

December 18, 2020

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. While we support the concerns around public health, these restrictions at the Edmonton International Airport (EIA) have severely impacted the regional economy, the larger economy of Northern Alberta, and have the potential to cause even more damage. We ask that this restriction be lifted at EIA to prevent further economic scarring to the Edmonton Metropolitan Region. As the Government of Canada prepares to announce a recovery package for airlines and airports, and as the Pfizer vaccine has now been approved in Canada, now is the right time to restore landing rights to our region.

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.

While we are dealing with the daily challenges posed by COVID-19, we continue to look ahead and actively position the Edmonton Metropolitan Region for a strong post-COVID recovery. Lifting the landing rights restriction now will be critical for resuming previous levels of cargo movement and for the recovery of the tourism industry post-COVID - both critical to supporting employment in our region. The federal government's decision to limit overseas passengers to four international airports has led to long-term negative economic consequences for our region including:

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 which is significantly limiting the movement of goods and limiting 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 this summer, has caused a corresponding loss of at least t \$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.

Given the critical importance of effectively 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, the Mayors who represent Edmonton Global Shareholders are committed to positioning EIA to serve as a key partner with the federal government in its Building Back Better plan. 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 Jason Kenney, Premier of Alberta