

Save our Medevac

I have recently become involved in a campaign to prevent the degradation of health care for northern residents of Alberta and Canada.

I have devoted much of my professional career to helping people and have been mortified by the imminent closure of Edmonton City Centre Airport resulting in Medevac Air Ambulance Flights being relocated to Edmonton International Airport near Leduc, Alberta.

Alberta is positioned to go from the “best to the worst” transfer times in Canada.

Please visit our website at www.saveourmedevac.ca and lend your support to help preserve, or better yet, enhance access to tertiary medical care.

KERRY PAWLUSKI

COPA Statement

Effort must now focus on alternatives

COPA is aware of the determined effort by the owners of the City Centre Airport, the City of Edmonton, to shut down the airport despite considerable effort, including on COPA’s part, to justify the important role the airport plays in the local, provincial and national air transportation infrastructure. COPA continues to firmly believe that the airport has an important role to play but it is also clear that the City has no interest in reversing its decision.

As detailed on the airport authority’s website this airport is essentially not used by Personal Aviation (people who use private aircraft for personal transportation and recreation):

“The top 25 users at ECCA make up nearly 75% of all movements in 2008. While there is a diverse group of users, the majority of movements are consolidated amongst a small group of clients. This group is comprised of local flight training schools, corporate clients and charter providers. Of these top 25 users, 9 are corporate aircraft; the 16 other users are primarily charter operators, air ambulance, flight training and government.”

Although this is an important issue for General Aviation, this airport has very little Personal Aviation located there, due in large part to escalating fees and other restrictions compared with other airports and very few privately-owned small aircraft are based there now and there appears to be relatively little use of the airport by Personal Aviation.

In light of the City’s firm position to close the airport and the relative lack of use by Personal Aviation, the focus of everyone’s efforts should now be on helping everyone understand the need for a GA reliever airport in the Edmonton area and the role of the City and the Edmonton Airport Authority, as manager of area airports on behalf of the City. Villeneuve is that airport.

There have been plenty of opportunities over the years for the City and the airport authority to invest in a viable reliever, as Calgary has done in Springbank. With the impending closure of City Centre, it is more important than ever to develop Villeneuve now as a viable reliever airport with adequate facilities for GA, including affordable options for basing aircraft there, upgrades and additional IFR approach options for training and operational use as well as other support facilities needed by General and Personal Aviation.

Transport Canada statistics show that the number of aircraft in Canada continues to increase and that the reason for this growth is small aircraft, and specifically privately registered small aircraft. This growing fleet requires viable facilities located within a reasonable distance of the City. Having ignored these facts at the City Centre Airport, now is the time to put real effort into Villeneuve.

- COPA President/CEO Kevin Psutka