



For Immediate Release

Atlantic Canada airports disappointed shovel ready infrastructure projects were ignored

Charlottetown (February 2nd, 2009) – The Atlantic Canada Airports Association voiced disappointment today that the federal budget did not include funding for airport shovel ready infrastructure projects.

“Atlantic Canada’s airports responded to a request from the federal government and submitted 22 shovel ready projects for consideration and not one was included in the budget” noted Monette Connaughton, Executive Director of the Atlantic Canada Airports Association.

Airports in the region are vital transportation hubs moving 6.9 million passengers annually. They are important economic engines for travel, trade and economic development for Atlantic Canada’s communities. “These shovel ready projects alone would have created an additional 2,000 jobs in Atlantic Canada” noted Connaughton.

The federal budget approved infrastructure projects for virtually every form of transportation with the exception of airports. Roads, harbours, cruise and rail were all beneficiaries in this budget. “It is a glaring omission,” noted Connaughton.

Connaughton explained, “It is in these uncertain times, that it is even more important that the federal government work with airports to eliminate the barriers to growth including; airport rent, lack of customs services and lack of capital funding programs that would assist our region’s airports in remaining viable.”

“We are still holding out hope that all is not lost and that the funds in the Building Canada Fund will start moving more quickly and that the Atlantic Canada Provinces and the Federal Government will look favorably upon airport infrastructure projects,” noted Connaughton.

The Atlantic Canada Airports Association was pleased to see an additional \$500 million in increased funding for tourism. Tourism is an important industry in Atlantic Canada and the sector has been in need of additional funding for some time. In addition, they commended the government for supporting increased security resources for the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) which received \$282 million.

About the Atlantic Canada Airports Association

The ACAA represents 13 airports in Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. Member airports are important economic generators with passenger and cargo traffic generating over \$2.6 billion into the economy annually. The regions airports move 6.9 million passenger and over 55,000 tons of cargo and account for over \$560 million in wages.

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