

LASER ILLUMINATIONS OF AIRCRAFT - A GROWING THREAT

The View From Here

Pearson International Airport.
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada



Comparison of National Statistics

United States

- ▶ 2010 - 2,836 Reported Illuminations

Canada

- ▶ 2010 - 182 Reported Illuminations
- ▶ On a per capita basis, Canada's incidents are occurring at 70 % of that in the USA

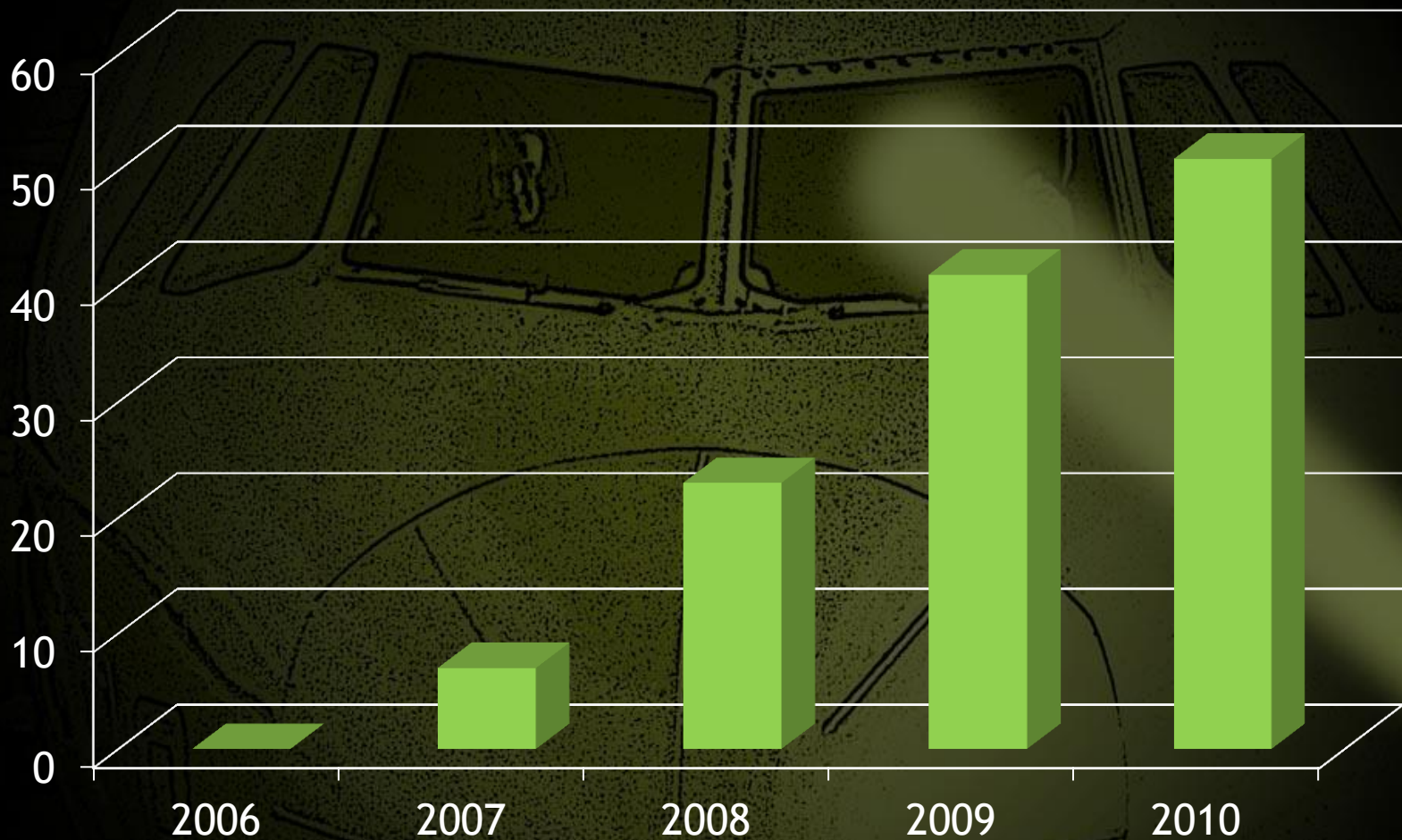


2010 Laser Illuminations

- ▶ Highest activity in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba
- ▶ Winnipeg, Manitoba - Police Air Support Unit commence operations in January 2011 and were targeted twice in the first month



CYYZ Incidents Reported to Transport Canada



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Peel Police - Airport Division

- ▶ Laser Strikes identified as a concern early in 2008
- ▶ Working Group established involving ALPA, ACPA, Police, NavCan & Transport Canada
- ▶ Laser Strike Project initiated in March 2010



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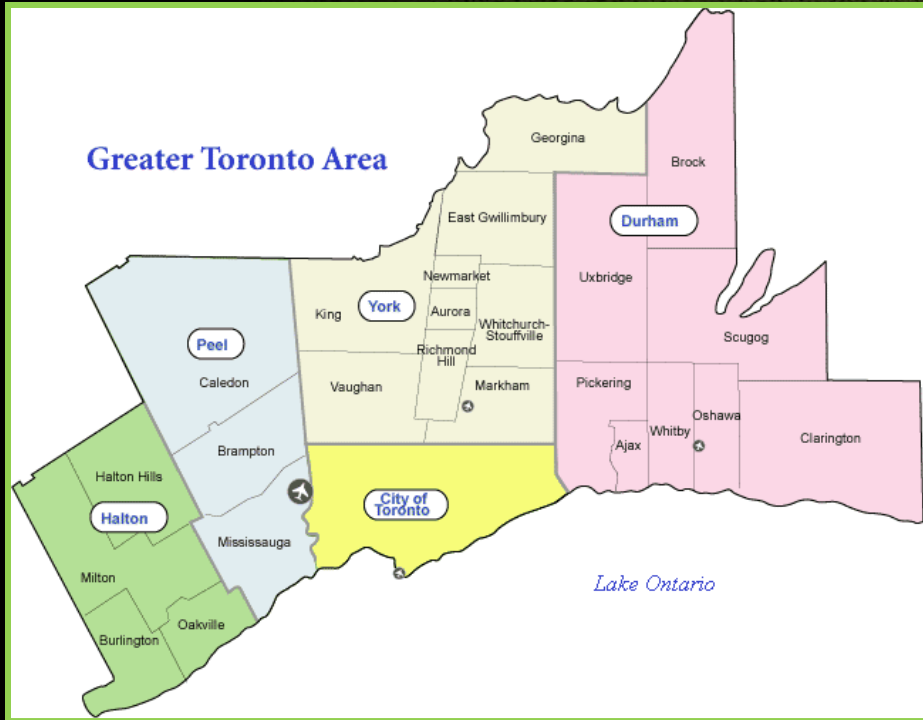
Protocol with NavCan

Best Response Practice

- ▶ Efficient flow of info is critical between Aircrew ~ ATC ~ Police @ Airport
- ▶ Police meet crew at gate to interview
- ▶ If source location can be established, police of jurisdiction will respond to investigate



Greater Toronto Area



- ▶ Population - 6,000,000
- ▶ 5 Regional Police Services plus O.P.P. & RCMP
- ▶ Two of five Regional Police services with Air Support Units
- ▶ Pearson International Airport is located in the Region of Peel



Investigative Challenges

► Solvency rate is low because...

- A definable source location is typically difficult to establish
- Aircrew shouldn't risk further exposure looking for a geographic reference
- Communication barriers and jurisdictional issues
- Culprit may not be static
- The act may only be seconds in duration
- Public largely unaware that it is a crime and don't usually report it



Court

- ▶ 15 Prosecutions country-wide since 2007
 - Convictions registered under the Aeronautics Act, Canadian Airline Regulations and the Criminal Code
 - Fines levied from \$500 to \$5,000
 - Aeronautics Act - fines up to \$100,000 and up to 5 years prison.
 - Conviction for Mischief CC & Aero Act - 14 days jail



How Can You Help ?

- ▶ Report all incidents to Police
- ▶ Arrivals and Departures
- ▶ Quick turn around - leave cursory incident details and contact info



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Laser Strike Project

► Education Campaign

- Point of sale visits and information
- Public awareness segment created for our Cable TV show
- Reference material made available for all officers
- Article published in national policing magazine “Blueline”
- Internal police training video produced



Officer & Public Safety Concerns

- Incidents of lasers used as weapons are a concern from a policing and public health and safety perspective



Health Canada - Consumer & Clinical Radiation Protection Bureau



- ▶ “Arctic Spyder III” seizures - July 2011 under authority of Radiation Emitting Devices Act
 - Device more powerful than necessary to accomplish its intended purpose - creates a risk of personal injury



Consumer Product Safety Act

June 2011

- ▶ Proactive - protect public from consumer products, preventing dangers to health and safety. Foreseeable use and misuse of a consumer product
 - Manufacturers, importers and distributors
 - Class 3b and 4 laser pointers and handhelds should fall within the scope of this legislation



Transport Canada Study

- Scientific study of dangers posed to transportation by lasers was commissioned by T.C. in 2010

- Completed and turned over to government in May 2011



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Legislative Possibilities

- ▶ Amendments to current legislation or create new offences remain a possibility
 - Inclusion of a laser device within the definition of a prohibited weapon?
 - Creation of a new criminal code offence for pointing a laser at an aircraft in flight?



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