



PRESS RELEASE

Reg Faubert Receives B.C. Aviation Council's Lifetime Achievement Award

The longtime aviation and aerospace industry advocate was recognized, along with other honourees, during the annual Silver Wings Industry and Scholarship Awards Celebration

Richmond, B.C. – The B.C. Aviation Council (BCAC) presented Reg Faubert with a Lifetime Achievement Award. Faubert and others were honoured for their exceptional contributions to the province's aviation and aerospace industry during the BCAC's annual Silver Wings Industry and Scholarship Awards Celebration at the Vancouver Convention Centre.

The BCAC's Lifetime Achievement Award is presented in recognition of outstanding leadership, promotion and consistent contribution to the continuous development of aviation and aerospace in B.C. Recipients are honoured for accomplishments that will stand the test of time. Faubert has spent more than three decades advocating for aviation and aerospace industry improvements from within the halls of government. He currently serves as the western region (B.C. and Territories) manager for the federal government's Initiative for Sustainable Aviation Technology. The \$350 million program will fund projects designed to help the aviation sector reach net-zero emissions by 2050. Faubert was appointed to that position after retiring from the B.C. Ministry of Transportation in Victoria. In his last of many roles with the province, he served as the manager of air and rail programs.

"It's wonderful, it's a very nice recognition, it's completely unexpected," said Faubert. "Having industry give somebody in government an award for what they've been doing throughout the last 30 years is surprising. I'm almost at a loss of words in terms of what it means. I'm still not entirely sure why they would single me out, but I like to think that it's because of the approach I always took to the job at the provincial government, and that was always listening and always trying to problem-solve. At the provincial level, we don't have jurisdiction for aviation, but I tried to not make that a limitation in trying to be able to help both airports and any airlines or aviation companies I came across and just having that focus and dedication, I think, is what they're recognizing. And just recognizing that is deeply appreciated from my perspective. I think the biggest element though of this is the stuff we put in place. We just tried to step up and be a support and one of the biggest elements of that was finding funds to help airports stay operational."

Originally from Hamilton, Faubert came west to complete a two-year Master's degree at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and wound up staying. He credits David Bachynski with playing a key role in his career by hiring him with the B.C. Transportation Ministry.

He was somebody who I've modelled a lot of my approach to work and to aviation, specifically, on," said Faubert.

The BCAC also honoured David Gillen with the Robert S. Day Outstanding Contribution Trophy. Gillen, a retired UBC Sauder School of Business professor, was recognized for his exceptional leadership in the promotion and development of aviation in B.C.



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Dr. Gillen is unquestionably one of the world's top aviation economists," said BCAC Executive Director Dave Frank, who along with Dr. Darren Dahl, Dean of UBC Sauder School of Business, accepted the award on his behalf. "Gillen has stood out by measuring the value of Canada's aviation network completing multiple presentation and research projects that have contributed to the industry's growth. Some study subjects have included air slot programs, airport congestion, global hubs, air-service agreements, risk and liability, and supply-chain impacts. Gillen can be counted on to provide an in-depth analysis of future economic impacts with a broad and unbiased perspective." stated Frank.

Other 2024 Silver Wings Industrial Awards and recipients include:

- Aviation Entrepreneur of the Year – Sealand Flight, Campbell River, B.C.
- William Templeton Public Aviation Facility Award – Castlegar West Kootenay Regional Airport
- BCAC Environmental Award – Kelowna International Airport
- Back and Bevington Air Safety Award – Thomas Urbanovitch

Here is more information on this year's awards and recipients.

Aviation Entrepreneur of the Year – Sealand Flight, Campbell River, B.C.

Sealand Flight is a flight school operated by Sealand Aviation, an aircraft maintenance and engineering company that specializes in airplane modifications. The BCAC selected Sealand Flight for its pioneering leadership in sustainable aviation. In June, the school achieved a historic milestone by completing Canada's first commercial electric flight. Sealand Flight charged a nominal fee to a local Air Force cadet who went up in the plane as part of his future training program. This accomplishment, realized through close collaboration with Transport Canada, marked a significant step forward in eco-friendly aviation and the future of pilot training.

It's incredible to get the recognition from the BCAC, because I've admired the BCAC, being in awe of all the members for a long time," said Sealand Flight Manager Nancy Marshall. "And for them to recognize us, it's really cool, really nice."

Despite facing regulatory challenges, Sealand Flight plans to expand electric airplane related training for pilots.

We are offering training up to the solo stage on the electric aircraft, and it's going to be significantly less expensive," said Marshall. "We developed the syllabus for training on electric aircraft. At this point, we can go to the solo stage and then no further. Probably within the next year, we'll be able to do the full rating for a license on the electric plane. We're offering it for private pilot license training up to solo flight. We're offering conversion training, or differences training, as it's called, so that regular pilots can get checked out on the electric aircraft."



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William Templeton Public Aviation Facility Award – Castlegar West Kootenay Regional Airport

The Castlegar West Kootenay Regional Airport received the William Templeton Public Aviation Facility Award for systematically pursuing a precision approach to increase service reliability while investing in facilities to accommodate the resulting heightened demand.

The large team behind Castlegar West Kootenay Airport is thinking into the future,” said BCAC Executive Director Dave Frank. “Airport management, city councillors and administrators, contractors, partners and supporters have collaborated on expansions and innovations that will have profound social and economic impacts on the entire region.”

The Castlegar West Kootenay Regional Airport was recognized for such initiatives as its runway solar LED project, apron rehabilitation and taxiway extension project, vehicle fleet renewal for enhanced snow removal and other purposes, and role in helping to set up the Air Canada Flight Disruption Shuttle. The free shuttle assists passengers affected by weather-related flight cancellations. The BCAC award selectors also considered the airport’s partnerships with the Kootenay Emergency Response Physicians Association (KERPA), the Southeast Fire Centre, and other community groups.

The award is very well deserved.” said Frank.

Castlegar Mayor, Maria McFaddin, and Maciej Habrych, the airport’s manager, accepted the award during the Silver Wings Industry and Scholarship Awards Celebration in Vancouver on October 18th, 2024.

The award is named after William Templeton, Vancouver International Airport’s first manager.

BCAC Environmental Award – Kelowna International Airport

The Kelowna International Airport (YLW) was honoured for providing leadership in sustainability initiatives such as Net Zero by 2030, and for sharing lessons learned with the broader airport community. In addition, the BCAC recognized the Kelowna airport for assisting other B.C. airports in the pursuit of their own net-zero goals and launching other environmental protection efforts, such as enhanced waste management.

Back and Bevington Air Safety Award – Thomas Urbanovitch

Thomas Urbanovitch is the operational duty manager at NAV CANADA’s facility in Surrey. Among his many roles, he manages wildfire impacts on aviation. During the past four and a half years with NAV CANADA, Urbanovitch has helped various groups manage hundreds of wildfires in B.C., with a significant number of the blazes impacting aviation operations each year. During wildfire events, his duties include managing airspace restrictions and communicating with airlines and airports. NAV CANADA acts as an information facilitator, informing airlines, airports, and the public about wildfire-related airspace restrictions.



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Urbanovitch, a long-time aviation industry veteran, manages a team of five that oversees about 150 employees. He leads day-to-day activities and tries to plan out the next three days of operations. He is also involved in the agency's traffic management unit. In that role, Urbanovitch co-ordinates airspace constraints and contingency plans to keep the aviation system running smoothly.

"I was actually quite surprised," said Urbanovitch of his BCAC award. "I didn't even know that this award was an option for this type of content. I'm very honoured to be presented with this."

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ABOUT THE BRITISH COLUMBIA AVIATION COUNCIL

The BCAC is a volunteer-driven organization, providing value to over 950 Members and 7750 Supporters by making meaningful contributions to the aviation and aerospace industry across the province of BC. In partnership with our supporters, stakeholders, communities, and governments, we positively influence the well-being of the aviation and aerospace sector, which is vital to BC's social and economic development.

[About the BCAC](#)

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Photos:

1. Thomas Urbanovitch
2. Dave Frank, Reg Faubert, Cathy Press
3. Maciej Habrych, Mayor Maria McFaddin

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