

Part 5 - Of The War on Aviation

Documenting Perpetual Mismanagement

Background and Review: This the fifth chapter of a document that I began in 2008. The original objective was a factual record of decisions and actions taken by regulators of Yukon aviation. It was never intended to be a personal record of perceived transgressions or a forum for whining.

I believe that a chronological record of government actions combined with a summary of the aviation situation is an effective tool for evaluation and improvement. I am committed to accuracy and objectivity. Where I make judgements or draw conclusions I intend to clearly label it. Should I make errors in fact or treat anyone unfairly, I urge the readers to contact me to allow correction or clarification.

After nearly 20 years of recording Government actions in aviation I am forced to wonder; Is the situation at Yukon airports only the unfortunate inevitable consequence of incapacity, or is this more deliberate as Jung offers us;

"When a rational explanation is absent we must logically assume the consequences are the objective."

May 2024 - Everything Old is New Again ! (Sadly)

After attending the COPA Annual General Meeting earlier this spring I was motivated to do a little research on the " Yukon Airports Advisory Committee" (YAAC), that we forced the creation of back in 2018.

At the time our agreement with the Yukon Government was that a public committee would be created to oversee the Yukon Government operation of all Yukon airports because of their consistent failures to manage the airports in a competent fashion. A second commitment was made to have COPA meet directly with the Minister twice a year to deliver a "report card" of their actions. All this was caused by a history of poor decisions partly documented in this and the previous four editions of this blog (available here).

The Minister at the time was Richard Mostyn and the ADM in charge was Alan Nixon. Shortly after this I resigned from the Presidency of COPA and from my role in the discussions.

Today, as I read the Ministers Order In Council 2018-33 which creates the YAAC, I realize how easily and quickly their commitment was avoided. Rather than committing to full oversight Mostyn and his staff weaselled out of anything binding and confined the creation of the official body to a mandate of solely economic issues. They also watered down the membership to "divide and conquer" airport expertise, the continuation of their 'modus operandi' which has existed ever since the creation of the department.

For those readers not witness to the creation of the Aviation and Marine Services Branch back in the early 1990's, I recall the entire department was created and given mandate over all Yukon airports and operations. In accordance with the policy of the day the entire department was to be "De-centralized" to Haines Junction. A facility was built there and the entire staff was recruited to live and work from there. An unfortunate result was that only people willing to relocate were hired, and an even more unfortunate result was that no one with any actual experience in aviation was hired. That decision dictated two results;

- there was no depth or expertise in staff, and
- it made the staff subject do easy manipulation by politicians.

This situation was perpetuated in the thirty years since.

I recall that the incompetence was so prevalent that subsequently when a new Director was hired years later all the aviation community was motivated and unanimous in asking only one thing of Minister Mostyn at that time; "...**please just hire some one with expertise in aviation!**"

Of course he did not. Instead they hired a person from Southern BC with policy and HR experience (who I believe, remains in place to this day.) It seems from my attendance at the COPA discussions recently the Yukon Government has skillfully avoided accountability for their airport management. It appears too that, possibly in anticipation of responsible governance by them, COPA failed to force them to deliver on the second commitment, that of bi-annual one on one review of issues. This might have prevented the sabotage of the committee had it been implemented, but we will never know.

Because I remain motivated in the pursuit of competent aviation management I have changed my mind about closing this blog (which has documented their behaviour in 4 parts beginning in 2008). Instead I see the need is likely even greater for a first person document of their actions and deceptive promises.

May 18, 2024 Fuel woes

During the last week we see all the usual reminders of the annual return of the flying economy to the Yukon;

- The migration of many light aircraft North to Alaska
- The helicopters practicing rotations in the infields and landing in small clearings west of town as check pilots drill their charges
- Floatplanes begin their transition to floats from wheels or skis.
- The return of the Fire-Bombers

-The failure of the security gates around the airport (one lease-holder was told by a YTG employee just to "pretend it worked"!)

The most important issue facing CYXY (and the Yukon Government if they still pretend to want a functioning aviation industry) is the availability of fuel for light aircraft. A woman flying an American registered light aircraft landed ahead of me Friday and taxied for fuel so she could continue travelling North. Once again the fuel pumps in CYXY were not working. She was forced to contact the number given on the pumps and wait until an attendant drove up to the airport from Riverdale. It seems their payment system has been down for a long while.

I think back to my recent trip across Canada in a super Cub a few weeks back and how every airport I landed at in 4000 kilometers had efficient fuelling systems, customer oriented facilities and friendly staff, until I got to Watson Lake. That system was broken and no one there could help.

And, I think back to an event just before I departed on that trip when a Piper 160 ahead of me at the pumps here finished fuelling at these same pumps and was horrified to see by the meter he had loaded and was paying for more than 350 liters of fuel. We both glanced around to look for a tell-tale puddle since a 160 only holds about 1/3 of that when absolutely empty. That day I left him too dialling the same phone number the American woman was now trying to use.

As I talk to flying contractors in Dawson City I hear horror stories about fuel availability there and YTG placed prohibitions on them storing fuel on the airport property there. It seems there is no flexibility..."the rules are the rules....common sense be damned?" Another example of people with no real world experience managing an industry they know nothing about?

May 27, 2024 Latest Rumour from the CYXY Construction Site;

Is it possible for a security guard at the airport, to make a decision to close down the construction site to the result of **One Million Tax-Dollar\$ lost in just two days?** Ask around, see if you find what I did. (Let me know?)

June 23, 2024 Human Nature and Disappointment

The rumour mill works in a predictable way; First - is the outrageous (sometimes sensational) allegation, Then - there is a period of time where the story is either repeated and validation made or the story dies, and Finally - the public becomes numb to the outrage and we each just throw it onto the pile of growing frustrations. The story from May 27 made it to that pile.

The private "self-serve" fuel at CYXY continues to be NON-SELF-SERVE. We all scramble locally to ensure fuel availability. The deterioration of this service has a lot of

factors, some we can only guess at, but the last thing the Territorial Government demonstrates is concern. If this is resolved in their normal fashion they likely just outlaw the possession or handling of fuel on any airport property? (I say this not in jest.)

A couple of politicians were seen out wandering the airport property recently asking questions and seeing the world for themselves, unfortunately none with power, or maybe even prospects of power. At least they were here.

A serious airplane crash occurred out at Haines Junction last week and sincere condolences go to all those affected. There have been many motorcycle and automobile fatalities through out the Yukon during the last two weeks hopefully this trend ends now.

Forest fires burn in Central and Eastern Yukon but so far the Whitehorse region benefits from occasional periods of heavy rain. The air-tanker group is moving to best advantage as usual. Thanks to those guys.

June 26, 2024 - Yukon Government opposition writes of woes -

The government MLA's wrote a letter last week which they circulated to us outlining some of their observations and asking questions of the current Minister in charge of airports. They ask;

...The most significant and immediate of these concerns is the lack of proper drainage along the taxiway. During spring melt, as well as following significant rain, there are significant issues with water that hampers the ability of the affected stakeholders from using the taxiway at all. Furthermore, the flooding and water issues create some safety issues as well, as the subsurface fire hydrants are often either flooded or frozen completely solid, to the point of being unusable. Can you please explain why drainage was not considered in the construction of the new taxiway, despite stakeholders repeatedly raising this with Yukon Government?

Of course there will be no reply that isn't a thinly veiled insult and projection. This Government has been in control for so long the arrogance is no longer even seen as a scandal in itself.

This letter is added to the appendix of official correspondence and documents listed here at the start of our Politics Page (www.yukonflying.com/politics).