

If you ever wonder how the Yukon Government approaches managing airports, here are some direct quotes received in a letter from Mr Mark Ritchie, Superintendent of Airports (the Yukon Government bureaucrat responsible at the Yukon Government);

“The inability to provide a ski strip is also due to Transport Canada ’s certification standards which are now strictly enforced by the federal department. “

“Transport Canada has also advised us that we cannot allow off-runway take-offs and landings except on the available runway.”

“We acknowledge the long-held argument regarding “pilot’s discretion” but there is no clear jurisprudence on this issue and we expect that argument will be contested in court sooner or later.”

“Risk, liability, fines, a Tribunal ‘operated’ by Transport Canada ’ and Supreme Court rulings against our arguments all force us towards full compliance. In the future, pilots will be advised at Yukon airports that off-runway landings are not permitted except in an emergency and are at the pilot’s discretion.”

“We acknowledge that the face of aviation is changing and sometimes not for the better. “

“Although organizations like COPA will continue to argue for general aviation, it is unlikely that there will be any change in the present course.”

“ In this age of regulatory standards and liability, it is no longer possible to allow aircraft to operate off of the available and approved movement areas.”

In subsequent correspondence sought from Transport Canada to clarify Marks statements, Transport Canada denied making these requirements. And herein is revealed one key factor in this disfunction. Differences on both sides are quickly blamed on “interpretations “ of the law. Hence our push for re-writing the relevant laws in plain language....