



MEDIA
RELEASE

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Airport Power Improvements Go Unnoticed

Thunder Bay, ON – A \$300,000 project to improve power supply to the Thunder Bay International Airport has gone unnoticed....which is just what the partners involved had hoped for.

Thunder Bay International Airport Authority, NAV CANADA and Thunder Bay Hydro recently worked together on an Automatic Transfer System project to install smart switches that would automatically reroute airport power from alternative feeders in the event of a power outage.

Since installation this spring, the system has been activated four times. The result has been no flight delays or cancellations, no processing stoppages and passengers who barely even noticed the power transition.

“This is just what we had planned for,” says Robert Mace, President of Thunder Bay Hydro. “By sharing costs with two other partners, we were able to modernize this section of our local power grid using the latest technology and achieving the highest degree of uninterrupted power flow for a high priority customer with critical infrastructure needs. It is a win-win-win.”

Ed Schmidtke, President & CEO of Thunder Bay International Airport Authority notes that “Electrical power is obviously an essential component of so many of the services required by our passengers. Our back-up generator capacity can only power a small portion of our needs. The new transfer system virtually eliminates power outages at the airport making customer service far more reliable.”

“NAV CANADA is pleased to have partnered with the Thunder Bay Airport Authority and Thunder Bay Hydro on this project. Improving the reliability of the power supply to our air traffic control services and the airport in event of an outage helps us deliver safe and efficient services,” says Mark Godin Assistant Vice President - Construction and Facilities Services for NAV CANADA. “Uninterruptable power is essential to Air TC, adding this layer of safety helps ensure there is no impact to the flying public”

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About the Thunder Bay International Airport Authority

Thunder Bay International Airport Authority is the private, non-shareholder corporation responsible for the operation of the Thunder Bay International Airport. TBIAA receives no government funding for the operation of the Airport. Economic activity related to the Airport is responsible for an estimated \$645 million dollars in GDP annually and over 5000 jobs.

About NAV CANADA

NAV CANADA is a private, not-for-profit company, established in 1996, providing air traffic control, airport advisory services, weather briefings and aeronautical information services for more than 18 million square kilometres of Canadian domestic and international airspace.

The company is internationally recognized for its safety record

About Thunder Bay Hydro

Thunder Bay Hydro is responsible for the power line system within the city limits of Thunder Bay and for delivering electricity to the homes and businesses here. We are the local, front-line customer service face of the province's electrical industry providing for the reading of customer meters, billing, and offering energy conservation advice and programs. We build, plan & maintain the local power line system and provide 24-hour emergency response.

Automatic Transfer System

Thunder Bay Hydro,
Thunder Bay International Airport Authority
and NAV CANADA

Backgrounder

In 2017, Thunder Bay Hydro and the Thunder Bay International Airport Authority entered into a partnership with NAV CANADA to improve the reliability of the airport's electricity supply. The most suitable solution to achieve this goal was the installation of a high speed automatic transfer system.

In the event of a power outage, the automatic transfer system will determine where power is available and in most circumstances will automatically reroute the power between existing circuits, using smart switches. The system requires no human interaction and is instantaneous; a power transfer happens in about half a second.

This automatic transfer system will provide virtually uninterrupted power to the Thunder Bay International Airport in situations that would previously resulted in a power outage. This improved reliability benefits the airport, its dozens of businesses and the growing number of daily travellers.

To date, the automatic transfer system has been activated four times.



What is a Smart Switch?

Smart switches are computerized devices used on electricity distribution networks to sense and correct faults on power lines.

There is a smart switch installed on each electricity supply to the airport. These switches communicate with one another to identify the location of the fault and transfer power from one airport circuit to another. This transfer of power is almost unnoticeable and takes only half a second.