



June 10, 2021

MR. KEVIN O'REILLY
MLA, FRAME LAKE**Oral Question 720-19(2) Airport Taxi Fees**

This letter is in follow-up to the Oral Question raised on May 28, 2021, where I committed to consider reinstating the waiver of taxi licensing fees at the Yellowknife Airport (YZF).

As part of COVID-19 temporary relief efforts, the Department of Infrastructure (INF) waived all license fees at all Northwest Territories (NWT) airports from April 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020. The fees were reinstated on January 1, 2021. At YZF, these revenues, along with others, are used to fund operations within the YZF Revolving Fund.

Taxi companies that have a license agreement at YZF are able to use the pick-up zone, queuing zone and vehicle staging zone. Taxis without this license can still drop-off at the Airport and pick-up passengers if called directly for service. All taxi companies currently hold a business directory license that includes direct line telephone connection for passengers in the terminal to call for service.

Since reinstating fees on December 31, 2020, YZF has been experiencing increased air passenger traffic and this trend is expected to continue. Westjet will soon be increasing its weekly flights to YZF, and Air Canada will be returning to service on June 30, 2021, with three flights per week.

Increased vaccination rates in the NWT are also expected to increase passenger traffic volumes this summer. As of May 29, 2021, 68% of NWT residents over 18 are partially vaccinated and 61% are fully vaccinated. The rates in Yellowknife, Ndilq and Dettah are slightly higher with 75% partially vaccinated and 68% fully vaccinated. With the release of the Emerging Wisely 2021 plan on June 9, 2021, it is expected that Airport traffic will continue to increase as travel restrictions are eased.

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I recognize all industries have been impacted by the pandemic, and I am pleased to see air passenger traffic is returning with the increased vaccination rates. This is anticipated to have a positive impact on the demand for Yellowknife taxi services. Given that the isolation requirements have recently been reduced for vaccinated individuals, along with the continued increase in passenger traffic at YZF, INF will not be reinstating the waiver of taxi licensing fees at this time.

Sincerely,



Diane Archie
Minister, Infrastructure

- c. Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Legislative Coordinator
Executive and Indigenous Affairs