

Proposed Changes to Flying Times Will Hurt Remote Communities, Weaken our Competitiveness and Make Canada's Pilot Shortage Even Worse

April 25, 2018 – New regulations proposed by Transport Canada on flight and duty times will have a devastating impact on northern and remote communities, weaken our competitiveness and will exacerbate an already serious pilot shortage in Canada said representatives of the Air Transportation Association of Canada (ATAC) and the Helicopter Association of Canada (HAC) at a joint news conference in Ottawa today.

Operators representing the passenger, cargo and helicopter industries across Canada expressed serious concerns about the adverse effects the proposed regulations concerning the number of hours that commercial pilots can work would have on the air industry's supply chain – from worsened pilot shortages, to increased costs for consumers, to reduced MEDEVAC services, to decreased services to northern, remote and indigenous communities, weaken competitiveness and increased cost of goods in remote communities. Liberals at last week's National Convention called on the Minister not to rush into this new set of regulations and sit with carriers in order to minimize the impact on service to Canadians, particularly those living in northern and remote communities.

"The cost of having to comply with these new regulations, paired with a growing demand for service, will force operators to cancel flights and ground aircraft due to a shortage of experienced pilots," said Steve Hankirk, President of Canadian North and Chair of the Air Transport Association of Canada. "The increased costs as a result of the proposed changes will mean higher costs for air travelers and reduced or cancelled service to rural and remote communities resulting in substantial job loss. Our industry is already experiencing a severe pilot shortage and the proposed changes to flight and duty regulations would further reduce the number of hours that commercial pilots in Canada can work." He continued, "As large operators will continue to hire, a diminishing supply of experienced pilots will mean the supply chain of pilots will quickly evaporate, affecting those at the initial steps of the pilot supply chain first, Canada's small operators and flight instructors."

"Safety is the centerpiece of how we operate at Porter," said Robert Deluce, President and CEO of Porter Airlines. "A duty time solution that protects service to small- and medium-size markets is critical for our industry and those communities. We hope Transport Canada will continue working with stakeholders to ensure we maintain Canada's excellent aviation safety record — while recognizing the country's vast, unique geography."

Sylvain Séguin, Chief Operating Officer at Canadian Helicopters, said the downstream result of the proposed changes will worsen an ongoing pilot shortage in Canada and may even have the effect of reducing service for Canadians, as operators are forced to use the services of less experienced pilots with fewer flying hours.

Air operators called on the Minister of Transport to take the time necessary to work with all stakeholders on developing a pragmatic, sector specific approach to duty time regulations based on evidence and documented industry experience.

"Canada has one of the very best safety records in the world and fatigue has never been identified as causal in any aviation accident in Canada," concluded Steve Hankirk. "Safe air transportation remains

the top priority for Canada's air operators. We are keen to see this issue thoroughly evaluated to ensure any changes will be effective while ensuring they are sustainable and pragmatic solutions. Building off over eighty years of collaborative engagement, we look forward to working with the Minister of Transport and his department in ensuring Canada's flight safety record is the very best worldwide."

About ATAC

Founded in 1934, the Air Transport Association of Canada has been a collaborative partner working alongside government for over 80 years. ATAC serves as Canada's national trade association for commercial aviation and flight training industries as well as aviation industry service and product suppliers.

About HAC

The Helicopter Association of Canada (HAC), founded in 1994, is the national service association for the commercial helicopter community, and their industry suppliers. Collectively, HAC's Operator-members account for more than 80% of Canada's commercially-operated helicopters.

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