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## News Release

June 23, 2014

### **Landing limits lowered at the Comox Valley Airport** *YQQ is once again one of the most reliable airports in the province*

Landing limits have been brought back to normal at the Comox Valley Airport following a move by the Department of National Defence to adopt Transport Canada's new standards.

"We are absolutely thrilled with this decision," said Comox Valley Airport CEO Fred Bigelow. "The Comox Valley Airport can once again offer the kind of all-weather capability that travellers expect. With a minimum instrument approach height of 250 feet, YQQ is now one of the most reliable and capable airports in BC."

"We would like to thank all of the passengers that stood by us and continued to use our services while we worked to find a solution to restore landing limits at YQQ," said Frank van Gisbergen, Chair of the Comox Valley Airport Commission. "We would also like to acknowledge our airline partners, who remained committed to doing business at our airport while actively working with us on finding solutions."

The new TP312 Transport Canada standards, which are slated to come into effect at airports across the country later this year, were adopted early by the Department of National Defence in order to prevent unnecessary cancellations and diversions during poor weather conditions. Obstacles which previously penetrated the limitation surfaces around the Comox aerodrome are no longer an issue under the new standards.

"By implementing the new standards this summer, the Department of National Defence has ended the need for the restrictions imposed on the Comox Valley Airport nearly three years ago," explained John Duncan, Member of Parliament for Vancouver Island North. "YQQ is an essential economic driver in this community and I couldn't be more pleased for my constituents, many of whom depend on the airport to access their place of employment."

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“The provincial government was engaged early on in this process, in particular working with BC Hydro to eliminate any barriers to achieving full operational capability at the airport,” said Comox Valley MLA Don McRae. “I am delighted the situation has been resolved and Comox Valley and area residents can once again have the pleasure of utilizing one of the most reliable airports in the province.”

Following dialogue with the Comox Valley Airport and the MLA, BC Hydro expedited its plans to lower power lines around YQQ last year, directly supporting the return to lower landing limits.

“The completion of this work ensured there were no additional barriers once the new federal standards were adopted,” explained Comox Valley Airport CEO Fred Bigelow.

“Working with 19 Wing, the RCAF headquarters in Winnipeg, Transport Canada officials, our airlines and with the full support of our MP, MLA and local governments, we rallied support to restore our operational capability,” concluded Bigelow. “All of these parties working together resulted in DND’s decision to adopt the new standards early. We are extremely grateful for the support of all involved.”

### **About the Comox Valley Airport**

The Comox Valley Airport (YQQ) is an economic driver for Northern Vancouver Island, supporting about 193 direct jobs including airlines, airport management, security, food and beverage, retail and ground transportation. The airport and tourism business community together generate \$367 million in Gross Domestic Product and \$701 million in direct economic output for the community. YQQ is operated by the Comox Valley Airport Commission, which was established in 1996 as a non-share capital and not-for-profit organization to operate the civil aviation facilities, including the terminal and apron. The airfield and its associated systems, including air traffic control, are operated by the Royal Canadian Air Force at 19 Wing Comox on a continuous 24-hour basis.

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