



March 16, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister
Government of Canada
Langevin Block
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

The Honourable Bill Morneau, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Finance
Department of Finance Canada
90 Elgin Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G5

The Honourable Marc Garneau, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Transport
Transport Canada
Place de ville, Tower C
330 Spark Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N5

The Honourable Mélanie Joly, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Economic Development and
Official Languages
Innovation, Science and Economic
Development Canada
235 Queen Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H5

Dear Prime Minister and Ministers,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Air Transport Association of Canada (ATAC) in an urgent appeal for immediate government financial support to the air transport industry of Canada as it deals with the COVID-19 pandemic. Although we fully support the Government in its actions aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19, a government financial assistance is urgently needed to avert a crisis in the aviation industry that will severely impact our member carriers, the travelling public and the Canadian economy, both in the short and long term.

ATAC air carrier members operate in all sectors of commercial air transport and are vital economic drivers offering essential services at the regional, national and international levels. ATAC operators provide these essential services throughout all provinces and territories.

The consequences of the crisis and of measures taken to contain the virus are having an immediate catastrophic economic impact on our industry. The Travel Advisory issued by your Government to “avoid all non-essential air travel”, business meetings and conferences across Canada being cancelled, travel restrictions by public and private sector employers, spring and summer air travel plans being cancelled both domestically and internationally all threaten the survival of many of our operator members. In addition, the 14-day self-isolation encouraged by your Government for arrivals from outside Canada is having far-reaching negative impacts, many of which were not foreseen. Without immediate federal financial aid being provided, this situation could lead to Canadian air carriers going bankrupt in the near term.

COVID-19 is threatening the commercial viability and essential services of many air carriers serving Canadians in every region of the country. Not only are thousands of industry jobs at risk, but thousands of jobs that support the aviation industry are as well. Hundreds of thousands of jobs also rely upon air transport of people and goods. Thus the socio-economic stability of many regions of Canada that depend on the air transport industry is at stake. Air travel is key to the economic supply chain of Canada and is an essential service feeding northern and remote communities.

Our members fully endorse the measures suggested by the National Airlines Council of Canada in its March 12 letter to Minister Garneau. In addition, however, it is our firm belief that the Government must include a significant financial aid package for the air transport industry on an immediate basis. We believe that part of the stimulus package announced by the Minister of Finance on Friday, March 13, and any subsequent financial support, should be allocated to the air transport industry to ensure the survival of the sector, protect our members' ability to serve all Canadians, and enable national economic recovery.

ATAC, its Board of Directors, and its members respectfully request that an emergency call be held early this week with senior decision-makers from the PMO, and other departments such as Finance Canada, Transport Canada, and Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. ATAC Board members and staff are available at any time to help develop an immediate effective financial assistance program for the air transport industry. Government emergency financial aid is the only way to ensure continued and dependable service to Canadians.

ATAC expects that any financial aid package for the air transport industry would be made available to all air carriers. This is the only acceptable way to maintain a level playing field in such a difficult time.

We will be contacting your offices within 24 hours to follow-up on this letter.

Mr. Prime Minister, your involvement and strong support are imperative for the livelihood of our members' employees and the survival of many long-standing Canadian air carriers that have helped build this great country. Only with your assistance in this time of need will we be able to continue to help Canada achieve its full future potential.

Most respectfully,



John McKenna
President and CEO
Air Transport Association of Canada

Attachment: The list of ATAC carrier members



ATAC Carrier Members

Air Creebec Inc.
Air Georgian Limited
Air Inuit Ltd
Air North Charter and Training Ltd.
Airco Aircraft Charters Ltd.
Calm Air International LP
Canadian North
Cargojet
Central Mountain Air Ltd.
Chorus Aviation Inc.
EnviroTech Aviation
Exploits Valley Air Services
Flair Airlines Ltd.
Glacier Air
Harbour Air Seaplanes LLP
Island Express Air Inc.
Keewatin Air Limited
KF Aerospace
Morningstar Air Express
National Helicopters Inc.
Nolinor Aviation
North Cariboo Air
Ornge
Pacific Coastal Airlines Limited
PAL Airlines
Perimeter Aviation
Porter Airlines Inc.
Summit Air
Sunwing Airlines