

Aviation

Monthly Aircraft Movements: Major airports – NAV CANADA Towers and Flight Service Stations, August 2017

Release date: October 30, 2017



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Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

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Monthly Aircraft Movements: Major airports – NAV CANADA Towers and Flight Service Stations, August 2017

Analysis

There were 555,911 aircraft take-offs and landings at the 91 Canadian airports with NAV CANADA air traffic control towers and flight service stations compared with 538,254 movements in August 2016.

Itinerant movements (flights from one airport to another) increased in August 2017 on a year-over-year basis, while local movements (flights that remain in the vicinity of the airport) declined. Itinerant movements rose 5.2% to 416,376 and local movements decreased 2.1% to 139,535.

Overall, air traffic was up 3.3% in August 2017 as 50 airports reported more movements from the same month the previous year. Year-over-year variations of more than 1,500 movements were reported at 15 airports. Of these, 10 airports registered growth, ranging from 4,424 movements at Oshawa, Ontario to 1,722 at Fort McMurray, Alberta. Reductions in aircraft movements at the remaining 5 airports ranged from 4,690 at Toronto/Buttonville Municipal, Ontario to 1,569 at Boundary Bay, British Columbia.

Itinerant traffic rose 5.2% (+20,664 movements) as 56 airports reported more movements in August 2017. The largest gains were observed at Vancouver International, British Columbia (+2,934 movements), Williams Lake, British Columbia (+2,885), Oshawa (+2,094) and St-Jean, Quebec (+1,950). The wildfire situation in the province of British Columbia worsened during the month. By mid-August, the province declared that 894,491 hectares had burned since April 1st, 2017. This surpassed the previous record (855,000) reported in 1958. Record keeping began in 1950. The largest reductions in movements were recorded at Toronto/Buttonville Municipal (-1,766) and Victoria International, British Columbia (-946).

In August 2017, 48 airports recorded lower levels of local activity from the same month a year earlier. As a result, local movements decreased by 3,007 movements. Year-over-year variations ranged from a decrease of 2,924 movements at Toronto/Buttonville Municipal to an increase of 2,630 movements at Chicoutimi/St-Honoré, Quebec.

Itinerant movements: domestic, transborder and international

Domestic itinerant movements (within Canada) rose to 355,721 in August 2017, up 5.7% from the same month the previous year. For the second consecutive month this growth was led by Williams Lake (+2,888 movements). Traffic at the airport was dominated by aircraft engaged in fire suppression activities in the surrounding area. The largest reductions in movements occurred at Toronto/Buttonville Municipal (-1,754), Victoria International (-959) and Deer Lake, Newfoundland and Labrador (-757).

During the month, 85 airports reported 44,967 transborder (between Canada and the United States) itinerant movements, up 1.4% from the level reported in August 2016. The largest increases in traffic were recorded at Vancouver International (+820 movements), Montréal/Pierre Elliott Trudeau International, Quebec (+233), and Toronto/Billy Bishop Toronto City, Ontario (+101). The largest decreases were observed at Halifax/Robert L. Stanfield International, Nova Scotia (-190) and Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario (-128).

In August 2017, 37 airports reported a total of 15,688 other international itinerant movements, up 6.8% from the same period the previous year. Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International was the busiest airport with 7,167 movements, an increase of 2.3%, followed by Montréal/Pierre Elliott Trudeau International (3,684 movements) and Vancouver International (2,783). Together, these three airports accounted for 86.9% of all other international itinerant movements during the month.

Factors which may have influenced the data

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.

In late August, 2017, hurricane Harvey caused the cancellation of 25 WestJet flights to and from George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston, Texas.

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 province's 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 14, 2017, Wasaya Airways, based at Thunder Bay, Ontario, launched new twice-daily, non-stop service to Sandy Lake, Manitoba and Pikangikum, Ontario First Nations from Winnipeg, Manitoba and announced it would increase the frequency of flights between Winnipeg and Sioux Lookout, Ontario.

Operation NANOOK 2017, Canada's annual northern sovereignty operation, took place between August 12 and August 27. The Canadian Armed Forces deployed land, maritime and air components in two locations in the North: Rankin Inlet, Nunavut and northern Labrador.

On August 12, 2017, weather and reduced staffing at Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International Airport, Ontario, caused delays and dozens of flight cancellations.

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 3800 personnel were engaged in combating the fires, with additional crews from New Zealand, Mexico and the United States due to arrive shortly.

On August 1, 2017, the Willams Lake Airport, British Columbia was re-opened for regular travel. Although fully manned, the airport had been closed to all activity except for fire suppression since July 7, 2017.

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. reported 3,154 fires covering 1,130,724 hectares as of July 31, 2017. This represents an increase of 1,514 fires and 960,048 hectares from a month earlier. In 2016, the agency had recorded 3,969 fires encompassing 1,293,072 hectares by the end of July.

In early July 2017, numerous wild fires broke out in British Columbia. The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre Inc. reported 821 fires 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.

In July, Conair Group, based at Abbotsford Airport, British Columbia, provided 26 aircraft to battle fires burning in British Columbia in such places as Cache Creek, 100 Mile House, Williams Lake and Princeton.

On July 18, 2017, De Beers Canada inaugurated a direct flight from Calgary International Airport, Alberta to Gahcho Kué Mine in the Northwest Territories. The employee charter flight will take place twice per week on a year-round basis.

On July 13, 2017, Elite Airways began twice weekly non-stop service from Halifax/Robert L. Stanfield International Airport, Nova Scotia to Portland, Maine with an option for passengers to continue to Sarasota-Bradenton, Florida.

On July 10, 2017, three additional air tanker crews from Air Spray Ltd., based out of Red Deer Regional Airport, Alberta, were deployed into British Columbia. The increase is in addition to the three crews already contracted to the British Columbia government for the 2017 fire season.

On July 10 the Canadian Forces confirmed the movement of three Griffon helicopters into Kelowna, British Columbia with larger fixed wing aircraft to arrive shortly thereafter. The aircraft will be on standby, to assist in firefighting efforts if needed.

July 10 and July 18, 2017, smoke from numerous wildfires burning in British Columbia's interior caused delays and a handful of cancellations at Kamloops Airport, British Columbia.

On July 9, 2017, Central Mountain Air commenced service between Edmonton International Airport, Alberta and Prince George, British Columbia. Flights will operate six days a week.

On July 7, 2017, the province of British Columbia closed the airspace of the Williams Lake Airport to all service with the exception of fire suppression efforts.

In June, 2017, Air Canada Cargo launched new services between Montréal, Quebec and Marseille, France, as well as extra flights between Canada and France (specifically, Lyon and Paris).

On June 24, 2017, Air Canada Rouge began daily seasonal service between Victoria International Airport, British Columbia and Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International using a Boeing 767. With a capacity of 280 passengers it is the largest regularly scheduled airplane to operate out of Victoria International. Continuation of the service will be reviewed in the fall. The airline also operates daily direct service to Toronto using an Airbus.

Starting June 24, 2017, WestJet reduced the number of flights between Winnipeg/James Armstrong Richardson International, Manitoba and London's Gatwick Airport, Great Britain. The number of flights were cut down to 10, from 22 flights in 2016. The reduction in flights will be effective until August 26, 2017.

On June 23, 2017, Air Canada commenced service between Vancouver International Airport, British Columbia and Boston Logan International Airport, Massachusetts. The non-stop seasonal flight will operate daily until September 4, 2017.

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 Grefill Health. IDLP previously owned Innu Mikun Airlines in Northern Labrador, while NGC owned Air Labrador.

On June 9, 2017, Air Canada Rouge launched its new route from Montréal/Pierre Elliott Trudeau International, Quebec to Marseille. The seasonal non-stop service will operate three times a week for the summer.

On June 8, 2017, Air Canada Rouge began seasonal service from Vancouver International Airport to London's Gatwick Airport. The flights will operate three times a week.

On June 5, 2017, Pacific Coastal Airlines added a new flight in British Columbia between Kelowna and Victoria International Airport.

On June 1, 2017, Aeromexico launched non-stop service from Calgary International to Mexico City, Mexico. Calgary is the airline's fourth Canadian destination along with Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver.

On June 1, 2017, Vancouver International Airport celebrated the inauguration of two new non-stop seasonal services; Air Canada's daily service to Frankfurt, Germany and Air Canada Rouge's three times a week service to Nagoya, Japan.

On May 29, 2017, WestJet began non-stop seasonal service four times per week between Kelowna and Winnipeg/James Armstrong Richardson International. The service will continue until September 2017.

Starting May 24, 2017 Sunwing changed several of its flights from Québec/Jean Lesage International, Quebec to destinations in Cuba and Mexico from non-stop to direct via Montréal/Pierre Elliot Trudeau International or Ottawa/Macdonald-Cartier International, Ontario.

Starting May 21, 2017, First Air added a new trans-territorial flight spanning Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. The airline added a fourth weekly flight on its Iqaluit-Rankin Inlet-Yellowknife route.

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.

From May 18 to June 29, 2017, WestJet launched overnight service four times per week from Kelowna to Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International. Daily service will begin from June 30 to September 5, 2017. Service will be reduced to three times per week between September 6 to October 8, 2017.

On May 17, 2017, First Air ended its service between Yellowknife and Norman Wells, Northwest Territories.

On May 12, 2017, the runway extension at Red Deer Regional Airport became fully operational.

On May 5, 2017, nearly 150 flights scheduled to arrive and depart from Toronto's Pearson International Airport were cancelled due to thunderstorms and poor visibility.

On May 4, 2017, WestJet started direct service between Calgary International and Nashville, Tennessee. The airline will operate two flights a week.

On May 1, 2017, Wasaya Airways launched a new non-stop service between Winnipeg/James Armstrong Richardson International and Sioux Lookout. This route operates on weekdays only.

On May 1, 2017, Air Canada commenced daily year round service between Montréal/Pierre Elliott Trudeau International and Washington Dulles International Airport, D.C.

On May 1, 2017, Air Transat changed its flight from Québec/Jean Lesage International to Paris, France from non-stop to direct via Montréal/Pierre Elliot Trudeau International.

On April 30, 2017, WestJet commenced service between Hamilton Airport, Ontario and Vancouver International Airport. The flight will operate four times a week moving to a daily flight, June 28 to September 7. The flight will then return to four times a week until October 27.

On April 30, 2017, WestJet launched a daily direct flight between Winnipeg/James Armstrong Richardson International to Abbotsford.

On April 30, 2017, WestJet resumed daily non-stop flights between Gander International Airport, Newfoundland and Labrador and Halifax/Robert L. Stanfield International Airport.

Effective April 22 until May 28, 2017, Air Canada Rouge offered daytime non-stop service on Saturday and Sunday from Kelowna to Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International. Daily service will begin from May 29 to mid-September.

In April 2017, Cathay Pacific added three additional flights between Vancouver International Airport and Hong Kong, China. The airline operates the new Airbus 350-900.

In April 2017, Calm Air cancelled flights to Gillam, Manitoba due to the soft runway conditions. The gravel runway was unsafe to land large planes.

Effective March 28, 2017, Cathay Pacific increased the frequency of its service from Vancouver International Airport to Boston.

As of March 26, 2017, Air Canada stopped flying directly from Ottawa/Macdonald-Cartier International to LaGuardia Airport, New York, New York. The airline instead will offer flights from Ottawa/Macdonald-Cartier International to Newark Airport, New Jersey.

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 15, 2017, Halifax/Robert L. Stanfield International Airport reported more than two dozen flight cancellations and delays due to a winter storm which caused power outages throughout the province.

On March 14, 2017, a powerful winter storm pounded southern and central Quebec. Most flights at Montréal/Pierre Elliot Trudeau International Airport were cancelled or delayed.

On March 7, 2017, Regina International Airport, Saskatchewan cancelled and delayed numerous flights due to blizzard conditions.

On February 16, 2017, Air Canada launched daily year-round flights from Montréal/Pierre Elliott Trudeau International to Shanghai, China.

Starting February 5, 2017, Air Canada began daily year-round non-stop flights between Dallas-Fort Worth Airport, Texas and Vancouver International.

On February 3, 2017, WestJet inaugurated daily service from Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International to Sudbury, Ontario.

On January 23, 2017, First Air announced a new four-year agreement with Summit Air, which will expand its use of the charter passenger service.

On January 19, 2017, WestJet inaugurated service from Calgary International Airport to Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, Arizona. Inaugural service from Edmonton International Airport began January 21.

On January 17, 2017, WestJet launched its non-stop service from Winnipeg/James Armstrong Richardson International Airport to Hamilton Airport. The airline also relaunched non-stop service to Edmonton International and Halifax/Robert L. Stanfield International Airport from Hamilton Airport on January 16.

Effective January 15, 2017, NewLeaf, operated by Flair Airlines, cancelled flights between Hamilton and Halifax/Robert L. Stanfield International airports. Also flights were cancelled between Abbotsford and Edmonton International and between Edmonton International and Kelowna.

Starting January 10, 2017, Aqsaqniq Airways offered bi-monthly service from Cambridge Bay, Nunavut to Yellowknife. The company plans to put passengers and freight on a de Havilland Dash-7 combi between the two hubs every second Tuesday.

Starting January 9, 2017, Delta Air Lines resumed daily year-round service between John F. Kennedy Airport, New York and Halifax/Robert L. Stanfield International Airport.

On January 8, 2017, American Airlines ended its service from Halifax/Robert L. Stanfield International Airport to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Due to planned maintenance by Canadian North, the Ottawa to Iqaluit codeshare route will be served by a single daily flight operated by First Air from January 5 to February 28, 2017.

On January 2, 2017, Canadian North launched a refurbished Boeing 737-300 combi-jet on its Iqaluit–Ottawa route. The company also announced that it will resume Dash 8 service for the following Nunavut airports: Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Qikiqtarjuaq and Pangnirtung.

In 2016, Air Canada reduced the number of flights between Kamloops and Vancouver International.

On December 26, 2016, several flights out of Thunder Bay Airport were cancelled due to a winter storm.

On December 20, 2016, Air Canada began a new year-round service between Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International Airport and Port of Spain, Trinidad.

On December 17, 2016, Air Canada inaugurated a new non-stop service between Montréal/Pierre Elliot Trudeau International Airport and Puerto Rico. The weekly flights will operate as a winter seasonal service.

Starting December 16, 2016, Sunwing began new seasonal flights to Freeport, Bahamas from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and Regina. Regina also received a new seasonal flight to Manzanillo, Mexico starting December 21, 2016.

On December 15, 2016, Sunwing started seasonal flights to Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic from Saskatoon.

On December 14, 2016, Cargair began to operate a training facility at Montréal/Mirabel International Airport, Quebec. The flight school was previously located at Mascouche, Quebec.

On December 9, 2016, Porter Airlines began winter service between Toronto/Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport, Ontario and Mont Tremblant, Quebec. Flights will be available until April 3, 2017, with service up to six times weekly during the peak schedule.

In December 2016, Canadian North cancelled its code-sharing flights from Ottawa/Macdonald-Cartier International Airport to Iqaluit. This route was serviced by First Air.

In November 2016, the city of Mascouche closed the private airport that had been operating in the city.

On November 19, 2016, Air Canada Cargo expanded its freighter operations with the introduction of freighter flights between Frankfurt and Toronto. The weekly 737-300 freighter flights are operated by Cargojet through a wet lease agreement with Air Canada.

On November 18, 2016, Air Canada Rouge launched weekly service between Montréal/Pierre Elliott Trudeau International to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. The route will be flown three times a week by mid-December 2016.

On November 18, 2016, Hawkair Aviation Services filed for bankruptcy, suspending all operations.

Starting November 7, 2016, Perimeter Aviation added flights in Ontario from Sioux Lookout to Bearskin Lake First Nation and Thunder Bay to Bearskin Lake First Nation.

On November 6, 2016, Sunwing Vacations introduced a new weekly service from Kelowna to Cancun, Mexico. This service will run until April 9, 2017.

On October 31, 2016, Toronto Airways Inc. and the Canadian Flight Academy announced their move of operations from Toronto/Buttonville Municipal Airport, Ontario to Oshawa Airport, Ontario. In order to accommodate the move, Toronto Airways at Toronto/Buttonville Municipal was closed effective November 23, 2016. The Canadian Flight Academy was closed effective November 30, 2016.

On October 29, 2016, the St. John's Airport Authority seized one of the aircraft of National Airlines passenger operations due to a financial issue. The airline subsequently announced that they were cancelling several flights in November and December and decided not to extend service to St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador beyond January 6, 2017.

On October 29, 2016, WestJet launched its first flight from Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International Airport to Belize City, Belize. The new non-stop seasonal service will operate two times a week.

On October 24, 2016, Perimeter Aviation service to Sioux Lookout was expanded to include the Ontario First Nation communities of Deer Lake, Sachigo Lake, Weagamow (Round Lake) and North Spirit Lake with many of these new flights connecting to Bearskin Airlines service to and from Thunder Bay.

On October 20, 2016, Air Canada inaugurated the only non-stop service from Vancouver International Airport to Delhi, India. The airline will operate flights three times a week.

The Canadian North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) Region began its annual field training exercise in Inuvik and the surrounding areas on October 17, 2016. The live-fly field training exercise will run to October 21, 2016.

As of October 7, 2016, Porter Airlines began daily flights between Toronto/Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport to North Bay, Ontario.

Effective October 6, 2016, Calgary International Airport was renamed to YYC Calgary International Airport.

As of October 5, 2016, American Airlines ended its service between Kitchener/Waterloo Airport, Ontario and Chicago O'Hare International Airport, Illinois.

As of October 1, 2016, Hawkair suspended flights from Terrace, British Columbia to Vancouver International Airport.

Starting in October 2016, United Airlines increased flights from Edmonton to Denver, Colorado to two per day.

Effective September 19, 2016, Bearskin Airlines increased service between the Ontario cities of Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury. All nonstop service between Thunder Bay-Sault Ste. Marie and Sault Ste. Marie-Sudbury will increase from 23 to 33 flights weekly. Service between Thunder Bay and Sudbury will increase from 29 to 40 flights weekly including a combination of nonstop and one stop same aircraft service.

On September 18, 2016, the City of Brandon, Manitoba announced that WestJet was ending direct flights between Brandon and Toronto/Lester B. Pearson International Airport. The service was introduced earlier this year as a trial run.

On September 15, 2016, Greater Toronto Airways began daily flights from Toronto/Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport to Niagara District Airport in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario.

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.

On September 5, 2016, Integra Air launched a new scheduled air service in Alberta between Edmonton International and Medicine Hat.

Operation NANOOK 2016, Canada's annual northern sovereignty operation began on August 21, 2016. The Canadian Armed Forces deployed land, maritime and air components in three locations in the North: Rankin Inlet, Whitehorse and Haines Junction, Yukon.

Effective August 18, 2016, Moncton/Greater Moncton International Airport, New Brunswick was renamed Greater Moncton Roméo Leblanc International Airport.

On August 6 and 7, 2016, Edmonton/Villeneuve Airport, Alberta boosted their regional profile by hosting their second annual Edmonton Airshow.

As of August 1, 2016, Delta Airlines suspended flights to and from Regina International Airport and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

In August 2016, West Wind Aviation completed its acquisition of Transwest Air. The carriers will operate as separate airlines with a codeshare agreement on their northern Canada schedule.

For the month of August 2016, Central Mountain Air continued to offer flights in British Columbia between Dawson Creek and Prince George after a trial run the previous month.