

Mr. Speaker, the aviation sector serves a variety of crucial roles in Canada and a requisite number of trained and experienced pilots will be required to facilitate a healthy industry.

As I mentioned in my previous speech on my Motion No. 177, Canada is facing a severe pilot shortage and it has lost the ability to generate the pilots it needs today or that it will require tomorrow.

In fact, Canada will need 7,000 to 10,000 new pilots by 2025, resulting in a projected shortage of at least 3,000 pilots, given the current rate of production. To this point, Canadian flight schools produce about 1,200 commercial pilots each year. Of these, only about 500 join the Canadian aviation industry each year due to international student pilot graduates returning home or international entities that purchase Canadian flight schools and subsequently prioritize their home markets.

Some of the biggest challenges to pilot production in Canada are the high cost of training for new commercial pilots, the low starting salaries and an industry that has evolved a non-linear career path. Those who are fortunate enough to navigate the existing barriers to becoming a pilot are almost always focused on the quickest path to a left seat at a flag carrier. The pilot shortage we face has accelerated that process, leaving the interim paths in considerable chaos.

Traditionally, pilots would spend years building flight time and experience as either a primary flight instructor, a bush pilot or as a military pilot in Canada's Royal Canadian Air Force. All three of these paths service an important purpose in our aviation ecosystem. When the industry faces a pilot shortage, they are usually the first sectors to suffer.

Pilot shortages in these sectors decrease our ability to train the next generation of pilots, reduce or remove air service to rural and remote communities and degrade our country's ability to generate air power with our Canadian Armed Forces. As the pilot shortage percolates up, both scheduled and non-scheduled commercial air service will be negatively affected, disrupting the travelling public, a position that we have already started to see occur.

A further strain that will most certainly exasperate the Canadian pilot shortage is a global one. It is projected that the international transport industry will double the number of aircraft and the amount of passenger traffic by 2036. This will require 620,000 new pilots to fly large commercial aircraft internationally. Eighty percent of these pilots have yet to be trained and Canadian-trained pilots are an attractive offer to many overseas flight operations.

Motion No. 177 only highlights one aspect of the pilot shortage in Canada. Flight schools and pilot training are a critical component of the pilot generation machine. However, it is certainly not the only issue Canadian aviation is facing from a broader perspective.

The industry also has a growing need for experienced aircraft maintenance engineers. It is projected the industry will need a minimum of 5,300 new aircraft mechanics by 2025 to keep up with growth and retirements. Occupations with the largest hiring needs in the industry include pilots, mechanics, avionics technicians, flight attendants, assemblers, air traffic controllers, managers, machinists and engineers.

While discussing the Canadian pilot shortage, it would be remiss of me not to mention the importance of our airports. They too play a critical roll, and I encourage the Government of Canada to continue to work with organizations like the Canadian Airports Council to ensure our airports are properly resourced.

Canada has the third-largest aerospace sector in the world, generating nearly \$30 billion in annual revenue and supporting 211,000 direct and indirect jobs. Aviation connects Canada and Canadians in ways no other form of transportation does or can. Our country's economic prosperity will be highly influenced by the health and well-being of the Canadian aviation sector.

It is my hope to receive the support of the House on my Motion No. 177, which would task to the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities to determine the most effective way to support our Canadian flight schools and pilot production in Canada.

As was mentioned earlier, there was a motion from the NDP. When I last spoke about this, I was asked to consider adding the study of the issue of noise pollution to my motion. I subsequently found out that the committee was already doing it, so although I was agreeable to it at the beginning, I will not be supporting it moving forward.