

DATE

Address details

RE: Government of Canada restriction on overseas passenger landing rights

Dear xx,

We, the fifteen Mayors that represent the Edmonton Global Shareholders and the Edmonton Metropolitan Region are writing to share our concern over the Government of Canada restriction on overseas passenger landing rights. Since March 2020, all overseas flights have been restricted and may only land at the Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, and Calgary airports. These airports represent only four of the nine Tier 1 airports in Canada. The Edmonton International Airport (EIA) is one of the remaining five that are still covered under this restriction.

We fully support the prioritizing of the health and safety of our constituents and are committed to supporting the public health orders initiated by both the provincial and federal government. We know that our partners at EIA are doing everything possible to support a safe return to air travel. EIA has been accredited by Airports Council International under its rigorous [Airport Health Accreditation Programme](#). This accreditation means EIA is meeting high international standards on how it has responded to COVID-19 and passenger safety concerns. This certification and their EIA Ready campaign demonstrate that they are committed to providing safe access to air travel while continuing to invest in the economy of our region.

We must not lose sight of the fact that the viability of our airports have a significant impact on the larger regional and national economy. In fact, the nine metropolitan regions that include a Tier 1 airport represent more than 70% of all total foreign direct investment that occurs in Canada. The restrictions at EIA have severely impacted the regional economy of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region, which will have ripple effects for the larger national economy. The current effects that we are seeing include:

1. Loss of dedicated cargo and cargo transported on passenger flights.

Restrictions have led to a perception that cargo freighters are not able to land at our airport. While this is not the case, perception is reality, and as a result, we are not realizing the potential for dedicated cargo freighters arriving in Edmonton. This is significantly limiting the movement of goods and negatively impacting our region's economy. Importantly, approximately 50 - 60% of all air cargo moves in the belly of passenger airplanes. The loss of access to global markets is translating into lost opportunities for Canadian businesses. For example, the loss of three European routes from EIA this summer, has caused a corresponding loss of at least \$16.1 million in economic impact to exports.

2. Airlines eliminating Edmonton from their flight networks in 2022 and beyond.

Securing an international route often requires up to ten years of work and right now EIA is running the risk of losing these coveted international links permanently. Retaining these routes will position Canada's tourism industry for a faster post-COVID recovery. A robust tourism sector benefits not

only the Edmonton region, but also the province of Alberta and Canada as a whole. The impact of these flights cannot be overstated. For example, six years of one European service route from Edmonton has delivered \$200 million of economic impact. This route created 364 jobs and \$19 million in wages per year and is now at significant risk of disappearing.

That's why we are asking that this restriction be lifted at EIA to prevent further economic scarring to our region. As the Government of Canada prepares to announce a recovery package for airlines and airports, and as the vaccine rollout has begun, now is the right time to restore landing rights to our region.

This is not an either/or discussion – it's about balancing public safety and ensuring that our airports are supported in a way that they can survive this economic crisis.

For context, Edmonton Global is comprised of 15 diverse municipalities in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region and is home to 1.4 million people representing 33% of Alberta's population. Our region is an economic force in Alberta, contributing 30% to Alberta's GDP and is the 5th largest economy in Canada. The combined economic shocks of low global oil prices and COVID-19 have caused significant hardship in the region, as demonstrated by an unemployment rate of 12.6% in September 2020. Currently, Edmonton has the highest unemployment rate among major Canadian cities – we simply can not afford anymore job losses.

Given the critical importance of effectively and efficiently distributing COVID-19 vaccines across Canada, we are also bringing to your attention EIA's unique capabilities in this regard. EIA is one of a few airports in Canada with the necessary cold chain facilities and cargo expertise to handle vaccines with multi-temperature storage requirements. In addition to ambient (15C to 25C), cold (2C to 8C), and frozen (0C to -20C) handling capabilities. EIA is the only airport in Canada with the ability to store vaccines requiring ultra-cold (-50C to -90C) temperature control. EIA is ideally and uniquely positioned to serve as the Government of Canada's airport partner for this critical mission in combatting COVID-19 in Canada.

In closing, we are collectively committed to positioning EIA as a key partner with the federal government in its Building Back Better plan. We see the priorities of health and safety and economic development as complimentary and equally necessary. We ask that you remove the landing rights restriction so that we can preserve our economic future, retain key international passenger and cargo routes, and position Canada for a strong post-pandemic recovery.

We would like to arrange a meeting with you to further discuss this matter and where our priorities align. We look forward to collaborating with you on this important issue as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

(Shareholder Signatures)

cc. Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada

Honourable Marc Gareau, Minister of Transport

Honourable Jason Kenney, Premier of Alberta

Honourable Doug Schweitzer, Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation

Honourable Prasad Panda, Minister of Infrastructure

Honourable Ric McIver, Minister of Transport

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