

## MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

### YELLOWKNIFE AIRPORT BOARDING DELAYS

May 23, 2019

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. On May 1<sup>st</sup>, CBC ran a story about how renovations to the main baggage screening area at the Yellowknife airport would cause delays in passenger boarding. The Department of Infrastructure was quoted as saying passengers needed to arrive at check-in 90 minutes before flight time instead of the usual 60. There was no GNWT media release, and no other media outlets carried the story that day.

Two days later, in the May 3<sup>rd</sup> Yellowknifer, there was a two-inch story, and the Yellowknife Airport Authority ran an ad telling people to arrive at the airport 30 minutes earlier to avoid missing flights. That is a good start to alert newspaper readers, but that ad only appeared once.

On May 9<sup>th</sup>, the Infrastructure Minister's office put out an email to all MLAs confirming the baggage area work had begun on May 1<sup>st</sup> and the need to arrive 90 minutes before flight time.

Finally, on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 10 days after the 90-minute check-in warning went into effect, the infrastructure department issued a news release confirming the additional time needed to get on flights with checked baggage. Even though today, if you go on the Yellowknife airport website, there is no notice of a 90-minute early arrival requirement, in attempting a scan of commercial airline departure information sites I can find no notice of a 90-minute warning. There is no mention of this on the Yellowknife Airport Facebook page, either. What is going on?

The Yellowknife airport is the primary transportation portal for all personal, business, tourism, and other travellers to and from Yellowknife, so this is pretty important news: get there 30 minutes early, or you could miss your flight. When you have a change in conditions of a core transportation system, a change that could lead to paying passengers missing their flights, you probably want to make sure that the news gets out early, widely, and repeatedly. Later today, I will ask the Minister to explain what went wrong and how we can do better in the future. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.