

The Airport Operators

Official publication of the Alberta Airports Management Association



2022



**Transport
Canada
changes to
aerodrome
regulations**

**Updated GRF
requires
thorough
understanding**

**Maximizing
revenues and
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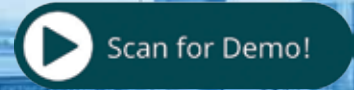
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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE ALBERTA AIRPORTS MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION WILLIAM STEWART, AAE

I didn't want to start this message off with a dark cloud of doom and gloom, so I'm going to redirect away from the hardships that we've all dealt with in the last year and instead focus on some positives that I see coming down the chute in the near future.

As we come out of this global pandemic and the impact that it has had, we are entering a brave new world in the airports business. Supply chain issues continue to cause grief, but has bred innovation with locally sourced 3D-printed parts and has reignited the comradery between airports in the sharing of spares. New airlines are launching and exploring new markets. As people dust off the restrictions that they've been living through for over two years now, they are ready to travel and I wouldn't be surprised to see drastic recovery faster than many experts expect.

Many smaller airports have continued along business as usual. When your traffic consists of Medevac and firefighting aircrafts, the pandemic has had less of an impact. However, these airports have not been immune, caught up in those pesky supply chain failures and the drastic rise in fuel and utilities costs. Finding efficiencies in everything that we do, from limiting sweeping operations to reduced hours of operations, helps us save where it makes sense without sacrificing the airport and the services that it provides.

With the elephant in the room addressed, I want to comment on the hard work that the directors here at the Alberta Airport Management Association (AAMA) have done over the last year. The AAMA has been working tirelessly to improve the provincial response that the threat of deer poses to airports in Alberta. Meetings with provincial

representatives, letters to ministers, and work with Transport Canada all move us closer to a provincial permit more in line with the rest of Western Canada. The AAMA has also been working towards an increase in funding from the province to the smallest of airports in Alberta. Many of these small airports exist primarily for the use of medevac and firefighting aircraft, both provincially operated, but provide no financial assistance beyond a pittance of a landing fee. This needs to change. If the province expects the infrastructure to be available and in top-notch condition, then the operational costs of these airports need to be considered.

It has been one heck of a year, full of challenges the likes of which I have never seen, but the future is certainly starting to look bright!

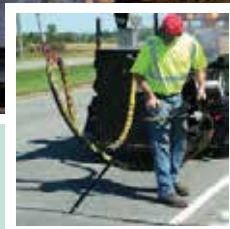


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
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TRANSPORT CANADA CHANGES TO AERODROME REGULATIONS



By Ed McDonald

The new aerodrome standards are virtually identical to those used at major international airports.

Registered aerodromes in Canada form a vital and often overlooked part of Canada's transportation infrastructure. While the certified airports such as Toronto (Pearson), Vancouver International, and others get most of the attention, registered aerodromes serve small communities and resource companies as a vital social, economic, and medical link to the rest of Canada.

Transport Canada is proposing changes to the obstacle standards to the registered aerodromes that will adversely affect their all-weather access. This is being done without a proper risk assessment (to understand if there is indeed a risk), impact analysis (to understand the impact to these aerodromes and communities), nor any meaningful industry consultation (to understand what the owners and the operators of these facilities think of the changes).

Instrument flight procedures (approaches and departures) allow aircraft to land and depart from airports and aerodromes

when the weather conditions (ceiling and visibility) are less than Visual Flight Rules (VFR) minimum weather requirements. Until recently, instrument flight procedures required a ground-based navigation aid; today, satellite-based navigation aids such as GPS are available at no cost. The only cost now is the professionally designed instrument flight procedures.

Satellite-based navigation has allowed aerodromes, particularly those operated by small communities, to have all-weather access identical to certified airports. Medical evacuation flights and other time-critical missions are no longer as sensitive to the weather, and aircraft can safely access the aerodrome in virtually all-weather conditions.

The effectiveness of instrument flight procedures is determined by how low an aircraft can descend during an instrument approach before the pilot must visually acquire the landing environment. The lower the approach limits (or minimums), the lower the aircraft can go and the higher the probability of a successful approach

and landing. The approach minimums are determined by the aerodrome status and the instrument procedure design.

Transport Canada proposed changes to the standards defining the aerodrome status (AC 301-001) that would cause approach limits to increase, reducing the all-weather access. A previous weather analysis done by JetPro at a Prairie aerodrome demonstrated a reduction of approximately four per cent or 18 days per year; a recent study of aerodromes in the Maritimes reveals a 10 per cent reduction in aerodrome access, or 36 days per year. That may not sound like much, but to a person in an ambulance requiring a medevac flight, that is a particularly important day.

The new aerodrome standards are virtually identical to those used at major international airports. While these airports serve Boeing 747's and Airbus A380's, registered aerodromes typically see eight-seat King Air's (a popular medevac aircraft). Applying major airport standards to small, community, and other registered



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Aerodromes were developed with fuel tanks, hangars, roads, etc. in good faith based upon the previous aerodrome standards.

aerodromes makes no sense whatsoever. There has never been an accident or incident attributed to the current aerodrome standards.

Aerodromes were developed with fuel tanks, hangars, roads, etc. in good faith based upon the previous aerodrome standards. In many cases, these same obstacles are violating the new obstacle standards and the cost to move or remove them is prohibitive. It is interesting to note that when Transport Canada changed its obstacle standards for certified airports, airports were able to grandfather their status to the previous standard. That same courtesy has not been extended to registered aerodromes.

The harsh truth is that reduced all-weather access to aerodromes is going to cost lives; people do not choose when to have car accidents, heart attacks, complicated child delivery, etc., necessitating a time-critical medical evacuation. And if the medevac aircraft cannot execute an instrument approach and landing because the instrument approach limits have been increased due to the changes by Transport Canada, that casualty will not be able to get to the major treatment facility.

There is also an economic cost to these changes. Resource companies operate aerodromes to support their operations. If crew changes cannot occur because the weather is below the (new) landing limits,

significant costs are incurred from wages, aircraft diversions, etc. As well, civil works to make the aerodromes comply with the new standards would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars or more, all to recoup what currently exists.

What Transport Canada is proposing is a classic case of a solution in search of a problem. There is no demonstrable safety issue, applying major airport standards to small aerodromes is ill-conceived, and denying the grandfathering of existing aerodrome status is unreasonable given the costs of compliance.

Canadians are going to suffer the consequences of this action. These changes are guaranteed to cost lives as medevac flights can no longer access these aerodromes during poor weather conditions – this is an incalculable cost; an economic price will also be paid too. Government should work in the interests of Canadians; however, this is not the case – new rules impairing the operation of aircraft to aerodromes is an ill-conceived regulatory change with no safety justification whatsoever.

Ed McDonald is a professional aviator, professional engineer, and founder of JetPro. JetPro is an engineering firm specializing in working with airports and aerodromes across Canada providing satellite-based instrument flight procedures, aerodrome surveying/ LIDAR, and obstacle management. Visit them online at www.jetpro.ca. ✈



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UPDATED GRF REQUIRES THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING

Transport Canada and NAV CANADA implemented the GRF in August 2021. A revised version then followed in November 2021.

The new Global Report Format system is expected to have massive positive implications for airport operations

By Lisa Kopochinski

In an effort to improve aviation safety, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) created a Global Reporting Format (GRF) several years ago, which enables a harmonized assessment and reporting system that provides pilots and their flight crew with a more objective assessment of runway surface conditions—particularly with respect to take-off and landing performance.

While the original launch date had been set for November 2020, ICAO was forced to change course and postpone its applicability to the following year due to:

- Technical development challenges, which have resulted in delays;
- Stakeholder feedback, which indicated that additional time was needed, and;

- The recent worldwide situation related to COVID-19, which caused an unprecedented stress on government and stakeholder resources.

Transport Canada and NAV CANADA implemented the GRF in August 2021. A revised version then followed in November 2021.

Terry McDonald, a senior equipment operator for the City of Lloydminster Airport, says for airport operators worldwide, the new GRF format simplifies reporting for pilots in many ways.

“If everyone is trained properly, the new GRF should reduce confusion. The NAV CANADA NOTAM Entry System is more user-friendly for mobile devices, which has helped increase how often we update the

runway condition,” says McDonald. “I like the idea of reducing confusion caused by interpretation. The sections that include information on clearing in progress or conditions rapidly changing are also beneficial.”

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Alberta Airport Management Association (AAMA) Chair William Stewart says when looking at the new system, it is vital to consider what part of the regulation applies to your specific airport. For example, will you be required to report in thirds, or issue a runway condition code? Or, can you continue to report full length and ignore the new runway condition assessment matrix?

“The answer will depend on a number of

factors and is airport specific, so before you head down the rabbit hole that is GRF, give the advisory circular and associated regulations a careful read," says Stewart.

While the GRF is intended for airports that support aircraft/airlines and are equipped to utilize the Runway Condition Code, many smaller airports do not support such services due to location or runway size.

"Reporting in thirds may only prove to be necessary under extenuating circumstances," says McDonald. "For most small airports in Alberta, there is minimal impact."

GRF brings with it many considerations for airport operators. Essentially, the new rule dictates anything over 25 per cent coverage is equal to 100 per cent coverage, which will change how airports manage their snow removal. Reducing the cleared width of a runway may improve the Runway Condition Code to an acceptable level. The ability to upgrade certain contaminant codes based on friction readings is another tool for the toolbox. These tricks of the trade will continue to develop as implementation matures and airports gain hands-on experience.

Stewart says with the simplification of a complete runway report to a number ranging from zero to six, one would expect that some of the nuance included in a typical runway condition report may be lost. This would be correct as the industry has spoken and the desire for a go- or no-go number is clear.

"By eliminating the interpretation of the report, decisions can be made instantly, reducing cockpit workload during flight and eliminating the desire to use a runway despite poor conditions."

REQUIRED TRAINING FOR UPDATED VERSION

To ensure a thorough understanding for this updated version, classroom training is required based on the Advisory Circular (AC) 300-005. A hands-on element is also

required and is site specific for reporting in thirds with the equipment and length of runway.

For aircrafts equipped with avionics to process the GRF code, the software will make the decision based on the aircraft's load and capabilities. Otherwise, the airline will decide based on the friction rating.

With the new GRF, NOTAMs only allow the report to be out for the airport's published hours of operation. The report should be viewed as a snapshot of the conditions at the time of observation to give pilots information for after hours.

"Pilots have complained about not being able to find a previous report to get an idea of what the runway may look like," says McDonald.

PROS AND CONS

As with anything, there are pros and cons, and the new Global Reporting Format is no different. For example, some of the

contaminant descriptions and depths options have been removed. These would give pilots a more accurate description of the runway condition, such as ice patches. In attempting to reduce the complexity of the reporting, it has removed some of the effectiveness.

"In many cases, we have noted that the pilots and dispatcher have not been trained and do not understand the GRF," explains McDonald. "A lack of training, either because of COVID or unveiling the GRF format too quickly, is likely the reason for this."

In the end, the Global Report Format is another new normal that airport operators must accept, adapt to, and embrace. As long as airports are ready with suitable training and an open mind, GRF will become as entrenched in the airport world as current runway condition reporting processes.

"Who knows, airports might even like it!" adds Stewart. ✈

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A PRICED DILEMMA

A look at how the lack of qualified airport personnel is affecting the Alberta aviation industry

By Shayna Wiwierski

The Wetaskiwin Regional Airport, located 60 kilometres south of Edmonton, is a Transport Canada Certified airport, but they currently do not offer any scheduled passenger services, which is the number-one reason for being a certified airport.

Although COVID-19 cases have dropped and many industries are getting back to normal, the airline industry is still feeling the effects of the past two years of the pandemic.

According to Statistics Canada, operating revenue earned by Canadian air carriers in 2020 fell to \$12.2 billion, less than half (41.4 per cent) of the number reported in 2019. Like most industries during the pandemic, total employment fell by nearly one third with voluntary furloughs and layoffs.

The Wetaskiwin Regional Airport, located 60 kilometres south of Edmonton, is a Transport Canada Certified airport, but they currently do not offer any scheduled passenger services, which is the number-one reason for being a certified airport. We spoke with Wendy McArthur, who is the airport management coordinator for the City of Wetaskiwin's Airport Operations department, on the lack of qualified aviation industry personnel and how it's affecting Alberta and the country's regional airports.

TELL ME ABOUT THE STATE OF THE INDUSTRY IN TERMS OF QUALIFIED AVIATION PERSONNEL.

Wendy McArthur (WM): We are in a shortage of qualified aviation personnel almost across the board. There's a pilot shortage, not only in Canada, but globally. There is a shortage of certified aircraft mechanics and other qualified personnel. We are slowly getting some more management, but there's a shortage there as well.

Most of the people in management positions and sitting in the captain's seat are at the age of retirement, and with the pandemic, a lot elected to start their retirement early rather than return to work for a short time, adding to the need for qualified personnel to replace them. The high cost of training and education in the aviation industry, coupled with a lack of awareness of resources and funding sources for students, and the growing number of industry professionals reaching the age of retirement all contribute to increasing personnel shortages.

TELL ME ABOUT THE WETASKIWIN AIRPORT.

WM: Before COVID, we had about 18,000 aircraft movements a year, growing at approximately six per cent a year; so, we are fairly busy for a small- to medium-sized general aviation airport. We have a variety of fixed-base operators, including a flight school, aerial application, aircraft avionics, maintenance and repair, aircraft storage space or hangar rentals, and development opportunities for business or privately-owned hangars at the airport. With the range

The Wetaskiwin Regional Airport, located 60 kilometres south of Edmonton, is a Transport Canada Certified airport, but they currently do not offer any scheduled passenger services, which is the number-one reason for being a certified airport.

Before COVID, the Wetaskiwin Regional Airport had about 18,000 aircraft movements a year, growing at approximately six per cent a year.



of services available, we tend to see a variety of aircraft types using the airport year-round. So, it can be quite busy; especially during the nice weather, where almost every pilot wants to take advantage of getting some flying time in.

When I came to Wetaskiwin in 2018, the City saw the value of the airport to the community and had recognized the need for oversight of the airport's operations by someone with aviation industry qualifications. Through no fault of the City, the airport was – for lack of a better word – in very poor condition. Many community airports previously operated by Transport Canada were given to the municipalities back in the '80s, and over the years, financial support for their operation from the federal government dwindled. This has left municipalities with already limited funds, paying for the costs of their community airport's upkeep and maintenance. The smaller communities don't usually have an interest from airlines to provide passenger services, unless remotely located, creating a necessity, and therefore don't have many sources of revenue to offset the operating costs. The Catch 22 with this is to qualify for federal grant funding for projects like repairing runway asphalt or replacing expensive maintenance equipment, but the airport must have a scheduled passenger service. These airports charge landing and other fees to the aircraft for the use of the airport facilities as a source of revenue to offset the costs of the airport's operating and maintenance.

Flight schools and other aviation training facilities that are the businesses that provide training in the industry tend to have low profit margins, so they look to operate out of these smaller airports because they can actually afford the operating costs. Ensuring they aren't pricing themselves out of the market for providing educational services unfortunately leaves the schools with choices of airports that have a lack of winter maintenance or a lack of infrastructure funding to be able to repair their facilities. The lack of funding and revenue sources for these airports puts the airports and the municipalities that operate them in a position where there just isn't the money to maintain the airports without taking away from other community services. It's unfortunate that these communities are put in a position where they just can't afford to maintain their airports to safety standards, and industry education and training facilities can't afford to operate out of those airports which can afford the maintenance. The lack of funding ends up creating an environment where there are unsafe conditions at the airports where new pilots are learning how to fly, and further contributing to the industry shortages in qualified personnel.

WHAT IS THE SITUATION LIKE AT YOUR AIRPORT?

WM: My airport is a Transport Canada Certified airport, but we don't have scheduled passenger service, which is the number-one reason for being a certified airport. We are certified because we are in the built-up area of a town or city, so we have all the regulatory requirements of airports like Edmonton International, but we don't have any of the funding resources like charging airlines or other user fees to offset our operating costs.

We have very limited grant funding sources since we don't have scheduled passenger service, one of the eligibility requirements for almost all federal grants. We did qualify for one provincial grant funding source, which has very limited scope of qualifying projects and limited funds available.

The airport did receive Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program (STIP) grant funding under their Community Airports Program, which allowed for the repaving of the runway and upgrades to the airfield lighting system last summer, through providing 75 per cent of the project costs. These two projects greatly improved the operating safety of the airport, however, without the City's contribution of approximately \$575,000 towards the paving project and another \$70,000 towards the lighting, we wouldn't have been able to complete these projects. Unfortunately, we've utilized all the sources of grant funding the airport is eligible for; so other airport facilities repairs needed will need to be funded solely by the City. These costs, even with access to grant funding, unfortunately are costs that many municipalities just can't afford.

WHAT DO YOU THINK COULD BE DONE TO RECTIFY THIS SITUATION?

WM: I think we need to look at more funding opportunities from the federal government. The grant funding eligibility criteria really needs to be reviewed to allow for airports who provide a training facility to qualify for funding. The current grant criteria is designed to help provide assistance to communities to grow the resource of their airport, but focuses on passenger service flights for the communities. It fails to recognize the connection between the smaller airports close to larger cities as being the resource utilized to train new pilots, which brings a lot of economic growth and benefits to the surrounding communities, something even more important with the industry-wide pilot shortage. ✈



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ALBERTA AIR AMBULANCE, MAKING IT WORK IN RURAL ALBERTA

The Alberta Air Ambulance aircraft transports critical care and scheduled, non-urgent transports from geographically-distanced communities to regional or tertiary care hospitals within the province of Alberta.

Providing timely and appropriate medical care to patients in need has always been the role of Alberta's air ambulance service. Alberta Health Services (AHS) Emergency Medical Service (EMS) program moves approximately 7,500 patients a year within the province of Alberta, and without the support and continued communication with our many partners in care, this would not be possible.

Through a centralized dispatch system, the Alberta Air Ambulance aircraft transports critical care and scheduled, non-urgent transports from geographically-distanced communities to regional or tertiary care hospitals within the province of Alberta. Supplementing rural ground EMS, they move the right patient to the right care, using the right resource.

Alberta has a long history of offering high-quality fixed-wing air ambulance services

to patients who need care. In the 1970's, air ambulance was offered in an ad-hoc fashion, usually staffed on an as-needed basis with local paramedics and nurses. In the 1990's, the air ambulance program was formalized through contracts managed by Alberta Health. In 2009, responsibility for EMS services, including air ambulance, was transferred to Alberta Health Services. This resulted in the creation of the AHS Air Ambulance program by 2010. In 2017, 10-year contracts were formalized for the continuation of air ambulance services in Alberta.

Operating 10 King Air 200/250 series aircrafts and 1 King Air 350, the AHS Air Ambulance program provides regional coverage of air ambulance services based in High Level, Fort Vermillion, Slave Lake, Lac La Biche, Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, Peace River, Edmonton, Calgary, and Medicine Hat. The twin-engine aircraft are staffed with two Advanced Care AMC (air medical crew) and two pilots.

A part of the success of the program is the community support AHS receives.

The vast geography of Northern Alberta poses access challenges for critical patients requiring tertiary care, and this can be exacerbated during periods of inclement weather. Communities served by AHS Air



Alberta has a long history of offering high-quality fixed-wing air ambulance services to patients who need care. Seen here is a fire evacuation in La Crete.



Operating 10 King Air 200/250 series aircrafts and 1 King Air 350, the AHS Air Ambulance program provides regional coverage of air ambulance services based in many Alberta communities.

All of Alberta's fixed-wing air ambulance aircraft have the capability to fly using Instrument flight rules, including airport GPS approach and departure systems.

Ambulance have long acknowledged the importance of airport maintenance and infrastructure in rural communities.

All of Alberta's fixed-wing air ambulance aircraft have the capability to fly using Instrument flight rules, including airport GPS approach and departure systems. However, timely airport/runway maintenance and reporting, and instrument landing/departing infrastructure available can impact the ability of air ambulance planes to access communities. Limited infrastructure or limited winter maintenance can mean a delay in patient transport.

How can airport operators help?

1. Complete timely and accurate NOTAMS for runway conditions.

- Pilots access this information to assess the likelihood of completing a successful trip. Inaccurate, out of date, or absent information can increase the safety risk to landing aircraft or cause delays or trip cancellations.

2. Complete timely snow/ice clearing if possible.

- Sometimes runways are unavailable for days because they are not cleared, putting additional burden on ground EMS resources. If clearing is not possible, timely notification then becomes important.

3. Inoperable airport infrastructure such as

lighting systems can keep aircraft from landing at night or in reduced visibility operations especially relevant in the winter months.

- While timely fixes are not always possible, notification then becomes important.

4. Keep aviation publications, such as the *Canadian Flight Supplement*, up to date with the airport operator contacts.

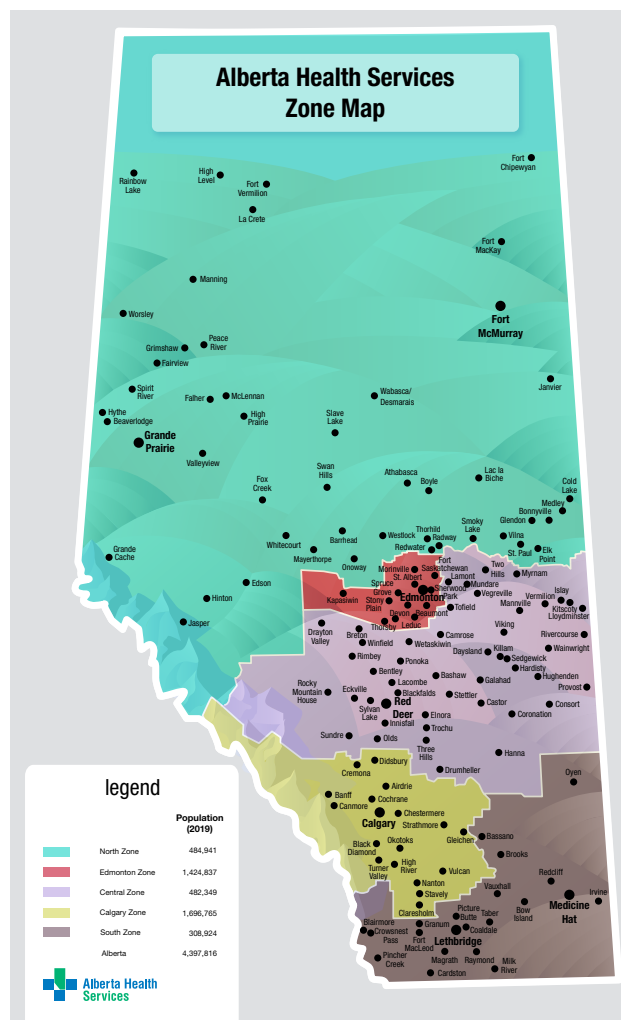
- Delays can also occur when pilots cannot reach airport operators to verify runway conditions.

5. Finally, reach out through the Alberta Airports Management Association (AAMA) to the air ambulance team.

- The Air Ambulance program will work collaboratively with communities to identify access challenges.

- Our goal is to give the

pilots as much information and support so that they can complete safe, timely, and successful transports from rural Alberta. ✈️





UNGULATE CONTROL: WILDLIFE ON THE RUNWAY

The first line of defense with wildlife on runways is always nonlethal for these three Alberta airports

A one-way gate at the Whitecourt Airport helps protect ungulates from danger on the runway and airfield. Photo courtesy of Whitecourt CYZU Airport.

By Lisa Kopochinski

Few can dispute that wildlife should be protected as much as possible. When strong efforts are taken to protect animals and birds in their natural habitat, this shows us the beauty this planet has to offer. However, efforts to protect birds and ungulates (mammals with hooves) can be challenging, especially when it comes to airport runways and airfields.

“The threat of wildlife to aircraft is significant that Transport Canada has mandated a significant program and recurring training for all certified airports in Canada,” explains William Stewart, chair of the Alberta Airports Management Association (AAMA). “By far the best way to deal with wildlife at an airport is through habitat modification. By managing attractants such as food and water, nesting locations, and by erecting a suitable wildlife fence, airports may be able to drastically reduce wildlife incursions.”

Unfortunately, as much as airport staff strive to keep wildlife off an airfield, there will inevitably be some animals that are uncooperative. To help combat this, there are numerous reactive options for wildlife incursions, including the use of pyrotechnics, high-pressure water, non-lethal projectiles (paintballs), herding of animals utilizing vehicles out of fence gates and, unfortunately as

a last resort, destruction of the animal—if allowed through proper permitting.

Terry McDonald is a senior equipment operator for the City of Lloydminster Airport. He says the protocol for dealing with wildlife on their runway includes deterrents such as whizzbangs and cannons.

“Proactively, we track wildlife trends and try to eliminate habitats and conditions that attract wildlife,” says McDonald. “Anything we are unable to remove safely, we call the conservation officer to assist with.”

During the summer months, birds are often on the runway or in the runway protected area, while in fall and spring, gulls often warm themselves on the pavement.

“Coyotes and other nocturnal mammals have left scat on the runway, but are seldom seen,” McDonald adds. “Our wildlife fence does keep out most ungulate or bigger mammals. Gophers and badgers are also a constant problem for our grass runway during spring and summer.”

At the Whitecourt Airport (CYZU), there is a fence that completely

At the Whitecourt (CYZU) Airport main entrance, a cattle gate helps prevent any ungulates from entering. Photo courtesy of Whitecourt CYZU Airport.

encompasses the property. At the main entrance is a cattle gate that helps prevent any ungulates from entering.

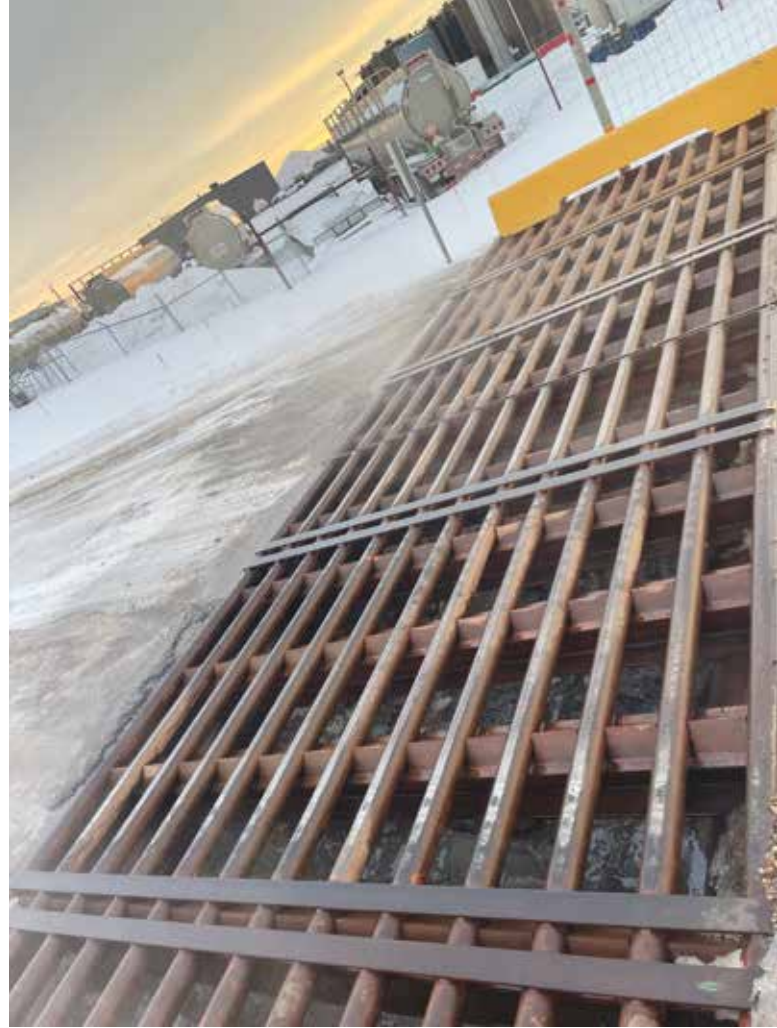
“We do weekly/biweekly fence inspections to ensure there are no issues with the perimeter fence,” says Steve Hollett, manager of environmental services/airport manager at CYZU Airport. “In the springtime— because of the open fields inside the property—we have issues with geese that land and rest before moving on.”

Spring, summer, and fall are the times when there are issues with ungulates. The fall, which is rutting season, is also when ungulates tend to be on the move the most. Additionally, during hunting season in the fall, they look for a safe place to be. Spring is also a busy time with the fresh growth of vegetation and the females looking for a safe place to raise their young.

During the winter, Hollett and his team will push ungulates away from the runway often with the use of pyrotechnics and vehicles. This tends to work better with elk and moose rather than deer.

LETHAL CONTROL AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

When it comes to the permitting process for the lethal control of mammals, this falls under the jurisdiction of provincial governments.



The Vermilion Airport

spanning 3,378 feet, has many attractive features for the aviation and business community. Being located within town limits and with commercial and recreational real estate available on the field, the Town of Vermilion offers a great place for affordable yet convenient aviation related business.



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“We have documented, through our SMS, many occasions where our local Fish and Wildlife have not been willing to remove the deer. It has been a fight to get permits to eliminate deer that have been reported on our runway causing a hazard to aircraft,” says McDonald. “There has been little to no effort to address concerns, and the conservation officer is often unavailable to react to hazards in a timely manner.”

For example, the appropriate agencies in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia will issue destruction permits to airports with various administrative controls, such as the reporting and surrendering of the destroyed animal meat to the local food bank.

In Alberta, the Ministry of Environment has stated that it will not be issuing destruction permits for deer or any other ungulates. When pressed about the matter, Stewart says the response from the minister’s office has been to build a wildlife fence—a step that most airports have already completed.

“Unfortunately, contractors can leave fence gates open or, in the case of one airport, a traffic accident can damage the fence, which will allow animals in. This creates another issue as removing the animals stuck inside the fence using non-lethal means is not always attainable,” says Stewart. “I have personally spent days trying to herd a group of deer off of an airfield.”

While airports have called Alberta Fish and Wildlife for assistance regarding these animals, the response time can be slow. That is, days rather than hours. So, assistance with deer near a runway three days after the sighting isn’t especially helpful.

“While the destruction of an animal should never be taken lightly, I feel that we must acknowledge that there are times in an airport setting where actions must be taken to prevent possible injury or loss of life,” Stewart adds. “Unfortunately, the Government of Alberta has completely shut that discussion down.”

McDonald says at the Lloydminster Airport, there have been incidents of the fence being breached, due to motor vehicle incidents which, in turn, has allowed deer to enter the compound.

“We have documented, through our SMS, many occasions where our local Fish and Wildlife have not been willing to remove the deer. It has been a fight to get permits to eliminate deer that have been reported on our runway causing a hazard to aircraft,” says McDonald. “There has been little to no effort to address concerns, and the conservation officer is often unavailable to react to hazards in a timely manner.”

Hollett says when it comes to migratory game birds, the federal government allows for the ability to deal with them via a kill permit. However, all efforts are made first to scare them away from the area before resorting to destroying any birds.

“However, the provincial government up to this point doesn’t want to help by giving us the ability to deal with problem ungulates. I guess we will have to wait and see when there is an incident involving an ungulate and an aircraft [to see if] the provincial government will step up and take responsibility for the incident,” says Hollett. “At some airports during hunting season, they can utilize hunters with tags to assist by shooting ungulates legally and filling their tags.”

WHAT’S THE NEXT STEP?

As for what needs to happen next to better handle this issue, Stewart would like to see the Alberta Ministry of Environment and Alberta Ministry of Transportation sit down with the AAMA and come to an agreement on a framework that allows Alberta airports to acquire a destruction permit for deer and other ungulates, comparable to the other western provinces.

“The AAMA has reached out to the Ministry of Environment multiple times regarding this issue and the threat that it poses,” says Stewart. “I implore the Government of Alberta to protect the traveling public by following all of the other provinces in western Canada and allowing airport operators to destroy a deer on the rare occasion where another option cannot be found.”

McDonald agrees and adds that the first line of defense with wildlife is always non-lethal. However, he acknowledges that when lives and property are at risk, a lethal response is required.

“The government needs to address this before there is an incident that results in an incursion causing casualties. Other provinces have set precedents in providing kill permits to airports to appropriately deal with wildlife management,” says McDonald. “It is very difficult for smaller airports to get funding for fencing and other non-lethal deterrents. Without these in place, it is difficult to ensure public safety.”

Hollett adds that the CYZU airport has spent a great deal of time and money logging all large areas of forest inside the fence to make it less attractive to wildlife.

“The airports in Alberta need to be given the tools to deal with troubled wildlife to provide a safe environment for aircraft,” says Hollett. “It’s very frustrating to put so many resources into reducing the risk of wildlife interaction and not getting the support from the provincial government.” ✈



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MAXIMIZING REVENUES AND OBTAINING AIRPORT INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

By Philip Van Manen, M.Sc., AAP, IAP

Medevac aircraft (Beech King Air) at Lac La Biche Airport (YLB).

The operation and development of local and regional airport facilities comes with a hefty toll and there is a significant infrastructure funding gap for Alberta airport operators. The cost of maintaining and operating an airport is significant; expenses are typically borne by a municipality or airport commission. Revenues at general aviation airports are limited; airports with scheduled passenger traffic typically have improved revenue streams and have access to significant funding from Transport Canada ACAP (Airport Capital Assistance Program).

Community airport operators are responsible for maintaining safe, effective aviation facilities which include oversight by airport administration and maintenance staff. The questions on operators' minds are how can we create revenues that support airport maintenance while building a capital fund for long-term infrastructure rehabilitation, and how can operators close this funding gap while developing the airport in response to market demands in a sustainable manner?

Some airport operators are currently navigating through these issues. Airport managers are finding ways to develop new revenue streams by maintaining a constant pursuit of stable, long-term revenues in the form of airport tenants – both aviation and non-aviation businesses. Successful operators often have a strategic land use plan or airport master plan to guide the long-term development of the airport in an economical and phased approach, and for which capital estimates can be budgeted.

Recently the Lac La Biche Airport (YLB) has become a leader in airport land development in a manner that maximizes their available land assets. Stantec assisted Lac La Biche to prepare an airport master plan in 2021 and they have since updated their runway approach lighting, removed obstacles from their OLS (obstacle limitation surfaces), and developed new lease lots for both aviation and non-aviation commercial uses. The community has been strategic in their view to protect their limited land resources by designating 'highest and best' use for each section of

airport property. The airport master plan ensures the operational needs of users are protected over the long-term.

Municipal and regional airport operators may want to consider how they can support broader economic initiatives, such as job creation, by working with their local economic development managers. Successful provincial funding applications offset the community's cost for undertaking consulting services and engineering designs for airport infrastructure rehabilitation and/or expansion projects. In addition to being a driver for the local economy, airports enable just-in-time cargo shipments and facilitate the critical and timely movement of patients on medevac flights that occur 24/7 at any time of the year.

Landing fees and user charges alone barely cover airport maintenance and operations costs. Other revenues are required and are generally found in the form of land leases, for both aviation users (i.e. hangars and aeroplanes) and non-aviation uses (i.e.



Runway 11 at YLB.



Air Canada Jazz DH-8-300 at West Kootenay Regional Airport, Castlegar, B.C. (CYCG).

highway commercial business). Long-term land leases to large, corporate entities may be preferable to selling off land assets which may not support the airport's master planned development strategy once outside of the community's control.

Our provincial government realizes the value of airports to communities. The Alberta Government's Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program (STIP), announced in 2020, provides millions in funding to municipalities

through four streams, one of which is the Community Airport Program (CAP). This program provides funding of up to 75 per cent of the cost of projects involving the rehabilitation and improvement of community-owned, public use airports. The provision of a current airport master plan supports infrastructure funding provided by the STIP/CAP program. Airport managers must collaborate with municipal leaders and CAOs to take advantage of this funding program for potential

implementation in 2023. The deadline for applications is November 30th for funding in the following year.

The result of your good work to create sustainable airport revenues that offset the cost of daily operations must continue to be supported by reliable, long-term infrastructure funding. This is essential to maintain the safe operation of our airports, which in turn support a variety of general aviation operations. ✈



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EXPLORE CYZU WHITCOURT AIRPORT



The Whitecourt Airport is located six kilometres southwest of the Town of Whitecourt, along Highway 32.

Surrounded by the natural beauty of Woodlands County, you will find the Whitecourt Airport (CYZU) buzzing with activity.

The certified, all-season airport is located six kilometres southwest of the Town of Whitecourt, along Highway 32. CYZU is owned and operated by Woodlands County and services the surrounding areas with NAV CANADA supporting flight services from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The 5,797-foot runway supports a variety of aircrafts; from military C130 Hercules to Pipistrel Virus, to flights from local energy and forestry companies and recreational flyers supported by the local chapter of the Canadian Operators and Pilots Association (COPA).

Supporting both fixed and rotary wing operations, the airport is home to over a dozen businesses and acts as a base for Alberta Agriculture and Forestry's wildfire

suppression in the area. It also supports essential STARS and AHS air ambulance connectivity for all residents of the region.

Several helicopter operations, such as flight training services and site, operate out of the airport. CYZU is a great place for aspiring helicopter pilots as the runways and area is clear and routinely maintained by dedicated staff throughout the year.

Helicopter maintenance and emergency repair services are available on-site by contacting Northwest Helicopters. Rotaiva Aircraft Services Ltd. offers AV gas and Jet Fuel, Monday to Friday and has call-out services on Saturdays and Sundays, making it a convenient stop for those looking to travel further north. Serviced lots are available for lease on airport grounds and near the runway.

National provides vehicle rental services, and free day-use parking is available at the airport year-round for visitors wanting to travel to their next destination or explore the natural recreation spots in the region as soon as they touch down. Short-term and long-term tie down spaces are available along with aircraft overnight locations.



Supporting both fixed and rotary wing operations, the airport is home to over a dozen businesses and acts as a base for Alberta Agriculture and Forestry's wildfire suppression in the area.



Once you land, feel free to experience the many outdoor experiences in Woodlands County while staying close to modern comforts.

A visitor rest area is available inside the terminal.

Once you land, feel free to experience the many outdoor experiences while staying close to modern comforts. During the summer, visitors enjoy local fishing and hiking spots in many of Woodlands County's parks and lakes, such as Schuman Lake and Hard Luck Canyon, or hit the links

at the nearby Whitecourt Golf & Country Club. In the winter, the surrounding region is home to the Golden Triangle Trail providing snowmobilers with 350 kilometres of trails to explore during the sledding season.

As one of the 10 busiest airports in Alberta, CYZU supports anyone looking to get out into the wild or call it home. With so

much going on and so much to explore, be sure to make CYZU your next stop. Also, keep a close eye on the airport as exciting opportunities prepare for takeoff soon.

For more information, visit the county's website or contact the Whitecourt airport manager. You can visit them online at www.woodlands.ab.ca or give them a call at 780-779-9948. ✈

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You're probably familiar with the expression, "Do it right the first time". When it comes to road repairs, this phrase has never been truer. With the expenses of crews, supplies, and closing down traffic, you can't afford to have to do the same job twice, and this is where W.R. Meadows Road Repair asphalt can help. W. R. Meadows' cold asphalt provides a permanent solution for your repair job, leaving you with the confidence of knowing you've done the job right the first time. With traditional repair solutions, temporary cold mix asphalt patches are put into place with the knowledge that it is only a matter of time until the repair deteriorates and requires new fill. When hot-mix asphalt is brought in to provide a permanent repair, a combination of limitations and expenses continues to make the repair process more and more inefficient. Factor in the waste of excess materials, and the practicality of such a repair

solution soon disappears.

W.R. Meadows Road Repair asphalt revolutionizes the pothole repair process by combining the ease of cold-mix asphalt and the permanence of hot-mix asphalt. When W.R. Meadows Road Repair cold asphalt is used the first time, in any condition, it is guaranteed to be instantly ready for traffic.

A patching solution that works the first time means a dramatic reduction in cost, and in turn, a dramatic increase in efficiency.

Less machinery, less labour, and less disruption to traffic makes W.R. Meadows Road Repair cold asphalt the ideal solution to any pothole repair. This means getting more done with less, so that the money and time that would normally be spent on revisiting the same sites over and over again can instead be used for new repairs. It only makes sense to do the job right the first time, and since W.R. Meadows Road Repair cold mix brings you the best of both hot-mix and cold-mix repairs, there's no reason to ever have to repair a pothole twice again. ↗





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CAMROSE AIRPORT: FLY IN TO FIRST-CLASS DINING, SHOPPING, AND ENTERTAINMENT!

The Camrose Airport has seen a recent increase in hangar builds at the airport, but still has some space available with paved taxiway access.

The Camrose Airport (CEQ3) is a surprising hub of activity in the City of Camrose. An hour's drive from Edmonton and a short flight to the Edmonton International Airport, this community-owned airport is a convenient landing spot for visitors to the region.

This airport has over 4,500 feet of paved runway and parallel taxiway access which supports a range of aircraft, from privately owned pleasure crafts to corporate jets and medical flights. Many industry owners in the community utilize the airport for efficient access to their facilities in the city of Camrose.

The airport is a gateway to the vibrant city of Camrose. Travelers come through the airport for small conferences, sport and recreational events, and of course, to the Big Valley Jamboree, North America's longest-running country music festival.

The Camrose Airport has seen a recent increase in hangar builds at the airport, but still has some space available with paved taxiway access. The city offers long-term, secure lot leases with easy access to municipal services.

Once pilots have landed in the city, they have access to both taxi and rental car



The Camrose Airport has over 4,500 feet of paved runway and parallel taxiway access which supports a range of aircraft.

service. Camrose boasts incredible natural recreation opportunities, including 25 kilometres of maintained walking trails, groomed cross-country ski trails, and a major recreation complex.

Many visitors choose to walk the historic downtown and visit the unique boutique shops, or fly in to attend first-rate entertainment at the Joanne and Peter Lougheed or Bailey Theatres. It is also home to the Camrose Flying Club (COPA Flight #137), the host of one of the longest-running (since 1955) annual fly-in breakfasts in the province of Alberta, with

an annual attendance of between 2,000 and 3,000 people.

The airport is easy to access year-round with NDB and WAAS approaches currently available, a 24-hour self-serve fuel station at competitive prices, and with full access to a newly renovated air terminal building, washrooms and pilot's lounge. Located in an aviation-friendly community, and recipient of the Certified General Aviation Friendly designation by the Canadian Owners & Pilots Association (COPA), this professionally owned and operated airport is a fly-in favourite in Central Alberta. ✈

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Western Asphalt has invested in the latest technology to manufacture the highest-quality asphalt emulsions available in today's market. With emulsion terminals strategically located in Brandon, Man. and Bruderheim, Alta., our team is able to supply all of Western Canada's asphalt emulsion needs.

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We also offer custom-tailored educational seminars. We will come to your airport and assess the current state of your runway/taxiways and develop an individualized maintenance schedule and corrective actions.

West-Can has worked on military, municipal, private, and international airports. We have the team in place to execute any size of job, from removing entire runways and returning them to greenfield, to full-width preservation of the runway and taxiways.

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We also offer do-it-yourself pavement preservation products since not all jobs require an outsourced contractor. Western Asphalt supplies pavement preservation products directly to airport agencies such as:

Cold pour crack sealant: We can provide the material along with application tools necessary for self-application. Cold pour crack sealant can fill cracks up to half an inch in width. It is not a heated product and is very easy to apply. It is sold in either pails (20 litres) or totes (1,000 litres). We will provide volume estimates with an order.

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West-Can has worked on military, municipal, private, and international airports.



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COME EXPLORE AT THE EDSON AIRPORT

The Edson Airport boasts a 6,000-foot runway, certified 3C NP, which is maintained to a high-standard year-round.

The Town of Edson Airport continues to boom. With more and more traffic each year, and scheduled public events, the airport is quickly becoming a hub of activity in the community.

There are plenty of exciting opportunities to explore with the airport being so close to the mountains and the City of Edmonton.

Edson, Alta. is located 200 kilometres west of Edmonton and 165 kilometres from the municipality of Jasper within Jasper National Park. The region is rich in tourism opportunities, including mountain bike parks, hiking, fishing, rafting, culture tourism, and much more.

The Edson Airport is a busy place, but crews are more than up to the task. Plenty of private charter passenger aircrafts are making use of the facility, helicopter operators, and flights servicing local industry

for crew moves. There's a large forestry base at the airport as well so it's always buzzing with activity.

The Edson Airport boasts a 6,000-foot runway, certified 3C NP, which is maintained to a high-standard year-round. There is also an opportunity to lease lots and build hangars, making it a great base of operations for private aircraft owners. Commercial space is also available for lease.

Along with the regular airport operations, staff have been busy supporting the community through school tours and organizing annual events.

For more information on the Edson airport, people are encouraged to visit www.edson.ca/departments/airport. ✈



Edson, Alta. is located 200 kilometres west of Edmonton and 165 kilometres from the municipality of Jasper within Jasper National Park.

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