

Minister of Health



Ministre de la Santé

FEB 07 2012

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K9

Mr. Neil Everson
Director
Economic Development Division
Planning and Economic Development Department
City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West, 7th Floor
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4Y5

Dear Mr. Everson:

Thank you for your correspondence of December 20, 2011, co-addressed to the Honourable Denis Lebel, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, concerning the environmental impact of perfluorooctane sulphate contamination at the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport and surrounding area. I regret the delay in responding.

With respect to the assessment of potential adverse human health effects arising from contamination, Health Canada provides guidance, training and advice to federal departments pertaining to human health risk assessment at contaminated sites owned by the federal government. However, as the land in question is the property of the Region of Hamilton–Wentworth, it falls outside the Department's purview.

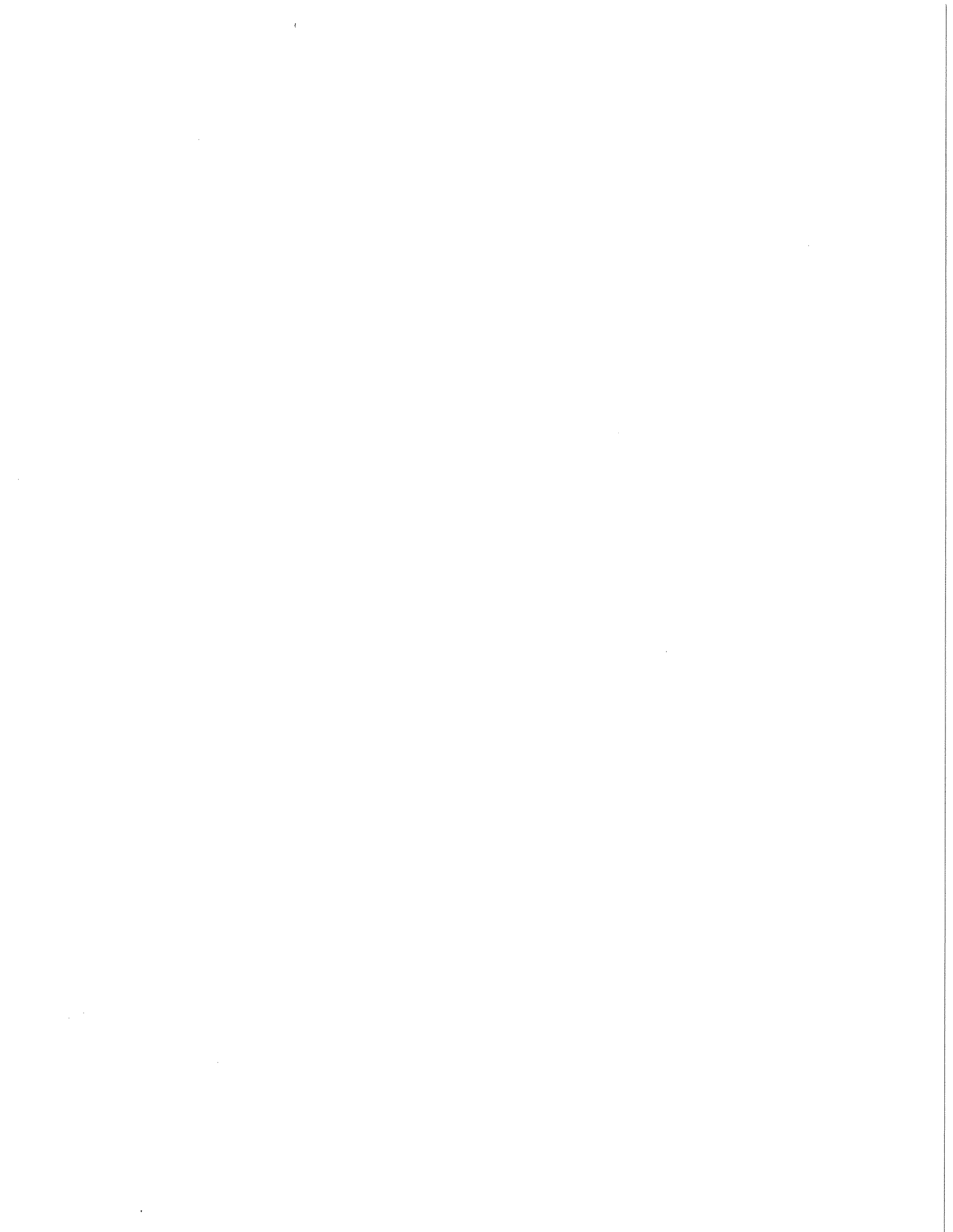
As ecological concerns fall under the purview of the Honourable Peter Kent, Minister of the Environment, I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of your correspondence to him, for consideration.

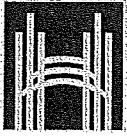
Thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

Leona Aglukkaq

c.c. The Honourable Denis Lebel, P.C., M.P.
The Honourable Peter Kent, P.C., M.P.





Hamilton

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December 20, 2011

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq
Minister of Health
Government of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

The Honourable Denis Libel
Minister of Transport, Infrastructure
And Communities
Government of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Honourable Ministers Aglukkaq and Libel:

Re: Hamilton International Airport – PFOS Contamination

At the direction of Hamilton City Council on Wednesday December 14, 2011, I am writing to you regarding a serious issue of historical contamination at the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport and its detrimental environmental impact on the surrounding area.

In 1996, the Federal Government transferred ownership of the Hamilton Airport to the then Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth. The Government of Canada was the original owner of the Airport since 1940, when it was first constructed as a war time Air Force training station. In the early 1980s, the Federal Government invested \$55 Million in airport infrastructure and facilities in order to transform the Airport into a regional air transportation hub.

In 1985, as part of the transformation, a Fire Training Area (FTA) was constructed by the Federal Government on Airport property. The FTA was in regular use for fire fighting training by airport fire services from across the province and as far away as Timmins, Ontario. Our City records indicate that Hamilton Airport Fire Fighter Training accounted for no more than 10% of the total activity.

From 1986 – 1994, Transport Canada was responsible for conducting all the fire fighting training activities and exclusively used Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) in these exercises at the FTA. The AFFF in use prior to 1990 was the only foam known to contain PFOS (Perfluorooctane Sulfonate which is part of the man-made group of *Perfluorosurfactant* also known as PFCs) that was used at the Airport.

Since the 1986 – 1989 timeframe when AFFF was in use at the Airport, the PFOS has migrated off the Airport FTA primarily through surface water run-off and has now contaminated not only airport property but the headwaters of the Welland River and Lake Niapenco in the Binbrook Conservation Area. This contamination was first identified in April 2010 by an Environment Canada Technician who discovered traces in turtle plasma in Lake Niapenco. The Airport FTA was confirmed several months later by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment as the source of the contamination.

Ministers Aglukkaq and Libel, as you can appreciate, this has become a very controversial issue here in Hamilton and, in particular, with the residents that live south and east of the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport. On behalf of the City of Hamilton, I am requesting your Departments' assistance with the following;

- Any information that Transport Canada has available with respect to fire training activities at the Hamilton Airport prior to 1996, particularly use of AFFF containing PFOS;
- Assistance and a contribution from the Federal Government for the completion of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 environmental studies and risk assessment ; and,
- The Federal Government's assistance in implementing a permanent solution to the remediation of the contamination on Hamilton Airport property and downstream as from the airport as confirmed by the provincial Ministry of Environment and as appropriate for the protection of citizens and the environment.

I would sincerely appreciate your attention to this matter so that, together, we can move forward with a remedial action plan and implementation for this area. If acceptable, representatives from the City of Hamilton and I will come to Ottawa for a meeting with the appropriate officials from Transport Canada.

Attached for your review is a report prepared by EXP. Consultants on the initial subsurface Investigation of PFOS and PDOA at the Hamilton International Airport.

Sincerely,



Neil Everson
Director

/dkm

Attachs. (2)

- c.c. - Ms. Yaprack Baltacioglu, Deputy Minister, Transport Canada
- Ms. Glenda Yeates, Deputy Minister, Health Canada
- Mr. David Sweet. MP – Ancaster, Flamborough, Dundas
- Mr. David Christopherson, MP – Hamilton Centre
- Ms. Chris Charlton, MP – Hamilton Mountain
- Mr. Wayne Marston, MP - Stoney Creek