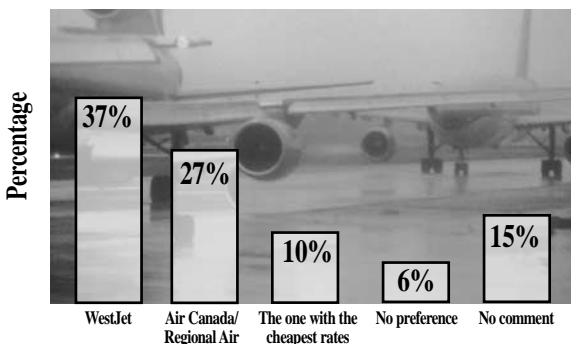


Edmontonians' poll station

By **Linda Banister**

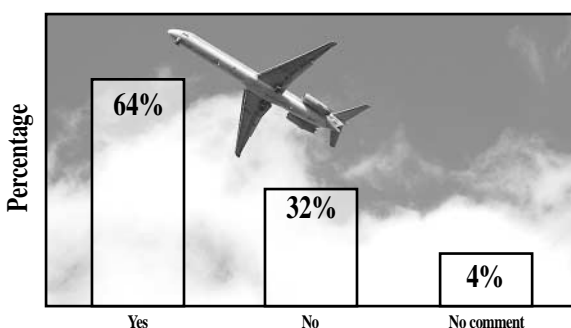
The recent financial woes of Canada's national air carrier, Air Canada, have placed considerable doubt into the minds of travellers across the country. Whether for business or for pleasure, all travellers have been anxiously watching the headlines to see what is in store for the struggling airline. In this month's *Poll Station*, we asked Edmontonians for their thoughts and feelings on the situation as it affects them and the City of Edmonton.

WHICH IS YOUR PREFERRED AIR CARRIER?



When asked which air carrier they preferred, over one-third (37%) of respondents mentioned the Calgary-based WestJet, while 27 percent mentioned Air Canada, and 5 percent mentioned airlines based outside of Canada. Another 10 percent of respondents said they tend to fly on whichever airline provides them with the cheapest rates and 21 percent were unsure.

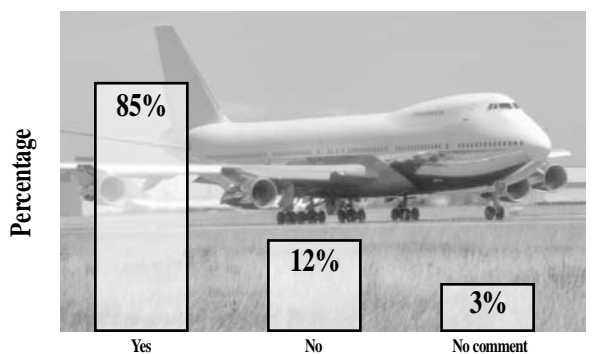
IS IT IMPORTANT THAT CANADA HAVE A NATIONAL AIR CARRIER?



Almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents felt it was important that Canada have a national air carrier, while one-third (32%) did not feel it was important for the country. However, only 17 percent of respondents felt the federal government should be responsible for financially bailing out Air Canada, Canada's national carrier, while the majority of respondents (77%) said they should not be responsible. Those in support most frequently mentioned maintaining a national airline (29%) as their reason for backing subsidization. Other reasons included keeping Air Canada afloat and competitive (28%), and ensuring that no one airline retained a monopoly in the industry (5%).

When those respondents opposed to government subsidization were asked why they felt that way, a strong majority (76%) believed all private companies should be subject to the competitive market and be responsible for making themselves financially viable. Other reasons provided included other airlines not receiving subsidies (17%), that the cost of flying would be reduced by not subsidizing (3%), and that receiving government subsidies fosters inappropriate business practices (3%).

IS IT IMPORTANT FOR EDMONTON TO HAVE DIRECT FLIGHTS IN AND OUT OF THE CITY?



Eighty-five percent of respondents felt that it is important to have direct flights operating out of Edmonton, while 12 percent did not think that it was very important. Reasons respondents felt it is so important to have direct flights included the convenience of being able to travel from Edmonton to other locations without having to make stopovers (54%), and it is very important for business and the local economy that Edmonton have direct flights (31%). Other mentions included it being essential for Edmonton's image as the Capital City (14%), that the market in Edmonton is large enough to demand direct flights (13%), and that it is important to the tourism industry (12%). Those who do not feel it is important felt that way because stopovers are not an inconvenience to them (67%) and because they felt the city is not big enough to make direct flights economically viable (33%).

The *Poll Station* surveyed 100 City of Edmonton residents on the topic and, while the results of the research are not statistically reliable, they do provide a qualitative indication of what Edmontonians are thinking. ✓



Linda Banister is a certified management consultant and the owner of Banister Research & Consulting Inc., a full service provider of market research and program evaluation services. If you have a question you would like included in the

Edmontonians Poll, contact Linda at 780.451.4444 or e-mail at research@banister.ab.ca. For further information on the firm visit www.banister.ab.ca.