

Evaluation Summary

Airports Operations and Maintenance Subsidy Program

Program

Transport Canada's Airports Operations and Maintenance Subsidy Program (The Program) provides financial support to remote airports that are identified in the *National Airports Policy* (1994). The Program was created in 1972 to help remote communities have year-round, safe transportation links to the national transportation networks. The funding helps remote airports pay for operational and maintenance costs such as employee salaries and benefits, rent for land, equipment, utilities and insurance.

In the five-year period from 2010-2011 and 2014-2015, the Program provided \$9.3 million to support remote airports. In the first three years of this period, the Program funded seven airports. In the following two years, the Program funded four airports. These airports each received funding in the amount of \$5,000 to \$1.1 million a year.

Evaluation

The current evaluation updates the 2009 evaluation by focusing on key information from program administration and performance reports. The evaluation covers the period from April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2015.

Evaluation Results

The evaluation findings are as follows:

- The Program helps remote communities which rely on air transportation for getting essential supplies and services such as food, mail and medical assistance. There is a continuing need to support remote airports through the Program.
- The Program is in line with the federal roles and responsibilities established in the *National Airports Policy*. Under this policy, the federal government ensures remote communities to have reasonable transportation services.
- The Program has achieved its expected outcomes. The funded airports were open year-round, had good safety records, and maintained their certifications for the airport safety standards and practices.
- If the funding to remote airports through the Program were to be stopped, Transport Canada would have to either directly operate these airports or contract other parties to do it in order to carry out its responsibilities under the policy. Neither of these choices would cost less nor work better than the current Program.
- Natashquan airport in Quebec receives funding but it is not a remote airport. It was reclassified as a regional/local airport in 1996. This case was raised in the 2009 evaluation.