



AIR CANADA

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Air Canada Comments on Aviation Industry Summit with Federal Transport Minister

MONTREAL, June 23, 2022 /CNW/ - Following a meeting today of senior Air Canada representatives and other key participants in the Canadian aviation industry with Canada's Federal Transport Minister, the airline has issued the following statement.

"At Air Canada, we know every trip is important, even more so today as many are flying for the first time in years to see loved ones or take an eagerly anticipated holiday. We are determined not to disappoint and have been long preparing for a travel surge this summer, including coordinating with our industry partners. As all businesses worldwide are finding, restarting after COVID is an extremely complex task and we deeply appreciate our customers' understanding and patience during these often-frustrating times. I also thank our dedicated employees who are working hard to serve our customers and transport them safely," said Michael Rousseau, President and Chief Executive Officer of Air Canada.



Each day, Air Canada currently operates more than 1,000 flights and regularly carries more than 120,000 people, with the vast majority of scheduled flights successfully completed. In recognition of the high importance Canadians place on travel and its value to the Canadian economy, Air Canada has recommitted to keep working alongside its industry partners and with the Federal government to ensure Canadians continue to benefit from a safe, efficient and reliable air transportation system.

Air Canada has been prudently restoring its schedule as it recovers from the effects of COVID-19 and this summer it plans to operate below its pre-pandemic capacity as the industry stabilizes. In support of this, the carrier has recalled employees laid off during the pandemic and continues to hire additional workers. It currently has 32,000 employees, versus approximately 33,000 prior to the pandemic while operating approximately 80 per cent of its June 2019 schedule. To assist customers and better support Canada's air transport infrastructure, Air Canada is taking a series of steps including:

Customer Initiatives:

- New Self-Service Re-accommodation tools will allow customers who have schedule changes, delays, or cancellations to request a refund if eligible or rebook their itineraries in a few minutes through its mobile app or website. This includes getting up to 20 alternative flight options (based on availability), choosing to fly to nearby airports instead, and the ability to search for flights in a three-day window. It will be available for customers regardless of how and where they booked their tickets;
- A goodwill policy has been implemented for passengers traveling via Toronto-Pearson to allow them to voluntarily increase their connection time at no cost for more flexibility when travelling. This policy can be applied within 48 hours of the original travel time;
- A second new policy will allow customers free, same-day stand-by options for earlier flights within Canada/Transborder regardless of fare brand or booking class;
- The airline maintains an updated travel readiness page on aircanada.com with the latest information and advice for those preparing to travel, including information about COVID-19 requirements. Customers are advised to consult this page before travelling.

In Airports:

- In addition to the recall of virtually all available employees, more than 2,000 front-line airport employees (and 774 more people to work in call centres) have been hired and extensively trained over the last six months, with additional overtime and ongoing hiring, including drawing upon recently retired employees with special expertise;
- Employees have been reassigned from other bases to augment specific airports, including the cross-utilization of cargo employees to assist with airport passenger operations;
- The airline has redeployed aircraft from its Jetz charter fleet to move delayed baggage, which has increased in large part due to air transport processing and infrastructure issues outside its control;
- The airline is working closely with airport authorities, government and third-party agencies to enhance and expedite the processing of customers throughout their journey;

- Additional ground equipment has been acquired to improve airport operations.

Network/Schedule:

- Minimum Connection Times for flights from international and transborder destinations connecting to domestic destinations have been increased by 30 minutes for new bookings in Toronto and Montreal, giving customers (and their baggage) additional time to connect;
- The schedule has been refined to reduce peak times at the Toronto-Pearson and Montreal-Trudeau airports by retiming and cancelling certain flights, or reducing frequencies, where protection is available to customers the same day. This will conserve resources and reduce stress on third-party service providers by smoothing passenger flows and be more convenient for customers;
- Aircraft gating at airports has been reconfigured. For example, widebody aircraft in Montreal travelling internationally and to the U.S. are being more conveniently located to achieve efficiencies during peak hours for added operational flexibility.

The airline continues to evaluate other measures to enhance the functioning and stability of the air transport system and it is committed to working with its partners on further improvements.

About Air Canada

Air Canada is Canada's largest airline, the country's flag carrier and a founding member of Star Alliance, the world's most comprehensive air transportation network celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2022. Air Canada provides scheduled passenger service directly to 51 airports in Canada, 51 in the United States and 86 internationally. It is the only international network carrier in North America to receive a Four-Star ranking from Skytrax, which in 2021 gave Air Canada awards for the Best Airline Staff in North America, Best Airline Staff in Canada, Best Business Class Lounge in North America, and an excellence award for managing COVID-19. Through its leading travel loyalty Aeroplan program, Air Canada offers the ability to earn or redeem points on the world's largest airline partner network of 45 airlines, plus through an extensive range of merchandise, hotel and car rental rewards. Its freight division, Air Canada Cargo, provides air freight lift and connectivity to hundreds of destinations across six continents using Air Canada's passenger flights and cargo-only flights with its fleet of Boeing 767-300 freighters. Air Canada has committed to a net zero emissions goal from all global operations by 2050.

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