

Archie Lang, Minister
Highways & Public Works
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2C6

September 13, 2010

Dear sir;

The Canadian Owners & Pilots Association is a focused on protecting general aviation interests and our branch pursues that goal particularly in the Yukon. It was in that connection that we wrote you on June 5, 2007 and expressed some of our concerns about the state of the Whitehorse airport (CYXY).

You kindly responded on July 16, 2007 with a list of capital projects and a timeline for completion of those projects, although at that time you said that "...our planning was flexible so that we can respond to unknown priorities in the future".

We are compelled to write you again as the airside facility continues to deteriorate and we see little evidence of those objectives you outlined in July 2007 being pursued.

Currently the pavement on the ramps, taxiways and runways is falling apart. I regularly see the maintenance people trying to shovel cold-patch into the holes, only to have it pulled out the next time they try to sweep it. And, in spite of their efforts I have personally on one occasion removed two handfuls of pea-sized concrete bits from each of the intakes of a transient Boeing 737-400. I witnessed a transient Cessna -180 break a tailwheel in front of the terminal at our annual COPA OR KIDS event. I had the opportunity recently to talk to a pilot of a transient Bell 212 helicopter as he refueled. With the weight of the fuel added to the helicopter the skids broke through the pavement leaving two more areas of loose tar and gravel on the ramp when he departed. When I walk the field I find gopher holes have undermined the cement and pavement of the taxiways and parking areas. Some of the holes are deep enough to contain an aircraft wheel.

But enough actual observations; In your letter you submitted that by 2010 "Hanger A, B and C Apron Rehabilitation" will be designed. Likewise "Airside Apron Concrete Pad replacement" will be designed and the "Parallel Runway Pavement Overlay" will be designed, all for completion by 2011. We would appreciate the opportunity to inspect these designs before much needed construction is completed next year (2011) ?

We see no evidence of the "Southwest Area Water and Sewer Expansion" that you submitted would be completed by 2010. And "Taxiway G extension and paving" that was to be completed by 2010 is not evident. "Apron II Lease Lot & Pavement" was to be completed this year. In anticipation, Private aircraft leaseholders have been displaced from their leased properties since early spring and have been scattered about the airport all summer tied securely to whatever old tires or signs are available since early

this summer. Airport management reassures us this will be completed before the snow flies.

I see that \$ 7 1/2 million dollars are transferred to you from the Federal Government **every year** earmarked just to operate the airports. From the general aviation perspective it is frustrating to watch as \$ 15 plus million dollars is spent just facilitating four Customs Officers who will be present only for Condors now once-weekly flights that are planned for next summer. Apparently none of this money was used to get the passengers and luggage into or out of the terminal building; The baggage handling system is still defective and is prone to regular failure, and the single passenger ramp way is still overtaxed and not always available.

Likewise some of the money spent expanding the vehicle parking lot and making it "user-pay" may have been better used fixing up the collapsing fences and broken gates, grass runway, Compass Rose, or other facilities and services that have been cut during the same period. A small amount might even have been used to replace or increase some of the maintenance people (my rough count shows "Security" staff currently outnumber "Maintenance" staff **7 to 1**) . I have been told by Airport management that despite this inequity, general security is not to be expected airside of the fence for private aircraft. This all seems contradictory and confusing.

The conclusion that I trying not to form is that it will only be when a major incident, an accident, or a failure affecting an Air Canada schedule occurs, that the status of the maintenance promised in your letter of July 2007 will be elevated to a "priority" warranting your attention.

Let me stress that this airport is a tremendously important economic engine for the Yukon. More than 250 people work full time at this airport. Services like police, fire, medivac, mail, courier, and more are dependent on this facility. Tourism, resident travel, business travel, government travel, mining, exploration, wildlife management, community support, and endless others all require a functioning airport.

I am sure you would agree that it would be irresponsible to let it deteriorate to the point that recapitalization is unfeasible.

Sincerely
J George Balmer

President, Canadian Owners & Pilots Association Flight 106

cc

Larry Bagnel, MP

Air Canada

Air North

Alkan Air (others)