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**NEWS RELEASE**  
February 14, 2013

## **The Comox Valley Airport Celebrates the Tenth Anniversary of the Referendum Vote that started it all**

Tomorrow marks the tenth anniversary of the municipal referendum vote that made the construction of the Comox Valley Airport terminal building possible. Many Comox Valley residents can recall a time when passengers stood outside in the rain waiting to check in for their flights. Thanks to the municipal referendum, travelers today enjoy a full service, modern facility that accommodates more than 327,000 passengers per year.

"This is an extremely important milestone in our history and it is important that we take the time to thank all of those who helped build our terminal; including the Yes Campaign Steering Committee, municipal taxpayers and all of our stakeholders and partners who continue to make the airport a community success story," said Comox Valley Airport Commission Chair, Linda Oprica. "YQQ has been extremely fortunate in its achievements, which would not have been possible without our current terminal building."

On February 15, 2003, over 17,000 votes were cast in the referendum and an overwhelming 87.5 per cent of municipal taxpayers voted in favour of providing a \$4 million capital grant to the Comox Valley Airport Commission to help construct a new airport terminal. The Commission was then able to leverage the grant, along with its own investment in the project, to obtain additional funds from the provincial and federal governments to make construction of a new facility possible.

"As a tenant of YQQ I am fortunate to experience the benefits of our airport on a daily basis as I observe the positive impact it has on our passengers and the community," said former Yes Campaign Steering Committee member Andrea Wagemaker. "It is truly amazing what can be accomplished when we work together as a community. The airport and the people who work here are extremely close to my heart and I couldn't be more excited to share in this milestone with all of those who made it possible."

The Comox Valley Airport terminal building was completed on budget and opened its doors to the public in April of 2004. Since then, annual passenger traffic has grown by 78 per cent with 327,827 passengers served last year.



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The historical funding breakdown for the construction of the terminal building is as follows:

<b>Comox Valley Regional District</b>	<b>\$4 million</b> – for terminal building construction
<b>Government of British Columbia</b>	<b>\$2 million</b> – for terminal building construction
<b>Transport Canada</b>	<b>\$1.9 million</b> – for aircraft apron and taxiway construction
<b>Canadian Airport Authority</b>	<b>\$535,562</b> – for security upgrades
<b>Comox Valley Airport Commission</b>	<b>\$3.3 million</b> – for terminal building construction
	\$1.2 million (cash)
	<u>\$2.1 million (bank loans)</u>
<hr/> <b>Total Project Budget</b>	<b>\$11.7 million</b>

“Each time a plane lands at YQQ it generates employment and labour hours from passenger handling, baggage, cargo, food concessions and car rental agencies,” concluded Linda Oprica. “Our airport generates a significant return on investment in terms of its economic impact on the Comox Valley. We are grateful for the community support that has contributed to the success of YQQ today and we look forward to celebrating continued success with our community in the future.”

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**ATTENTION ASSIGNMENT EDITORS:**

Some former members of the Yes Campaign Steering Committee and the Comox Valley Airport Commission are hosting a community event in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the municipal referendum vote on **February 15, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. at On The Fly Café in the Comox Valley Airport.** Remarks will be delivered by the Comox Valley Airport Commission, the Yes Campaign Steering Committee and the Honourable Don McRae, MLA for the Comox Valley. There will also be a written statement from the Honourable John Duncan, Member of Parliament for Vancouver Island North, as well as a media photo opportunity, cake, coffee and free parking at the airport from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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