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## NEWS RELEASE

February 1, 2012

### Comox Valley Airport Commission Announces Resignation of CEO

It is with great regret that the Comox Valley Airport Commission announces the resignation of its Chief Executive Officer, Shirley de Silva who has served as YQQ's CEO since January, 2010.

"It is with sadness in our hearts that we accept Shirley's resignation. This is a loss for YQQ and the Comox Valley as a whole," said CVAC Board Chair Brad Minton. "We were fortunate to have been able to work with Shirley and learn from her over the last two years. I feel privileged to have worked with such a skillful and dedicated individual, who has also become a good friend. She will be thoroughly missed."

De Silva has worked tirelessly on making the case for new routes at YQQ, said Minton. Since her arrival at the Commission, the Comox Valley Airport has seen a 4.2 per cent increase in passenger numbers and the development of a new strategic plan focused on acquiring new air service.

Just last year, she made 14 presentations to prospective airlines and established an incentive program to attract new routes and carriers to the airport. During her tenure, the airport successfully established the region's first charter flight to Fort Nelson, as well as a direct flight to Cancun, Mexico that helped to contribute to an increase in passenger numbers, when other airports across North America were reporting flat growth.

"Under Shirley's oversight, we have enhanced the corporate culture of CVAC and developed a professional approach utilizing best practices from the aviation sector," said Minton. "Shirley was a goal oriented individual and it is fair to say that she has improved the airport since she arrived and placed us in a stronger and more competitive position for future growth."

De Silva has also overseen the development and implementation of a public relations program at YQQ, which is aimed at increasing communication with the Commission's nominating entities, YQQ staff, the community, passengers and airlines. A revamped marketing strategy, anchored by a world-class brand model, was launched in 2011 to stem the leakage of passengers to other airports and revitalize the terminal building and corporate materials.

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"I greatly appreciate the support that the Comox Valley Airport Commission has given me during my tenure here," said de Silva. "I am fully confident in the abilities of both the Board and the Management team to achieve the goals envisioned in our strategic plan. I am certain that the transition ahead will be a smooth one and I am committed to working cooperatively over the coming weeks and months to ensure that the organization is prepared for my departure."

De Silva's resignation is effective April 30, 2012, allowing for a seamless three month transition. The next weeks and months will be spent working with the board to develop a succession plan that will keep the organization on its planned trajectory as outlined in the Commission's five year strategic plan.

For more information about YQQ's strategic direction visit: [www.comoxairport.com](http://www.comoxairport.com) under *about us/publications*.

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**Note:** CVAC Board Chair, Brad Minton, will be conducting interviews regarding the resignation of Shirley de Silva. To arrange an interview with Brad, please contact:

Christianne Wile  
Comox Valley Airport Commission  
Phone: 250-890-0829 ext. 253  
[cwile@comoxairport.com](mailto:cwile@comoxairport.com)