
NEWS RELEASE

YXX and WestJet Go Green

Abbotsford, February 26, 2010 – WestJet and the Abbotsford International Airport have embraced new navigation technology that enhances airport safety, efficiency and environmental effectiveness, announced Dave Kandal, Chair of the Abbotsford Airport Authority today.

The new navigation capability, called Required Navigation Performance (RNP) is applied in the approach and landing of aircraft. RNP allows an aircraft to fly a specific path between two, three-dimensionally defined points in space, which results in more efficient use of airspace. The technology provides pilots with precise navigational accuracy using a network of GPS satellites communicating with onboard aircraft navigation systems.

“Previously, there was no method for pilots to use an instrument approach to the eastern end of runway 07/25,” said Kandal. “Conventional navigational technology could not support an approach due to the high terrain, which meant that aircraft had to fly further west and conduct a circling procedure to land. The new RNP capability enables pilots to use a highly-precise, curved approach that allows WestJet pilots to easily and safely navigate in challenging terrain.”

RNP also brings with it shorter flight distances, lower (idle) thrust settings on approach, decreased fuel consumption and noise, and significant Greenhouse Gas emission reductions.

“When we look at the environmental impacts over an entire year, the numbers are staggering,” said Kandal. “By changing to the RNP approach the annual reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions over the City of Abbotsford is expected to be greater than 1,000 tonnes of CO₂.”

RNP was initially developed at airports that have challenging weather and approach conditions such as mountainous terrain and restricted airspace. WestJet is an industry leader in implementing this technology in its aircraft and has established a network of RNP approaches at 20 airports across Canada.

“After a lengthy and comprehensive design and development process, the RNP approach was approved for use in Abbotsford in December 2009” said David Deere, Standards Pilot for WestJet. “RNP flight paths are precisely accurate, repeatable and predictable, which for us is paramount in helping us to achieve our customer service delivery goals.”

Abbotsford International Airport serves approximately 500,000 passengers annually and has connecting flights to destinations worldwide. During the period of the Olympics, Abbotsford International Airport served as a portal airport and serviced hundreds of arriving and departing dignitaries and guests including Arnold Schwarzenegger.

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