

Notice to Air Travelers using the Yellowknife Airport

On April 28, 2017, the Northern Air Transport Association was notified by the Government of Northwest Territories of major landing and terminal fee increases at the Yellowknife Airport. These fees are planned to become effective on July 1, 2017.

Concurrently, the Yellowknife Airport plans to begin assessing an Airport Improvement Fee (AIF) for all enplaned passengers. This fee will be \$20 for passengers departing Yellowknife for destinations outside of the Northwest Territories and \$10 for passengers departing Yellowknife for destinations within the Northwest Territories.

NATA opposes the planned fee increases as well as the introduction of an AIF. In combination, they will not only make travel more expensive for Northerners, but will also make it more expensive to do business in the North. Higher prices will increase cost of living, slow our economy, and hurt NWT residents.

We estimate that the combination of increased fees and the AIF will increase the cost of travel for an individual by **at least \$35** for a round trip outside of the territory and by about \$25 for a round trip within the territory. We feel that travel cost increases of this magnitude are excessive, counter-productive, and should be reconsidered.

To put the fee increases into perspective, the proposed combination of landing and terminal fees represents an increase over current fees at YZF and over the same fees at other Canadian airports. The table below shows comparable airports' fees as a percentage of the new YZF fees. You can see in Whitehorse, for example, the cost is only 4.39% of what has been proposed by GNWT.

Comparable Airports vs New YZF Fees

Yellowknife (2017)	100%
Yellowknife (2016)	33.29%
Whitehorse	4.39%
Vancouver	50.47%
Edmonton	58.24%
Ottawa	61.77%
Calgary	75.78%

It is easy to see how Yellowknife will become less competitive as a destination with these higher ticket costs in a very competitive global tourism market. Increased cost of living will mean Northerners will not be able to travel as frequently, which lowers our standard of living and hurts our ability to attract new business and investment.

Air Carriers will be obliged to pay the increased fees to the GNWT and to collect the AIF on their behalf, but we are limited in our ability to disclose them in our advertising so we are taking this opportunity to make the public aware of our concerns.

The Northern Air Transport Association represents the majority of air carriers involved in northern and remote air operations.

We believe that safe, sustainable, and affordable travel in, out and throughout the northern areas of Canada is best for the economic and social development of the North.

We believe in offering our customers the best travel experience possible and have invested considerably in equipment upgrades to reduce ticket prices and improve quality of air travel in the North. These improvements should benefit the traveler in the form of lower airfares.

We understand the need to improve our airports and to modernize YZF. However, we do not feel that the economic damage caused by this plan will justify the proposed improvements. There are other solutions that should be explored.

Air services are essential for passengers and cargo in the North. Without road access in many NWT and Nunavut communities, the Yellowknife airport is relied upon as a gateway and an essential service. Any increased fees will increase the cost of travel and goods & services for the residents of these communities.

We cannot accept the proposed fee increases and passenger taxes as reasonable. We want you to know how this will impact your travel costs and our economy.

**\$35 or more per ticket for travel anywhere outside of NWT
\$20 or more per ticket for travel within the NWT**

**If this concerns you, please contact
Minister of Transport
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