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Airlines pledge Kyoto Accord reduction in greenhouse gasses

Ottawa – Canada’s airlines will be among the first industries to commit to major Kyoto Accord reductions in their production of greenhouse gasses (GHGs), under an agreement negotiated with Transport Canada, the Air Transport Association of Canada affirmed today.

Under the new agreement, carriers will strive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 1.1% per annum. By the year 2012 they will have reduced emissions by 24% from the baseline year on which the Kyoto targets are set (1990).

“I’m delighted we can make this commitment, and take a big step towards meeting our obligations under Kyoto,” Cliff Mackay, President of the Association. “This is more evidence of a strong commitment to environmental sustainability in our industry, and to a strong working relationship with Transport Canada in this area.”

“One point one percent doesn’t sound like much, but the impact is enormous,” Mr. Mackay said. “That’s fifty million litres less fuel that will be consumed in a year. Over the 1990 – 2012 period, we will burn 1.1 billion fewer litres of fuel. To put that in context, you could fill the gas tanks of roughly 22 million automobiles”

Under the agreement Canadian airlines will produce 129 kilotonnes fewer CO2 equivalents annually. This represents a cumulative reduction of 2838 kilotonnes over the 1990 – 2012 period. Domestic aviation accounts for 4% of Canada’s transportation related GHG emissions.

“Canadian air carriers have participated in myriad international organizations such as ICAO and the International Air Transport Association, working to improve their environmental performance”, Mr. Mackay said. They have had obvious successes; since the early seventies Canadian aviation has recorded a 51% efficiency improvement. This new commitment will extend our efforts significantly.”

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For more information:

Les Aalders
ATAC Vice President Engineering & Maintenance
Mobile phone 613 – 794-1403