

Aviation

**Annual Aircraft Movements: Small  
airports - Airports without NAV CANADA  
Towers or Flight Service Stations, 2017**

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# Annual Aircraft Movements: Small airports - Airports without NAV CANADA Towers or Flight Service Stations, 2017

## Analysis

In 2017, the number of take-offs and landings at 134 Canadian airports without air traffic control towers totalled 639,396 movements.

Ten airports accounted for 37% of the activity during the year: Peterborough, Ontario (51,322 movements), Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador (29,751), Red Lake, Ontario (23,464), Drummondville, Quebec (22,475), Trois-Rivières, Quebec (20,878), Moosonee, Ontario (20,390), Pickle Lake, Ontario (19,240), Comox, British Columbia (18,481), Barrie-Orillia-Lake Simcoe Regional, Ontario (17,890) and Island Lake, Manitoba (15,525).

Activity at the Drummondville Airport rose 104% in 2017 to reach 22,475 movements; its highest number of total aircraft movements since the airport began reporting in 1968. In 2016, aircraft movements at the airport were significantly reduced from September until December because of runway re-construction at the airport. The project was completed in two phases and resulted in a longer, wider, modernized runway.

There were 474,681 itinerant movements (flights from one airport to another) recorded at 115 airports without air traffic control towers in 2017. Goose Bay was the most active site, reporting 29,751 take-offs and landings.

In the summer of 2017, a series of wildfires began across British Columbia. By August, the province had declared 2017 to be the worst fire season since record keeping began in 1950. At Quesnel airport, a large camp was established to support aircraft and crew engaged in fighting wildfires in the surrounding area. As a result, Quesnel airport saw an annual increase of 4,818 itinerant movements (+120%).

There were 136,954 local movements (flights that remain in the vicinity of the airport) recorded at 71 airports without air traffic control towers in 2017. Peterborough remained the busiest airport (45,036 movements), despite reporting a year-over-year decline of 7,545 movements. On October 16, 2017, a faculty strike across Ontario colleges that lasted five weeks had a large impact on local flights that were associated with a college aviation program at the airport.

## Note to Readers

1. Aggregate data only are available for the 19 airports reported by the Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation listed below:

- Berens River
- Bloodvein River
- Brochet
- Cross Lake
- God's Lake Narrows
- God's River
- Ilford
- Lac Brochet
- Little Grand Rapids
- Oxford House
- Pikwitonei
- Poplar River
- Pukatawagan
- Red Sucker Lake

- Shamattawa
  - South Indian Lake
  - Tadoule Lake
  - Thicket Portage
  - York Landing
2. Aggregate data only are available for the 12 airports reported by the Kativik Regional Government in Quebec listed below:
- Akulivik
  - Aupaluk
  - Inukjuak
  - Ivujivik
  - Kangiqsualujjuaq
  - Kangiqsujuaq
  - Kangirsuk
  - Puvirnituq
  - Quaqtaq
  - Salluit
  - Tasiujaq
  - Umiujaq
3. Aggregate data only are available for Tillsonburg, Ontario.
4. As per the November 2015 NAV CANADA Flight Supplement, Repulse Bay (Nunavut) was changed to Najuaat. The community's name was officially changed on July 1, 2015.
5. As of March 2014 the following airports began to report data:
- Isle-aux-Grues, Quebec
  - Kegaska, Quebec
  - La Romaine, Quebec
  - La Tabatière, Quebec
  - Matagami, Quebec
  - Montmagny, Quebec
  - St-Bruno-de-Guigues, Quebec
  - Tête-à-la-Baleine, Quebec

## **Factors which may have influenced the data**

### **2017**

On December 28, 2017, freezing rain fell throughout the Fraser Valley in British Columbia. The weather resulted in some flight delays at Abbotsford. By the next day, the freezing rain warning was extended to Metro Vancouver, especially in Surrey and Langley.

On December 26, 2017, Environment and Climate Change Canada issued extreme cold warnings for most of Alberta, the Prairies, Ontario and Western Quebec. The cold conditions were predicted to last until the weekend.

On November 21, 2017, college students across Ontario returned to class after the longest college faculty strike (5 weeks) in the province's history. Activity at several airports was impacted as flights operated by college aviation programs in Ontario were affected.

On November 13, 2017, it was announced that Sarliq Aviation, a Nunavut-based company, in partnership with Quebec transporter Nolinor Aviation, had signed a 10-year agreement with Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd. to provide air transportation for employees and cargo from Montréal and Abitibi-Temiscamingue, both in Quebec, to the company's mining projects in the Kivalliq region in Nunavut. The new agreement will add flights to Rankin Inlet, in addition to Nolinor's existing transport to Agnico Eagle's Meadowbank open-pit gold mine, near Baker Lake. In all, Nolinor will be providing 416 flights per year, or eight flights per week to Nunavut.

On November 7, 2017, flights were grounded at Goose Bay Airport, Newfoundland and Labrador, after snow clearing crews noticed that material used to seal cracks in the runway was coming loose and sticking to tires. Commercial flights by PAL Airlines, Air Borealis and Air Canada were all affected. The runways reopened on Friday, November 10.

On November 6, 2017, FLYGTA Airlines added daily service from Toronto/Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport, Ontario to Barrie-Orillia-Lake Simcoe Regional Airport, Ontario and to the Kitchener/Waterloo Airport, Ontario.

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. reported 5,305 fires covering 3,456,768 hectares as of September 30, 2017. This is an increase of 412 fires and 453,394 hectares from one month earlier and an increase of 620 fires and 2,067,873 hectares from the same time last year.

On September 15, 2017, the British Columbia government lifted a provincial state of emergency declared more than two months earlier for what would become the province's worst fire season on record. The declaration was made July 7 after dozens of out-of-control wildfires broke out in B.C.'s interior, forcing thousands of people from their homes. As of September 15, there were still 155 fires burning in B.C. and 11 evacuation orders were in place.

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. reported 4,893 fires covering 3,003,374 hectares as of August 31, 2017. This represents an increase of 1,739 fires and 1,872,650 hectares from a month earlier. In 2016, the agency had recorded 4,832 fires covering 1,390,375 hectares by August 31.

On August 22, 2017, hundreds of firefighters and dozens of aircraft were working to contain one of the largest wildfires ever recorded in British Columbia. Nineteen wildfires covering 467,000 hectares in the provinces interior merged together. The Plateau fire stretched 130 kilometers from one end to the other.

On August 18, 2017, the province of British Columbia extended its state of emergency until September 1. The extension is in response to 138 wildfires burning and approximately 25,000 people under either evacuation orders or alerts.

On August 18, 2017, the province of Alberta reported 28 wildfires. In response, the province was using 200 firefighters, two special teams of incident management personnel, 21 helicopters, an air tanker crew and various pieces of heavy equipment to address the situation. The majority of the fires, including 5 listed as being out of control, were in the High Level Forest area.

On August 11, 2017, the province of British Columbia declared 2017 to be the worst wildfire season since record keeping began in 1950. Since April 1, 2017, 894,491 hectares had burned. The previous record of 855,000 hectares was established in 1958. More than 3,800 personnel were engaged in combating the fires, with additional crews from New Zealand, Mexico and the United States due to arrive shortly.

In early July 2017, numerous wild fires broke out in British Columbia. The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. reported 821 fires in the province, covering 426,022 hectares as of July 31. In response, the province declared a state of emergency, issued evacuation orders and deployed aircraft to several regions to assist in the fire suppression activities.

On June 18, 2017, PAL Airlines, based in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, began a new air transportation service to the Quebec Lower North Shore. Included were seven new destinations: St-Augustin, Chevery, La Romaine, Kégaska, La Tabatière, Tête-à-la-Baleine and Natashquan.

On June 16, 2017, Air Borealis began operations in Labrador. Together with PAL Airlines, the Innu Development Limited Partnership (IDL P) and the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies (NGC), this partnership operates seven DHC-6 Twin Otters and primarily serves communities on Labrador's north and south coasts. It also provides medical travel – both scheduled and medevac flights to both coasts for the regional health authority, Labrador Grenfell Health. IDLP previously owned Innu Mikun Airlines in Northern Labrador, while NGC owned Air Labrador.

In May 2017, several changes were initiated as a result of the termination of the code share partnership between Canadian North and First Air. Canadian North resumed a number of routes in the Qikiqtaaluk Region in Nunavut. Effective May 18, the airline began service, three times a week, between Iqaluit, Pangnirtung and Qikiqtarjuaq. Effective May 17, it began service, six times a week, between Igloolik and Pond Inlet. The same day, service also began, three times a week, between Iqaluit and Pangnirtung. This last route was originally planned to be between Iqaluit, Pangnirtung and Clyde River but was dropped by the airline. First Air made adjustments to its schedules in Nunavut starting May 17. The airlines' service between Iqaluit and Cape Dorset increased from five to six weekly flights. Service between Iqaluit, Clyde River, Pond Inlet and Resolute Bay would operate once weekly. Overall service between Iqaluit and Pond Inlet and Resolute Bay rose to six weekly flights. Service between Iqaluit and Igloolik grew from five to six weekly flights. Service in the Northwest Territories between Yellowknife and Inuvik resumed with one daily flight. Further, as part of its agreement with Summit Air, flights between Edmonton International, Alberta and Yellowknife increased from 10 to 12 weekly flights.

On March 17, 2017, two Cessnas operated by Cargair Aviation collided in mid-air over St-Bruno, Quebec. Several of the Cargair flight school campuses suspended activities for a few days immediately following the accident.

On March 14, 2017, a powerful winter storm pounded southern and central Quebec and Eastern Ontario. Most flights at Montréal/Pierre Elliot Trudeau International Airport were cancelled or delayed. Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International reported 248 cancelled arriving flights and 267 cancelled departing flights. Ottawa/Macdonald-Cartier International also reported several cancelled flights.

## 2016

At the beginning of December, 2016, one phase of major work to repair and widen the airfield runway at Drummondville Airport, Quebec, was completed. The work began on September 1, 2016 and many aircraft were redirected to other airports in Quebec; Montréal/St-Hubert, Sherbrooke and Victoriaville, for the duration of the project. Further work to extend the runway was scheduled to begin in August 2017.

On September 12, 2016, Watson Lake Airport, Yukon, welcomed the arrival of its first scheduled commercial flight since the 1990's. The Alkan Air flight originated from Whitehorse, Yukon.

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. reported 3,969 fires covering 1,293,072 hectares as of July 31, 2016. This represents an increase of 944 fires and 412,915 hectares from a month earlier. In 2015, the agency had recorded 5,766 fires encompassing 3,889,663 hectares by the end of July.

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. reported 3,025 fires covering 880,157 hectares as of June 30, 2016. This represents an increase of 1,065 fires and 25,152 hectares from a month earlier. In 2015, the agency had recorded 4,076 fires encompassing 1,352,281 hectares by the end of June.

As of May 31, 2016, the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. reported a total 1,960 fires covering 855,005 hectares across Canada in 2016. The majority of these occurred in Alberta, which recorded 525 fires encompassing 595,709 hectares, approximately 70% of the total area covered by forest fires nationwide. During the same period in 2015 the agency recorded more fires (2,503) across Canada, however the coverage was not as widespread (239,313 hectares).

On May 31, 2016, Air Labrador began service between several airports in Newfoundland and Labrador: Happy Valley-Goose Bay, St. John's and Deer Lake.

Beginning May 30, 2016, Innu Mikun Airlines launched a new morning service from several airports in the North Coast of Labrador to Happy Valley-Goose Bay. This service will begin in Nain in the morning with service to Natuashish then to Happy Valley-Goose Bay, also allowing for a morning connection to Gander and St. John's via PAL Airlines.

On March 27, 2016, Mt. Pavlof, a volcano on the Alaska Peninsula, erupted with little advance notice spewing an ash cloud up to 20,000 feet (6,100 m) high and prompting aviation warnings. Flights were affected in the territories, and as far away as Regina, Saskatchewan.

On February 24, 2016, a winter storm hit Chicago, Illinois and moved into eastern Canada. The combination of snow and freezing rain led to dangerous travel conditions with over 1,000 flights cancelled in Chicago. Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International Airport, Ontario had about 140 flights cancelled.

A major snowstorm hit eastern Canada on February 16, 2016. Ottawa, Ontario received 51 cm of snow, a one-day record snowfall.

A major snowstorm hit Atlantic Canada on February 8 and 9, 2016 with Halifax, Nova Scotia and St. John's being particularly hard hit.

From January 22 – 26, 2016, snowstorm Jonas hit the eastern seaboard of the United States and cities including New York, New York and Washington, DC received record or near record snowfalls. Overall, about 12,000 flights were cancelled over the four-day period, a number of which were destined for Canada.

On January 17, 2016, the Maritimes were hit with their third major snowstorm of the week.

Effective January 15, 2016, Perimeter Airlines discontinued service to Dauphin, Manitoba. The airline advised this was in part due to the loss of their contract with Purolator courier air freight. In October 2015, the airline started to reduce flights on this route.

## 2015

Having already impacted travel at both Chicago, Illinois and Detroit, Michigan; airports in the U.S. Midwest, a major snowstorm hit central and eastern Canada on December 29, 2015, causing delays and cancellations in southern Ontario and western Quebec, including Toronto, Ottawa, and Montréal airports.

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. reported 6,654 fires covering 3,953,056 hectares as of August 31, 2015, more fires and a bit more area than a month earlier. In 2014, the agency had recorded 4,681 fires encompassing 4,549,459 hectares by the end of August.

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. reported 5,766 fires covering 3,889,663 hectares as of July 31, 2015. This represents an increase from the previous year when 3,331 fires covering 1,606,278 hectares were recorded. In several cases, particularly in Western Canada, air support was deployed to assist ground crews.

In early July 2015, a rare, lingering fog and thick ice caused major delays in food shipments to Iqaluit, Nunavut. Cargo planes and combi planes (planes that carry cargo and passengers) were not able to fly in or out of Iqaluit Airport.

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. reported 4,076 fires covering 1,352,282 hectares as of June 30, 2015. This represents an increase from the previous year when 1,977 fires and 414,722 hectares were recorded. In several cases, particularly in Western Canada, air support was deployed to assist ground crews.

Major snowstorms struck Atlantic Canada in mid-March 2015, forcing flight delays and cancellations.

Significant winter storms struck Atlantic Canada in February 2015 forcing numerous flight cancellations and delays. During the same time, eastern Ontario and southwestern Quebec recorded colder-than-normal temperatures.

January 2015 was marked by extreme cold, heavy snow and freezing rain conditions across Canada forcing delays and flight cancellations at many airports.

## 2014

A significant winter storm struck Eastern Canada forcing dozens of flight cancellations and delays at Eastern Canadian airports in March 2014.

A major winter storm with freezing temperatures struck the south-west coast of British Columbia forcing flight cancellations and delays in February 2014.

**2013**

Significant winter storms struck much of Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime provinces forcing flight cancellations and delays across Canada in December 2013.