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Vancouver flight school manager is first female head of national airline association

Ottawa - The Air Transport Association of Canada has named a woman to be its chairperson, for the first time in its sixty seven year history. Patricia Kennedy, Chief Operating Officer of Vancouver-based Pacific Flying Club was named to the post at the Association's Annual meeting in Toronto.

Mrs. Kennedy assumes the post at a time of severe economic hardship in the industry. "A great many of our members are in distress, as a result of the slowing economy and the attacks of September 11. The Association has played a crucial role in the last two months, and it will be even more critical in the next few months as economic issues are added to security issues in this industry," she said.

Mrs. Kennedy said a good relationship with the federal government was critical. "I think our relationship with the federal government is very good just now and it has to be, because we are experiencing some of the most serious challenges in our history."

Mrs. Kennedy has a lengthy involvement with the Association and recently served as co-chair of a major project the Human Resource Study of Commercial Pilots which was released earlier this year.

ATAC President Cliff Mackay said he was delighted to have Mrs. Kennedy as chair. "Our association is usually seen as the voice of huge airlines," he remarked. "Pat will be a great change; representing small business, the West and the flight training industry. It will be a reminder of the full scope of our organization, and of the many businesses whose issues may not get the same attention from the media and the government."

A mother of two, Mrs. Kennedy was born in Toronto. She graduated with a degree in History from Queen's University, Kingston in 1977 and is also a Certified Management Accountant. She is a past Director of the British Columbia Aviation Council. She has been the Chief Operating Officer at Pacific Flying Club, one of Canada's largest flights schools, since 1991.

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