



THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA  
LA SOCIÉTÉ ROYALE D'ASTRONOMIE DU CANADA



February 16, 2018

The Honourable Marc Garneau  
Minister of Transport  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6  
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M. Garneau;

I read with interest your comments in the CBC article entitled “**Garneau orders officials to explore all options for reducing laser incidents involving planes**”

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/garneau-plane-lasers-1.4538520>

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC) has been very aware of the issues and concerns with respect to the use of green lasers and their impact on air safety since 2010. A Green Laser Safety Committee was formed and a policy on safe use of green lasers was announced in 2011.

This policy can be found on our web site. <https://rasc.ca/green-laser-pointer-usage>  
Information materials such as posters, presentations and brochures are made available here. These brochures on Green Laser safety have been printed and are handed out to the public by members of the 29 centres across Canada during public outreach events.

The safe use of green lasers on a clear night is invaluable when educating people on finding their way around the night sky. The thin, green beam of light seems to reach out and touch the star or constellation you are pointing out to enthusiastic students.

The RASC fully supports stiff fines and penalties for the misuse of green lasers, mandatory warning labels and the banning of lasers over a certain power level. We do not support the outright ban of what is a valuable education tool for astronomy educators.

We feel we act as a resource for the safe use of green lasers and applaud the Transport Ministry’s “Not-a-Bright-Idea” safety campaign. Early in 2017, we were contacted by the Air Line Pilots Association International (ALPA) and provided information to them on the safe use of green lasers and the policy the RASC has set up for educators.

We would be happy to provide further information upon request.

Yours sincerely,

Randy Attwood  
Executive Director