

**NATIONAL AIRLINES COUNCIL OF CANADA**  
**CONSEIL NATIONAL DES LIGNES AÉRIENNES DU CANADA**



**NACC Presentation on Aviation Security  
to the House of Commons Committee on Transport,  
Infrastructure and Communities**

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## INTRODUCTION

- Thank you Honourable Members of the Committee for the opportunity to appear before you today to talk about aviation security. Before I begin, I would like to note that the National Airlines Council of Canada's safety experts appeared before this Committee on April 15 to present our views on aviation safety, and so today we will speak to you exclusively about security.
- I am Laura Logan, Chair of the NACC's Security and Facilitation Subcommittee as well as Director, Security Systems and Regulatory at Air Canada, and I am joined today by Lorne Mackenzie who is Vice-Chair on the Subcommittee as well as WestJet's Director Regulatory Affairs.
- I would like to note that we are appearing before you today on behalf of all NACC member carriers – Air Canada, Air Transat, Jazz Air and WestJet.
- Aviation is a global business and by definition airlines operate in the jurisdictions of multiple governments. We would like to encourage the government of Canada to continue and strengthen its use of the inter-government networks and ICAO when developing aviation security policy and requirements. The coordination must be more than philosophical or skin deep. Minor differences in requirements can significantly increase costs and disruptions without adding any security value.

## COMPREHENSIVE AND STRATEGIC SCREENING

- The NACC's member airlines recognize that safe and secure air travel is a critical priority for all Canadians, and it is vital to our national security at large.
- We also recognize that the human and financial resources dedicated to aviation security are not unlimited, though new and emerging threats require continued vigilance and innovative thinking. For that reason we strongly advocate a comprehensive approach to screening that makes more efficient use of current capabilities and includes more than just technology at the checkpoint. The technology is useful but it is not foolproof. As such we strongly support the announcement by the Minister of Transport to pursue and develop a behavioural screening training policy.
- Currently every air traveller, except for selectees identified by the TSA or on an exceptional basis by the carriers, arrives at the screening point as an unknown and is assumed to pose an equal risk. Yet in reality, information on the passenger is already accessible:
  - a) The carrier has data about each passenger as provided during the booking process;
  - b) The government has intelligence that can be brought to bear, including for example on those passengers who have NEXUS cards and who can be considered lower-risk, 'known'; and
  - c) Additional information can be detected through behavioural observation.

- This information can be combined to differentiate passengers who pose higher risks from those who pose lower risks so that screening efforts can be re-deployed to maximum benefit.
- Screening must be viewed as a holistic process that draws on multiple information streams to assess the risk posed by the individual. Relying on a one-size fits all technology-based screening checkpoint with a 'random' component is neither foolproof nor cost-effective.
- Best practices in other jurisdictions have shown significant success with behavioural screening, which, I stress, is not racial profiling. This technique, in which highly trained detection officers question and observe travellers throughout the screening process, is considered by the NACC as an effective and cost-efficient method of detecting suspicious behavior without compromising individual privacy.
- It is well know that Israel is considered a leader in behavioural assessment procedures, and as such the NACC recommends that the Committee may wish to give further scrutiny and analysis to the methods used in this country.

#### TOWARDS A RESPONSIVE AND COST-EFFICIENT OPERATING MODEL

- The NACC fully endorses the comprehensive review of CATSA announced by the Minister of Transport as an opportunity to ensure Canadians are getting the best security value for their dollar. We believe this review should look at all aspects of the organization – its structure, its mandate, and whether or not the current administrative/governance model is the best way forward to allow it to deliver on its mandate. To this end it is imperative to ensure a structure which allows for meaningful and transparent consultation with primary stakeholders and systems users such as air carriers.
- In the ever-evolving world of aviation security, we believe it is legitimate to periodically step back and conduct a thorough review of the system, and examine best practices and structures in other jurisdictions.
- It is entirely legitimate to, in the course of a review, question whether an aviation security agency, which in turn sub-contracts the actual screening and security service provision at airports to third party firms, is a cost-effective system of administration, and examine whether such a structure fosters the level of front-line service delivery Canadians expect and rely on.
- One of the key tenets of any aviation security review must be the evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness in delivering security screening services.
- Moreover, the December 2009 Delta Airlines incident, which called for increased security screening on US bound flights, demonstrated the need for robust and on-going contingency planning by Canadian aviation security authorities, including CATSA.

- Indeed the incident revealed that current global security threats require that CATSA's operating model needs to be better positioned to respond more quickly to change and to seek new opportunities to make aviation security better, smarter and more cost-efficient.
- Additionally, the NACC recommends that regular consultation with stakeholders must be formally implemented to ensure coordination on new and ongoing measures, and to promptly trouble shoot and resolve throughput issues.

#### USER PAY / USER VALUE

- Since the tragic events of 9/11, aviation security has become intrinsically linked to public safety and the war on terror. We all have a stake in the effectiveness of aviation security, and the Government of Canada must recognize that ensuring safe and secure air travel is a public good and needs to be funded accordingly.
- Indeed, unlike in other transportation sectors, the cost of air transport security is reflected directly in the travellers' ticket because it is air travellers who bear the cost of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA).
- According to the US Transportation Security Administration, in fiscal year 2009, the TSA's aviation security budget of \$6 billion US was funded as follows:
  - 63% was funded through appropriations;
  - 30% was funded through air travelers;
  - 7% was funded through air carriers.
- A comparison to the US funding approach is particularly relevant. As other witnesses have stated before this Committee, decisions taken by the TSA impact the security requirements of other nations, in particular Canada's given our shared geography and the fact that Canada is one of the busiest aviation access points into the United States.
- Our government has stated, and rightly so, that Canada must be harmonized with the US in terms of continental security. However, when we look at how aviation security is funded in both countries – and what that means to the air traveller – the disparity is flagrant.
- For example, on a return Boston to Paris flight, an air traveller in the United States will pay a \$5 security charge. In contrast, a passenger flying Montreal to and from Paris will pay a \$28 security charge.
- As the TSA continues to develop its security policy and requirements, the bulk of those requirements are being provided from general government revenue. In effect, as Canada adopts new measures, given our user-pay model we are effectively asking Canadian consumers to compete with the US Treasury.

- In an era when governments around the world are responding to new and emerging global security threats by demonstrating a firm commitment to aviation security funding, does Canada's 100% user-pay model still make sense?
- The NACC strongly believes that aviation security is a matter of national security and that air travelers should not have to shoulder the absolute cost of measures meant to safeguard all Canadians from potential threats.
- The Council therefore recommends that the Government of Canada establish an aviation security funding model that reflects its shared benefits, is sustainable in the long term, is better aligned and harmonized with a North American model, and provides for greater input from stakeholders through transparency and consultation.
- We are not advocating that the state assume 100% of aviation security costs. What we are saying is that the current model is not sustainable. If the user-pay principle is to be the dominant approach, then we need to look at new ways to implement this policy.
- For example, airport ground rent brings in approximately \$300 million per year that now goes to general revenues. What about directing these funds – which are generated by the aviation industry – toward the cost of aviation security?

#### IN SUMMARY

- In closing, I would like to reiterate the unconditional commitment of NACC member airlines to provide their passengers with the highest levels of safety and security.
- We believe that aviation security is a matter of national security and requires increased funding, coordination and oversight from the Government of Canada.
- Thank you.