprehensive overview of all occupations and employers at the airport. Instead, a selection of entry-level occupations, representing a large number of workers who face notable hiring and retention challenges, were prioritized. Even though an attempt has been made to verify information from multiple sources, some of the insights might be limited and biased by the stakeholders' individual perspectives. As part of the engagement, information was sourced from a vast array of sources, including industry reports, multiple rounds of interviews with key informants and community stakeholders, and demographic and employment trends from the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2016 Census for the census tract containing Toronto Pearson Airport.

Information from the following sources was analyzed to triangulate the insights highlighted in this report.

1. **A literature review** was conducted to explore how trends affecting the aviation industry are impacting the industry's workforce and operations. This literature review examined examples of programs and initiatives in other jurisdictions that support the workforce and plan for pandemic recovery. The reviewed jurisdictions were drawn from North America, Europe, Australia, and Asia. This exploration provided a global context for workforce trends and challenges concerning the aviation industry.
2. **Multiple rounds of interviews** with stakeholders were conducted to holistically examine trends and changes in business activities and operations at the airport. These interviews also served to identify the workforce's experiences, needs, and challenges. In the absence of reliable and timely data on the composition and makeup of the workforce at Toronto Pearson, these interviews provided contextual insights and estimates. In addition, the participants supported connections to relevant personnel and resources to reinforce the research and validate any preliminary insights. The key stakeholder consultations and interviews conducted include:

- **Key-informant interviews**

A round of key-informant interviews was conducted with members from departments at GTAA overlooking eleven essential aspects of the airport's operations. The other groups that were engaged included four major unions representing a diverse cross-section of workers and The Toronto Airport Workers' Council (TAWC). TAWC is a non-union, workplace-based organization that comprises representatives from seven large unions that advocate for the collective workforce at the airport. The purpose of these interviews was to engage key stakeholders at Toronto Pearson International Airport about current and future workforce challenges, priorities regarding hiring and retention practices, essential skills, internal training, and primary competencies required to work in key business activities and roles. Airlines and government agencies were excluded from the research as they have broader policies and regulations guiding their workforce decisions. Consequently, the impact that airport-wide workforce solutions can have on them is limited by this dynamic.

- **Interviews with Employers**

The next round of interviews engaged senior business executives for key employers at the airport. These employers were identified in the previous round of interviews as being prominent and influential. A total of fifteen interviews were conducted to gather information on current and future local workforce trends and challenges, and to understand the underlying factors driving workforce decisions. Despite not connecting with every employer due to availability and scheduling constraints, the interviewed sample represented the essential operations and occupations groups identified in the previous round of interviews. The

Appendix

interviews with the employers also helped to identify needs and opportunities to support the workforce and their businesses. The employers connected the research team to their workers, including team members involved with the organization's hiring, internal training, and advancement practices.

- **Interviews with HR**

The third round of interviews was primarily with HR personnel from six different organizations. These interviews investigated existing workforce structures, career pathways, and prevalent hiring and training practices related to four major occupation groups at the airport. The major occupation groups were predetermined and represented entry-level occupations that employed the largest number of people at the airport. The interviews also identified occupation-specific job roles and functions, skills requirements, influential trends, and possible opportunities to support these workers.

- **Interviews and Focus Groups with Workers**

Finally, nine workers were interviewed either in groups or individually to capture workers' interests, experiences, and challenges in working and advancing their careers at the airport. The interviewed workers were part of the four major occupation groups identified in the previous analysis. The outreach process involved sharing a call for participants as part of GTAA's periodic newsletter and requesting assistance from employers and unions. Participants were offered a \$50 gift card. Despite more significant interest in attending the interviews, only a handful showed up to the actual interviews.

3. The last component of the research involved analyzing demographic and employment data. This data was pulled from the 2011 National Household Survey and 2016 Census, and provided insight into the working-age population (15+ years) employed in the Toronto Pearson Airport Census Tract based on 'place of work' data. The data was used to uncover demographic and employment trends in the underlying geographic region. It must be noted that publicly available data was used at this level of aggregation as data is suppressed for areas below a certain threshold to limit the disclosure of information about individual respondents. A limitation of this approach is that the dataset covers a geographic area beyond the boundaries of Toronto Pearson, which includes other employers and occupations beyond the airport's workforce. However, the airport is one of the largest employers in the region, and trends from the resulting analysis can be considered a strong indicator of the changes in the airport's workforce. The analysis does not use this data for detailed reporting but to extrapolate trends related to the demographics of the airport's workforce.

APPENDIX B: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

GTAA Departments

- Airport Operations
- Airport Development and Technical Services
- Finance
- Governance, Corporate Safety, and Security
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Stakeholder Relations and Communications

Unions and Workplace-Based Organizations

- CUPE Local 4092
- IAMAW Local 2323
- Teamsters Local Union 419
- UNIFOR
- The Toronto Airport Workers' Council (TAWC)

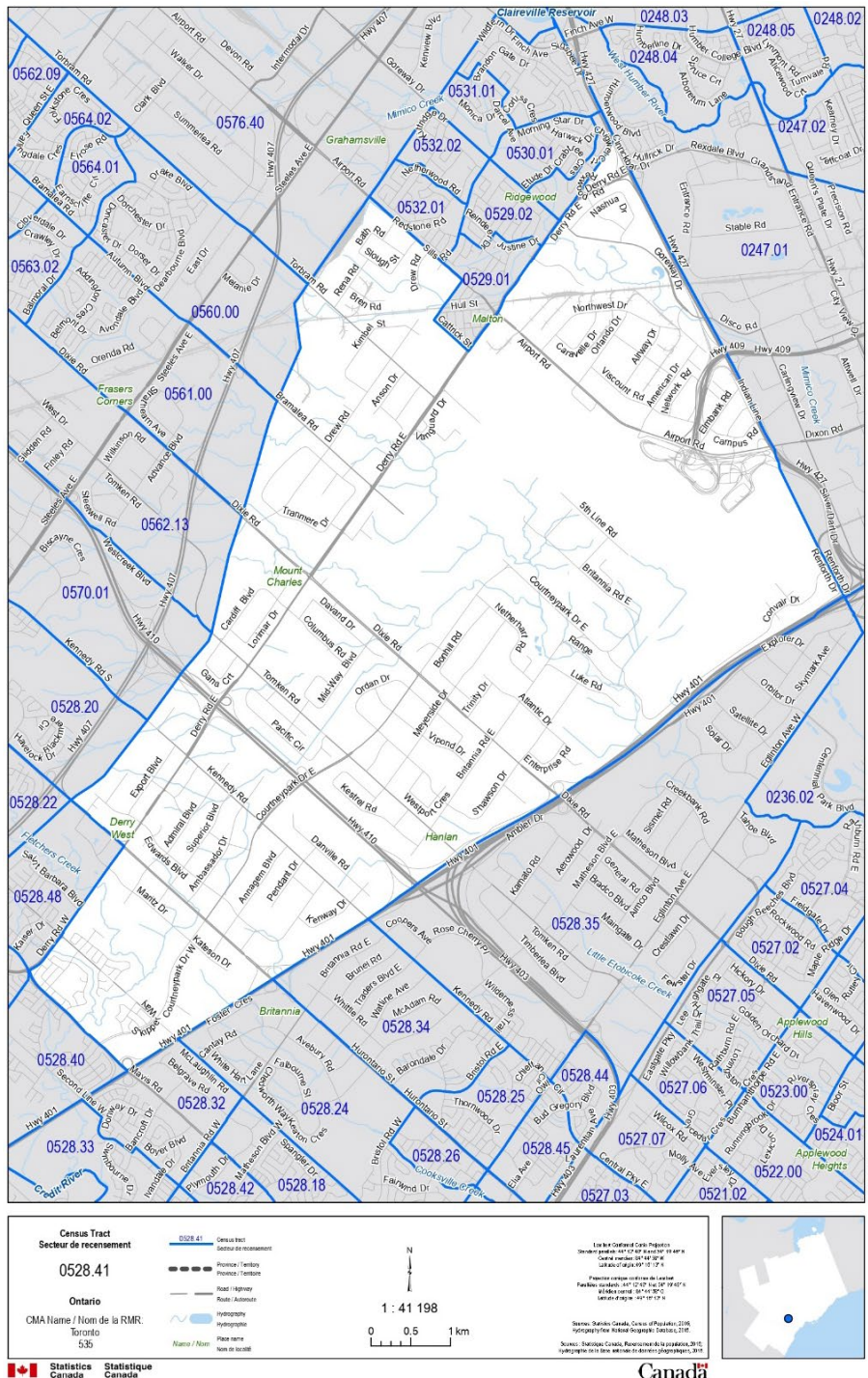
Disclaimer: In addition to interviews with the departments and organizations listed above, employee focus groups

Appendix

and interviews with HR personnel and executives from key employers at the airport were conducted. The names of these participants and the organizations they are affiliated with are not disclosed to maintain confidentiality.

APPENDIX C: STATISTICS CANADA – MAP OF THE CENSUS TRACT CONTAINING TORONTO PEARSON AIRPORT (0528.41)

The following map outlines the geographic area covered by the 2011 National Household Survey and 2016 Census data used in the report based on 2016 Census boundaries.



Appendix

APPENDIX D: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS FOR THE WORKING POPULATION IN THE TORONTO PEARSON AIRPORT CENSUS TRACT (NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY 2011 AND CENSUS 2016)

Table 1: Number of Workers by Age Group, Toronto Pearson Census Tract (2011 – 2016)

Age group	2011		2016		% change (2011 – 2016)
	# of workers	% of total	# of workers	% of total	
15 to 24 years	7,155	7%	8,635	8%	21%
25 to 64 years	93,420	91%	98,610	89%	6%
25 to 54 years	77,695	75%	78,535	71%	1%
25 to 34 years	20,790	20%	21,735	20%	5%
35 to 44 years	26,860	26%	25,870	23%	-4%
45 to 54 years	30,045	29%	30,935	28%	3%
55 to 64 years	15,725	15%	20,070	18%	28%
65 to 74 years	2,365	2%	3,550	3%	50%
75 years and over	260	0.3%	300	0.5%	15%
Total - Age	103,200		111,100		8%

Source: Statistics Canada

Table 2: Number of Workers by Education level, Toronto Pearson Census Tract (2011 – 2016)

Education	2011		2016		% change (2011 – 2016)
	# of workers	% of total	# of workers	% of total	
No certificate, diploma or degree	10,210	10%	10,755	10%	5%
Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate	29,610	29%	33,280	30%	12%
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	63,385	61%	67,060	60%	6%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	7,230	7%	6,110	5%	-15%
Trades certificate or diploma other than Certificate of Apprenticeship or Certificate of Qualification	4,580	4%	3,290	3%	-28%
Certificate of Apprenticeship or Certificate of Qualification	2,650	3%	2,820	3%	6%
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	23,955	23%	26,825	24%	12%
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	6,185	6%	3,255	3%	-47%
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	26,015	25%	30,870	28%	19%
Total - Highest certificate, diploma or degree	103,200		111,100		8%

Source: Statistics Canada

Appendix

Table 3: Number of Workers by Main Mode of Commuting, Toronto Pearson Census Tract (2011-2016)

Main mode of commuting	2011		2016		% change (2011 – 2016)
	# of workers	% of total	# of workers	% of total	
Car, truck or van	91,460	89%	97,575	88%	7%
Driver, alone	77,535	75%	82,845	75%	7%
2 or more persons shared the ride to work	13,920	13%	14,735	13%	6%
Driver, with 1 or more passengers	8,130	8%	8,070	7%	-1%
Passenger, 2 or more persons in the vehicle	57,90	6%	6,665	6%	15%
Sustainable transportation	11,105	11%	13,050	12%	18%
Public transit	10,430	10%	12,660	11%	21%
Active transport	670	0.6%	390	0.4%	-42%
Other method	635	0.6%	470	0.4%	-26%
Total - Main mode of commuting	103,200		111,100		8%

Source: Statistics Canada

Table 4: Number of Workers by Select National Occupational Classifications (NOC), Toronto Pearson Census Tract (2011-2016)

National Occupational Classification (NOC)	2011		2016		% change (2011 – 2016)
	# of workers	% of total	# of workers	% of total	
6421 Retail salespersons	2,070	2.0%	2,285	2.1%	10%
6522 Purser and flight attendants	1,730	1.7%	2,160	1.9%	25%
6523 Airline ticket and service agents	2,730	2.6%	2,790	2.5%	2%
6541 Security guards and related security service occupations	2,125	2.1%	2,410	2.2%	13%
6552 Other customer and information services representatives	2,640	2.6%	2,600	2.3%	-2%
7534 Air transport ramp attendants	1,595	1.5%	2,410	2.2%	51%

Source: Statistics Canada

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