



Flight

The Journal for Canadian Aviation Enthusiasts
Le magazine des passionnés d'aviation canadiens

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WINTER FLYING ISSUE

Tales of Adventure to
Keep You Warm



**FLYING INTO CANADA'S
POLAR BEAR CAPITAL**

**WHAT WILL AN ELECTION MEAN
FOR GENERAL AVIATION?**

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WE COVER WHAT TO DO**

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ON THE COVER: Photographer Tony Puerzer captures Mike Andrews and Doug Durrant enjoying the 1941 Super Stearman amongst the springtime snow-capped mountains of Vancouver Island.

ABOVE: World renowned Canadian aerobatic performer, Luke Penner takes a break from training to the Caribbean in a Cessna 210 this winter. What warm destination are you dreaming of?

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By now, many of you have seen my announcement about retiring from my role as COPA's President and CEO. When I took on this two-year position, my goal was to strengthen the association's business acumen, refine its identity, and provide stability through my experience as a leader. With a background as an avionics AME, 20 years of COPA membership, and experience successfully leading another aviation business, I aimed to guide COPA through a crucial period of growth and change.

Looking back on my tenure, I'm incredibly proud of what we've achieved. From aviation medical reforms to advocacy during the 100LL fuel shortage, and working to ensure the ADS-B mandate meets the needs of our community, we've faced significant challenges and met them head-on. I am confident that I will leave the next leader in a strong position to guide us through the ongoing issues facing GA in Canada.

While our small team works tirelessly behind the scenes, we have often fallen short in sharing the scope of these efforts. But I assure you, we punch far above our weight. We've made important strides in advocacy, and though much has been accomplished, much remains to be done.

Though I'm stepping down as President, my commitment to COPA

remains unwavering. I will continue to fly and support the organization, as my identity is deeply tied to being a Canadian GA pilot. I will also remain involved in the transition to ensure the next leader is set up for success, and that the work we've started continues on solid ground.

Throughout my time here, I've worked to build a sustainable organization that meets the evolving needs of our members. We've made significant progress in areas like aviation medicals and airspace access policies. However, challenges and opportunities still lie ahead. For example, our work with Transport Canada on aviation medicals, which has helped hundreds of members, will continue as we push for new solutions like a BasicMed-like category for more pilots to stay flying.

Last summer, COPA was quick to respond during the 100LL fuel shortage, reaching out to Imperial Oil and ensuring our concerns were heard. We will continue to monitor this issue to safeguard the future of aviation in Canada.

Our advocacy with NAV CANADA on ADS-B requirements also made significant strides in the past couple years.. We helped delay the rollout of space-based ADS-B for Class C, D, and E airspace, ensuring that the unique needs of GA aircraft are considered in the larger airspace management strategy.

So, what's in store for 2025? More opportunities for connection, communication, and advocacy. This includes member meetups, enhanced COPA Flight chapter resources, and advocacy toolkits.

Ultimately, I hope we don't lose sight of the bigger picture. COPA is a membership-based organization, and we exist to work on behalf of you, our members. At the same time, we rely on each of you to take action

Looking ahead, I'm optimistic about COPA's future. We've laid the groundwork for continued success, but the next phase will require a strong, visionary leader to guide us through the challenges ahead. That leader will build on the momentum we've created, continuing to protect and inspire general aviation in Canada for years to come.

in your communities and to use our resources to protect the collective interests of Canadian pilots. Together, we are stronger, and your involvement is crucial in ensuring the continued success and growth of General Aviation in Canada. We are here to support you, but it is through your active participation that we can make the most impact.

Looking ahead, I'm optimistic about COPA's future. We've laid the groundwork for continued success, but the next phase will require a strong, visionary leader to guide us through the challenges ahead. That leader will build on the momentum we've created, continuing to promote, preserve, and inspire General Aviation in Canada for years to come. Thank you for your ongoing support. It's been an honour to serve you, and I look forward to seeing COPA thrive in the years ahead (again, I'm still around). 🛩️

SUR LE LEADERSHIP À LONG TERME DU COPA

À l'heure qu'il est, plusieurs d'entre vous ont pris connaissance de l'annonce de mon départ à la retraite en tant que président et directeur général de la COPA. Lorsque j'ai accepté ce poste de deux ans, mon objectif était de renforcer le sens des affaires de l'association, d'affiner son identité et d'assurer sa stabilité grâce à mon expérience du leadership. Avec mon expérience en tant que TEA en avionique, 20 ans d'adhésion à la COPA et une expérience réussie à la tête d'une autre entreprise aéronautique, j'avais pour objectif de guider la COPA dans une période cruciale de croissance et de changement.

Lorsque je regarde en arrière, je suis incroyablement fier de ce que nous avons accompli. Qu'il s'agisse des réformes de la médecine aéronautique, du plaidoyer lors de la pénurie de carburant 100LL ou des efforts déployés pour que le mandat ADS-B réponde aux besoins de notre communauté, nous avons fait face à des défis de taille et les avons relevés sans détour. Je suis persuadé que je laisserai au prochain dirigeant une position solide pour nous guider à travers les problèmes actuels auxquels l'Aviation Générale est confrontée au Canada.

Bien que notre petite équipe travaille sans relâche en coulisses, nous n'avons pas toujours réussi à faire connaître l'ampleur de nos efforts. Mais je peux vous assurer que nous sommes bien au-dessus de nos moyens. Nous avons réalisé d'importantes avancées en matière de défense des intérêts, et bien que beaucoup ait été accompli, il reste encore beaucoup à faire.

Bien que je quitte mon poste de président, mon engagement envers la COPA demeure inébranlable. Je continuerai à voler et à soutenir l'organisation, car mon identité est profondément liée au fait d'être un pilote canadien de l'Aviation Générale.

Je resterai également impliqué dans la transition afin de m'assurer que le prochain dirigeant est prêt à réussir et que le travail que nous avons commencé se poursuit sur des bases solides.

Tout au long de mon mandat, j'ai œuvré à la mise en place d'une organisation durable qui réponde aux besoins évolutifs de nos membres. Nous avons réalisé des progrès significatifs dans des domaines tels que les examens médicaux aéronautiques et les politiques d'accès à l'espace aérien. Cependant, il reste encore des défis à relever et des opportunités à saisir. Par exemple, notre travail avec Transports Canada sur la médecine aérienne, qui a aidé des centaines de membres, se poursuivra et nous ferons pression pour trouver de nouvelles solutions, comme une catégorie similaire à BasicMed pour permettre à davantage de pilotes de rester en vol.


La question de l'accessibilité du carburant d'aviation reste une priorité absolue. La COPA a réagi rapidement lors de la pénurie de carburant 100LL, en contactant Imperial Oil et en veillant à ce que nos préoccupations soient entendues. Nous continuerons à suivre cette question afin de préserver l'avenir de l'aviation au Canada.

Notre plaidoyer auprès de NAV CANADA sur les exigences de l'ADS-B a également permis de réaliser des avancées significatives. Nous avons contribué à retarder le déploiement de l'ADS-B spatial pour les espaces aériens de classe C, D et E, en veillant à ce que les besoins spécifiques des aéronefs de l'Aviation Générale soient pris en compte dans la stratégie globale de gestion de l'espace aérien.

Que nous réserve l'année 2025? Plus d'opportunités de connexion, de communication et de plaidoyer. Cela comprend des réunions de membres, des ressources améliorées pour les sections du COPA Flight et des kits d'outils de plaidoyer.

Enfin, j'espère que nous ne perdrons pas de vue la situation dans son ensemble. La COPA est une organisation à base de membres, et nous existons pour travailler en votre nom, celui de nos membres. En même temps, nous comptons sur chacun d'entre vous pour agir dans vos communautés et pour utiliser vos ressources, le cas échéant, afin de protéger les intérêts collectifs des pilotes canadiens. Ensemble, nous sommes plus forts, et votre participation est essentielle pour assurer le succès et la croissance continue de l'Aviation Générale au Canada. Nous sommes là pour vous soutenir, mais c'est grâce à votre participation active que nous pourrions avoir le plus d'impact.

Je suis optimiste quant à l'avenir de la COPA. Nous avons jeté les bases d'un succès continu, mais la prochaine étape nécessitera un leader fort et visionnaire pour nous guider à travers les défis qui nous attendent. Ce leader s'appuiera sur l'élan que nous avons créé, continuant à protéger et à inspirer l'Aviation Générale au Canada pour les années à venir.

Je vous remercie de votre soutien constant. Ce fut un honneur de vous servir, et je me réjouis de voir la COPA prospérer dans les années à venir (encore une fois, je suis toujours présent). 

MEMBER PROFILE: ISAAC ESHIKATY



BY AMANDA POIRIER

Isaac Eshikaty's journey into aviation is rooted in a strong family tradition and a passion for teaching, a combination that has shaped his role as an aviator and mentor for aspiring pilots.

Growing up in Kenya with a father who was a pilot in the Kenya Air Force, Isaac was surrounded by aviation from an early age. Isaac's younger brother, now a 737 Captain with Kenya Airways, also shares this aviation lineage. Eshikaty however never felt the call to pursue the commercial airline path and instead prefers the freedom that General Aviation allows. Isaac has found his own unique calling in aviation—teaching young minds about the wonders of flight while staying rooted in his community.



▲ Touring Aviation Club students through the Seneca Aviation Polytechnic

Eshikaty received COPA's Drone Pilot Scholarship in 2023 and ran a drone program for students at Lakefield College School in Ontario, a small private school tucked away on Lake Katchewanooka. The program helped students obtain their drone licences while also introducing them to the

fundamentals of aviation. He had five students receive their drone certificate in 2024 and saw that there was a growing appetite amongst them to get into a plane and fly. "We have kids that are passionate and interested in flying, and this is where I fill the gap," says Eshikaty.

He has evolved this program and developed an aviation club at the school, with more and more students showing interest in learning the principles of flight. Eshikaty received his PPL with W.M. Aeroflight in Peterborough, Ont. and has so far taken six of his students to the same flight school for their first ever discovery flight. "I want to support their ambitions outside of the aviation club at the Lakefield College School and get them started into real flying," says Eshikaty.

Despite the challenges of finding aircraft and resources, Eshikaty has made a lasting impact on the students he mentors. He integrates STEM education into aviation, using principles from trigonometry and physics to help students understand real-world applications in the cockpit. "My main focus of the program is to help make aviation make sense to a high schooler," says Eshikaty. This approach to aviation education helps makes concepts like crosswind, ground speed and ETA calculations more tangible to his students.

He is also an active member of his local flying community, serving as Captain of COPA Flight 34 in Peterborough. Through the leadership of this COPA Flight, he organizes fly-ins and fosters camaraderie among local pilots. He also launched a 'Want a Seat, Take a Seat' initiative in which active



▲ Family flight to Tailwinds in Orillia for dinner. Photo: Isaac Eshikaty

club pilots can take others along for a ride that may have lost their medical or who no longer actively fly.

Isaac spearheads efforts to get younger pilots at a neighbouring flight school involved in the club to show them ways to enjoy aviation outside of the classroom. "A lot of these younger student pilots are heads down in the books and they're there to get in and out to the airlines as quickly as possible. It doesn't give them a lot of time to get into the love of flying and experience the joy of the grass strips, cookouts or barbecues," says Eshikaty. "It's just not on their radar. I want to be the guy that brings people across the chain-link fence."

Ultimately Eshikaty loves the freedom aviation brings and has destinations pinned on his maps to fly to and explore. I can fly 200 miles to get butter tarts. I can fly to Killarney for fish and chips, I can fly to Montreal for bagels, I can fly to Prince Edward County for lobster. That's where the real joy of aviation lies." ✈️

PROFIL D'UN MEMBRE : ISAAC ESHIKATY



PAR AMANDA POIRIER

Le parcours d'Isaac Eshikaty dans le domaine de l'aviation est enraciné dans une véritable tradition familiale et une passion pour l'enseignement. Son rôle d'aviateur et de mentor pour les aspirants pilotes découle donc directement de cette combinaison.

L'aviation faisait partie intégrante de la vie d'Isaac dès son plus jeune âge puisqu'il a grandi au Kenya avec un père qui était pilote dans l'armée de l'air du Kenya. Le frère cadet d'Isaac, maintenant Capitaine 737 chez Kenya Airways, fait également partie cette lignée de pilotes. Isaac n'a cependant jamais ressenti l'appel pour l'aviation commerciale, préférant la liberté apportée par l'Aviation générale. Isaac a ainsi trouvé sa propre vocation dans l'aviation : enseigner les merveilles du vol aux jeunes tout en restant bien enraciné dans sa communauté.

En 2023, Isaac a reçu une bourse de formation de pilote de drone de la COPA, puis il a dirigé un programme de pilotage de drone destiné aux étudiants d'une petite école privée nichée sur le lac Katchewanookae en Ontario, la Lakefield College School. Le programme a aidé des étudiants à obtenir leur permis de pilotage de drone tout en les initiant aux principes fondamentaux de l'aviation. Cinq de ses étudiants ont ainsi reçu leur certificat de pilote de drone en 2024. Isaac a d'ailleurs remarqué le désir croissant de certains d'entre eux de monter dans un avion pour voler. « Nous avons des enfants qui démontrent une passion et un vif intérêt envers l'aviation, et c'est là que je comble les lacunes », explique Isaac.

Tout en faisant évoluer ce programme, il a mis sur pied un club


d'aviation à l'école comptant de plus en plus d'étudiants ayant un intérêt envers l'apprentissage des principes de base du vol. Isaac a reçu sa licence de pilote privé grâce à sa formation à l'école de pilotage W.M. Aeroflight située à Peterborough en Ontario. Incidemment, il a emmené six de ses élèves à la même école de pilotage pour leur tout premier vol de découverte. « Je veux soutenir leurs aspirations en dehors du Club d'aviation de la Lakefield College School pour les aider dans leurs premiers pas dans des vols réels », explique Isaac.

Bien qu'il ait eu à faire face aux défis de trouver des avions et des ressources, Isaac a un impact durable sur les étudiants qu'il encadre. Il intègre l'enseignement des STIM au domaine de l'aviation en utilisant des principes de trigonométrie et de physique pour que les élèves puissent mieux comprendre les applications réelles dans le poste de pilotage. « Dans le cadre du programme, mon principal objectif consiste à enseigner les rouages de l'aviation aux étudiants de niveau secondaire », explique Isaac. Cette approche de l'enseignement de l'aviation contribue à concrétiser des concepts comme le vent latéral, la vitesse sol et les calculs de l'ETA pour ses étudiants.

Isaac est également un membre actif de sa communauté locale de pilotes. Il est d'ailleurs le Capitaine du Club de vol COPA 34 de Peterborough. Dans le cadre de ses fonctions à ce club de vol de la COPA, il organise des rassemblements d'aviation et favorise la camaraderie parmi les pilotes locaux. De plus, il a lancé l'initiative « Want a Seat, Take a Seat » (Prenez place si ça vous le dit)

par laquelle les pilotes actifs de club peuvent offrir un tour d'avion à des personnes n'ayant plus la santé pour piloter ou qui, simplement, ne pilotent plus activement.

Isaac est également à la tête des efforts pour favoriser la participation de jeunes pilotes d'une école de pilotage voisine au club de vol en vue de leur montrer des façons de profiter des plaisirs de l'aviation en dehors de la salle de classe. « Plusieurs de ces jeunes pilotes étudiants ont souvent la tête dans les livres et ils sont là pour entrer et sortir le plus rapidement possible des compagnies aériennes. Ils n'ont ainsi pas beaucoup de temps pour vivre pleinement l'amour du vol et la joie de la nature et des barbecues », explique Isaac. « Ils n'y pensent tout simplement pas. Je veux être la personne qui fait passer les gens de l'autre côté de la clôture à mailles de chaîne. »

Isaac adore donc la liberté apportée par l'aviation. De nombreuses destinations sont d'ailleurs épinglées sur ses cartes en vue de ses prochains vols d'exploration. « Je peux voler sur une distance de 325 kilomètres pour aller chercher des tartelettes au beurre. Je peux aussi voler jusqu'à Killarney pour déguster un poisson-frites, je peux voler jusqu'à Montréal pour aller acheter des bagels, je peux voler jusqu'au comté de Prince Edward pour y savourer du homard. C'est là où se trouvent les véritables plaisirs de l'aviation. » 

AVIATION ENCOUNTERS

DISCOVER AVIATION 2024



BY HANNA ABDO

COPA Flights across Canada organized 36 Discover Aviation events in 2024, introducing over 3,700 young men and women to the world of General Aviation. Thank you to all the organizers, ground volunteers, and volunteer pilots for ensuring the success of those events!

INNISFAIL, AB

Volunteer pilots from COPA Flight 130 – Innisfail Flying Club in Innisfail, AB, flying local sixth graders at a Discover Aviation event at Big Bend Airport (CEM4) on September 28, 2024. Photo credit Karmen Meyer Photography.



▲ Innisfail, AB



▲ Innisfail, AB

GUELPH, ON

COPA Flight 1 – Guelph Discover Aviation event for participants from the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Guelph, ON on September 14, 2024 at the Guelph Airpark (CNC4). Photos courtesy of COPA Flight 1 Guelph.



▲ Guelph, ON



▲ Guelph, ON

MELFORT, SK

Sisters Halia and Hazel Drapak enjoying a Discover Aviation event at Melfort Aerodrome (CJZ3). The event was hosted by COPA Flight 182 in Melfort, SK, on June 09, 2024. Photos courtesy of Flight Captain, Trent Rae.



▲ Melfor, SK



▲ Melfor, SK

VERNON, BC

Volunteers from COPA Flight 65 – in Vernon, BC hard at work organizing the Discover Aviation event on June 22, 2024 at the Vernon Regional Airport (CYVK). Photos courtesy of the Vernon Flying Club.



▲ Vernon, BC



▲ Vernon, BC

TWO LEFT FEET

(OR HOW I CONQUERED TAXIING)



BY LOLA REID ALLIN

Lola Reid Allin shares an excerpt from her memoir, *Highway to the Sky: An Aviator's Journey*, adapted to a self-contained short story. Simon & Schuster/ She Writes Press September 2024.

After completing the pre-taxi checklist, I wait for Murray to say I have control, but instead he says, "Today, I want you to taxi."

I glance around the ramp, chock full of expensive aircraft. My heart thumps with excitement, yet — how hard can it be? When Murray taxis, the tiny two-seater aircraft trots obediently, turns on command, and halts exactly where he wants.

Last week, Murray said I flew well—but that was a week ago—and there's a lot to remember. But I've committed taxiing to memory.

I'm confident. I can do this.

I scan the ramp for moving aircraft and pedestrian pilots, then push right rudder.

Nothing happens.

My foot has intuitively mimicked the motion used for driving a car.

Murray says, "Feet control steering, toes control braking, throttle controls power."

He helps me guide the throttle plunger to 1500 rpm. Despite his assistance, I'm heavy-handed: the tach zooms past 1,500 to 2,000 rpm. The engine thunders and the aircraft surges toward three airplanes, parked only twenty feet away.

The image of twisted propellers and crumpled airplanes jumbles the signals from my astonished brain. I can't move my hands and feet. I can't reduce power, brake, concentrate, and breathe simultaneously, but I must do something, so I reduce power and

stomp on the brakes. My body lurches forward, toward the instrument panel.

This time, I nudge the throttle, gently increasing power. The aircraft inches forward, slower than a slug. At this pace, I'll spend my one-hour lesson on the ground, not in the air. I tease the power setting up to 1,500 rpm. The plane submits to my command, and I begin to relax . . . until my uneven foot pressure on the rudders causes the plane to slither like a sidewinder across the desert.

Every movement is important and requires immediate and simultaneous attention. But when I tell my hands what to do, I forget to tell my feet what to do. Or maybe I'm telling them, but they're not listening. I feel like a gangly puppy running downhill, tripping over feet too large for her body. I'm inexperienced, unable to anticipate possible consequences. Stimuli, not anticipation, drive my actions.

*I've heard pilots brag,
"Good pilots can do
ten things at once."*

Obviously, I'm not a good pilot.

Then I remember my clumsy teenage attempts to master our car's standard transmission. Driving a standard requires both feet, one for the clutch, one for the accelerator; driving an airplane requires both feet for steering and braking. Driving with a stick shift requires both hands, one for the wheel, one for the stick; flying requires one hand on the steering control and one on the throttle. I'm certain flying



is harder than driving a car, but the similarities encourage me.

I mumble my new mantra, Rudders to turn, toes to brake. I increase power, the plane saunters toward the taxiway, and Murray says, "Well done."

A smile of pride flashes across my face. I'm on my way, about to nail this, just as I nailed driving a standard. My confidence builds until I realize I need to turn left onto the taxiway, an action that will destroy the equilibrium I've finally achieved.

Instinctively, as if turning left in a car, I turn the control column to the left.

But instead of turning left, the plane continues toward the grass field, sodden with spring rains.

I push the all-too-real image of a bent propeller mired in the mud from my mind, breathe deeply and visualize my exit from the ramp onto the taxiway. I tap the bottom of the left pedal (as if I actually know what I'm doing) and, to my astonishment, the plane turns left and glides onto the taxiway. 🛩️

MEET THE COPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATES



BY HANNA ABDO

The COPA Board of Directors plays an important role to ensure the sustained success of the association and continuously shapes COPA's strategic priorities. Between December 05, 2024, and January 17, 2025, COPA accepted nominations for two vacant positions on the board representing the Alberta and Northwest Territories region as well as the Saskatchewan region.

Read below to meet the four candidates. Members in the two regions will be able to cast their votes between February 10, 2025 and March 21, 2025. Information will be sent to members with instructions on how to cast their ballot online. Mail-in ballots are available on the next page.



MEET DAVE MCLEAN, CANDIDATE FOR ALBERTA & NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Dave McLean's passion for aviation runs deep, with family ties to airline, military, and WWII RCAF pilots. He earned his PPL in the late 1990s but, like many, had to pause flying due to life commitments. After completing his education, starting a family, and building a career, he returned to aviation in 2018. He now holds a Commercial Pilot's Licence with a Class IV instructor rating and has logged over 600 hours, including 150 hours in tailwheel aircraft.

Dave is an active aviation advocate, managing Alberta General Aviation and Flying Alberta social media, co-organizing the "That Night in the Woods" aviation survival exercise, and serving as President of the Western Wings Flying Club. His leadership experience gives him insight into the challenges aircraft owners and operators face.

As a COPA Director, Dave is committed to engaging youth in aviation and fostering an inclusive, affordable, and sustainable GA community. With expertise in marketing and communications, he aims to bridge the gap between seasoned pilots and newcomers while reinforcing the vital role of General Aviation in Canada.



MEET PAUL HOLSCHER, CANDIDATE FOR ALBERTA & NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Paul has been involved in General Aviation since 1982, when he earned his PPL. A member of COPA since 2008, he has accumulated approximately 500

hours of flight time in various single-engine piston aircraft. After a career in hospitality and safety, Paul now works as a part-time consultant in hospitality and real estate.

A part owner of a Cessna 182RG, Paul has been passionate about aviation since earning his PPL and believes that all pilots, regardless of age, must continue learning and challenging themselves. He fully supports COPA's recent efforts to provide a wide selection of online courses to help pilots achieve this goal.

Paul is a Lifetime Member, Sustaining Member, and currently serves as Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Calgary Flying Club (CFC), one of Canada's largest flight schools. His experience with the CFC has provided him with valuable insights into the challenges faced by GA in Canada and taught him about the operational needs of not-for-profit corporations.

Having completed most of his training at Springbank, AB (CYBW), Paul has observed a need for improved service levels for GA aircraft and recognizes the critical role COPA can play in that area. Paul's unwavering passion for aviation, his understanding of the current issues, limitations, and challenges in GA, and his knowledge of the not-for-profit environment make him a valuable contributor to COPA.



MEET KASSIA CLARKE, CANDIDATE FOR SASKATCHEWAN

Kassia started instructing shortly after obtaining her CPL in 2016. She spent her first year in the industry teaching pilots at Mitchinson Flight Centre in Saskatoon, Sask. After instructing,

Kassia made the move to a regional airline flying the Saab 340 out of Saskatoon and eventually flying as a Captain on the Twin Otter in La Ronge, Sask.

Currently, Kassia is an instructor at Saskatchewan Polytechnic with the Commercial Pilot Diploma Program. Her new title has recently brought on more involvement with the local General Aviation community in Saskatchewan. Kassia currently has a seat on the board of the up-and-coming Saskatchewan Chapter of the 99's, and is looking to do more in the aviation community.

The interest in this position comes from a desire to get connected with more people in aviation, and to stay in touch with the changes occurring on a provincial and national scale. She hopes to connect more Saskatchewan pilots with the COPA community and contribute to future developments, wherever they occur.



MEET RON WOOD, CANDIDATE FOR SASKATCHEWAN

Ron's passion for aviation began with childhood visits to the Moose Jaw Airforce Base, where his uncle was stationed. His journey took off with a gliding scholarship through the

Air Cadets, but work and family delayed his flying ambitions. In 2001, a birthday flight lesson from his wife reignited his dream.

He has since earned his PPL in 2003, logged over 420 hours, including contributing to search and rescue missions with CASARA. In 2008, Ron purchased a Zenair 601 HDS homebuilt, sparking deep involvement with EAA 154, where he served nine years as president. A COPA member since 2002, he remains active in COPA Flight 4 in Regina. He currently owns a Piper Cherokee 180 and Zenair CH701.


With a background as a technician and manager at SaskTel, Ron brings strong project management skills to COPA. He is committed to advocating for Saskatchewan pilots and ensuring that General Aviation remains accessible and protected.

Want to vote by mail?

Members in Alberta, Northwest Territories, and Saskatchewan can use the ballot corresponding to their region found below and mail it to the COPA office to vote by mail. Mail-in ballots will be accepted only if received by the COPA office **by 5:00 p.m. ET on March 21, 2025.**

Your COPA membership information (e-mail associated with your membership or your membership number) must be clearly mentioned on the envelope for the vote to be counted.

If a member submits both a paper and an electronic ballot, only one will be counted. The ballot with the latter submission date will be recorded, with the postmark date serving as the official date for mailed ballot.



Elections - Board of Directors
Alberta & Northwest Territories (1 position)

The following is a re-print of the pertinent areas of the COPA Operating By-law regarding elections:

5.04 Election of Directors
Subject to the Articles, all Directors, otherwise not disqualified under the Act, shall be duly elected by the Members at an Annual meeting at which an election is required. Every election of Directors shall be carried out with reference to the report of the Nominating Committee and shall be in conformity with the requirements as to Board composition set forth in section 5.05.

Each COPA member* in Alberta/NWT region may vote for one director.
*Ballots received by mail will be checked against membership records maintained by COPA at the time of the election.

Please mark an "X" beside the one candidate of your choice on this ballot.

Dave McLean
 Paul Holscher

Cut-out this ballot and mail to the COPA office
Canadian Owners and Pilots Association
150 Elgin Street, Suite 925
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 1L4

Mail-in ballots will be accepted only if received at the COPA office **by 5:00 p.m. ET on March 21, 2025.**
Your COPA membership information (e-mail associated with your membership or your membership number) must be clearly mentioned on the envelope for the vote to be counted.



Elections - Board of Directors
Saskatchewan (1 position)

The following is a re-print of the pertinent areas of the COPA Operating By-law regarding elections:

5.04 Election of Directors
Subject to the Articles, all Directors, otherwise not disqualified under the Act, shall be duly elected by the Members at an Annual meeting at which an election is required. Every election of Directors shall be carried out with reference to the report of the Nominating Committee and shall be in conformity with the requirements as to Board composition set forth in section 5.05.

Each COPA member* in Saskatchewan region may vote for one director.
*Ballots received by mail will be checked against membership records maintained by COPA at the time of the election.

Please mark an "X" beside the one candidate of your choice on this ballot.

Kassia Clarke
 Ron Wood

Cut-out this ballot and mail to the COPA office
Canadian Owners and Pilots Association
150 Elgin Street, Suite 925
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 1L4

Mail-in ballots will be accepted only if received at the COPA office **by 5:00 p.m. ET on March 21, 2025.**
Your COPA membership information (e-mail associated with your membership or your membership number) must be clearly mentioned on the envelope for the vote to be counted.

For all questions, please reach out to COPA at (613) 236-4901 or copa@copanational.org

SNOWBIRDS TAKE FLIGHT

WHY TRAVEL INSURANCE IS YOUR BEST CO-PILOT

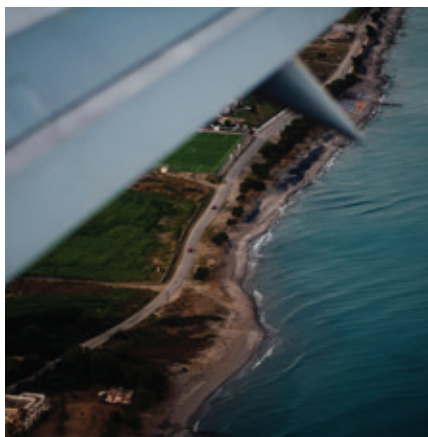
Many Canadians look forward to escaping icy winters to sunny destinations. For pilots, the getaway is even more thrilling when you can fly yourself and your family there. But whether you're relaxing on a beach or exploring new cities, one thing is certain: unexpected medical emergencies abroad can turn your dream trip into a nightmare. That's where snowbird travel insurance comes in—and for pilots, the COPACare Travel Plan offers coverage as unique as your journey.

This guide dives into everything you need to know about snowbird travel insurance—how it works, what to look for, and why the COPACare Travel Plan is useful for you, our members, and your families.

WHAT IS SNOWBIRD TRAVEL INSURANCE?:

Snowbird travel insurance is designed for Canadians who escape cold winters by spending extended time abroad in warmer climates like Florida, the Caribbean or even overseas. Unlike regular travel insurance, snowbird plans cater to long-term travelers, offering coverage that includes medical emergencies and evacuation for periods ranging from 45 to 180 days.

For pilots, finding an insurance plan that understands your lifestyle is crucial. Most travel insurance excludes coverage while piloting private aircraft. That's where COPACare stands out—it's tailored for aviation enthusiasts and their families, ensuring you're protected even when piloting your aircraft.



HOW DOES SNOWBIRD TRAVEL INSURANCE WORK?

Snowbird insurance provides peace of mind by covering unexpected costs your provincial healthcare plan won't cover when you're abroad, including significant medical emergencies like surgeries or evacuation. This can leave you exposed to costs that could reach tens of thousands of dollars.

Here's how it works:

- 1. Pre-Trip:** You purchase a snowbird plan based on your travel length, destination, and health needs.
- 2. While Abroad:** The plan covers eligible expenses like medical emergencies, hospitalizations, or even trip interruptions.
- 3. Post-Trip:** Unique to COPACare, the coverage reloads for an additional 45 days upon return to your home province at no additional cost. This ensures you're covered year-round. For pilots, it also means coverage if an unforeseen landing occurs outside your province due to emergencies. This kind of pilot-friendly feature is rare in the insurance world.

UNIQUE CHALLENGES FOR PILOTS

If you're flying your aircraft as part of your adventure, your needs differ significantly from those of regular travelers:

- **In-Flight Coverage:** Most plans exclude accidents while piloting. COPACare is one of the few options that cover you during leisure flights, as long as you're not engaging in stunt flying or competitive events.
- **Destination Flexibility:** Whether you're landing in a major U.S. hub or a remote island runway, COPACare provides worldwide assistance.
- **Emergency Evacuations:** Pilots often visit less accessible areas. COPACare covers medical evacuation costs of up to \$15,000 to ensure you're transported to the nearest suitable facility.

TYPES OF SNOWBIRD INSURANCE PLANS

When choosing a plan, consider these common types and their fit for your needs:

- 1. Single-Trip Plans:** Best for one-off extended trips lasting several weeks or months. Coverage only applies for the specified trip duration.
- 2. Multi-Trip Annual Plans:** Cover multiple trips within a policy year, ideal for frequent flyers. COPACare offers a 45-day multi-trip plan, which automatically resets each time you return home.
- 3. Top-Up Plans:** Extend coverage for longer trips. For example, if your multi-trip plan only covers 45 days, you can add extra days through a top-up.

DO PROVINCIAL INSURANCE PLANS COVER SNOWBIRDS?

The short answer is not really. Provincial healthcare plans provide minimal coverage outside of Canada. They might reimburse part of a doctor's visit or hospital fee, but major expenses—like surgeries or medical evacuations—aren't covered. As such, the Canadian government recommends snowbirds get their own travel plan to avoid high medical bills while away from home.

Consider this: an air ambulance from the U.S. to Canada can cost upwards of \$50,000. Provincial plans won't touch this, leaving you to foot the bill unless you have travel insurance.

ELIGIBILITY FOR SNOWBIRD TRAVEL INSURANCE

Eligibility requirements for travel insurance vary, but here's what you'll typically need:

- **Canadian Residency:** Most plans require you to be a resident of Canada.
- **Age Limitations:** Plans like COPACare extend coverage up to age 80, with special options for those over 80.
- **Stable Health:** Pre-existing conditions may be covered if they've been stable for a certain period before your trip.

FACTORS THAT AFFECT TRAVEL INSURANCE COSTS

Several factors determine the cost of snowbird travel insurance:

1. **Age:** Rates increase for older travelers due to higher health risks.
2. **Destination:** Costs are higher for destinations with expensive healthcare systems, like the U.S.
3. **Trip Length:** Longer trips come with higher premiums.
4. **Coverage Level:** Plans with higher limits or additional benefits will cost more.
5. **Pre-Existing Conditions:** Coverage for these conditions may increase premiums.

WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN SNOWBIRD INSURANCE?

An ideal snowbird insurance policy should cover:

- **Emergency Medical Costs:** Hospitalization, physician fees, and emergency treatments.
- **Evacuation Benefits:** Medical transport to the nearest hospital or back to Canada.
- **Repatriation of Remains:** Coverage for returning deceased individuals to Canada.
- **Trip Interruption Protection:** Reimbursement for unexpected trip cancellations or delays.
- **Accommodation and Transport:** For family members to visit or support you during emergencies.

The COPACare plan provides up to \$1 million in medical expenses, covers medical evacuations up to \$15,000, and offers travel for your family in emergencies.

THE PERKS OF COPACARE TRAVEL INSURANCE

The COPACare Travel Plan stands out among competitors, particularly for pilots. Here's why:

- **Pilot Coverage:** Most travel plans exclude coverage while piloting, but COPACare has you covered—even for in-flight emergencies.
- **Coverage for Families:** The COPACare plan covers the travel needs of COPA members and their families. Coverage also includes spouses under 80 and children/dependents.
- **Pre-Existing Conditions:** If you have pre-existing conditions, COPACare offers coverage as long as your health has been stable for a certain period, depending on your age.
- **Reloadable Multi-Trip Coverage:** Coverage resets after each return home at no extra cost.

WHAT CAN INVALIDATE TRAVEL INSURANCE?

Your travel insurance can be invalidated by:

- **Ignoring Stability Clauses:** Traveling with unstable health conditions.
- **Engaging in Excluded Activities:** Professional sports, stunt flying, and competitive aviation are excluded from most plans.
- **Providing False Information:** Misrepresenting your health during application could void your policy.

CAN YOU PURCHASE TRAVEL INSURANCE AFTER LEAVING THE COUNTRY?

It's challenging to secure travel insurance once you've left Canada. Providers typically require coverage to begin before your departure. If you plan to extend your trip, top-up options like those offered by COPACare should be arranged while you're still in Canada.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE: A LIFELINE WHEN YOU NEED IT


COPACare offers 24/7 worldwide emergency medical assistance through Beneva SSQ Assurance. Whether you need evacuation from a remote airfield or urgent medical care abroad, their support ensures you're never alone in a crisis.

TRAVEL CONFIDENTLY WITH COPACARE

For snowbirds and pilots alike, the COPACare Travel Plan is more than just insurance—it's a co-pilot in your journey. From emergency medical coverage to unique aviation benefits, this plan ensures you can focus on enjoying your adventures without worrying about the unexpected.

With winter here, don't let the cold ground your plans. Take flight with the confidence that comes from knowing you're protected, whether on a beach or in the cockpit.

For more information or to enroll in the COPACare Travel Plan, visit

www.copacare.ca 

PLACES TO FLY

WINTER EDITION GA FRIENDLY SKI RESORTS



BY PAUL TOMASCIK

Winter's not over yet. Google "flying to a popular ski lodge in Canada" and you get the big carriers flying you to a major airport. Yuck! Why trudge through heavily trafficked terminals dragging check-in luggage, ski-bags and stirring up the miasma from disgruntled travelling hordes? Instead, skip happily to your own plane through your local, welcoming FBO. Use your flying skills to maximize the utility of your aircraft or rent one to get you and yours to the heart of a fantastic skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling or hiking trail vacation. Be your own travel agent and airline. Isn't this why you became a pilot – to get away from it all without going through it all?

There are so many great winter holiday resorts in every region across Canada within reach by private flying. There are ski-hubs that offer enormous flexibility by air to reach them. File a flight plan and go Nordic. With just a little planning you can experience the ultimate downhill thrill. If losing altitude on your favourite snow-covered glide slope doesn't peak your fun metre then go for a leisurely cross-country taxi-walk at flight level 0. Every ski resort worth its carb heat has great trails for those craving some slow flying where you actually hear the birds instead of scaring them. Places like Killarney Mountain Lodge have their own airport (CPT2) right on site and I'm sure there are more across Canada just like it. Auberge Montebello, a rustic winter getaway in Québec is not far from Gatineau airport and paved strips dotting the landscape around Montréal.

Here's a brief flight plan to consider: Fly, Über, Hotel, Rent, Ski. That's it. You don't need to pack the boards, poles and boots. Unless you fly a Cessna Caravan or a Pilatus PC-12, these unwieldy carry-ons wouldn't fit anyway. Besides, national and regional carriers charge you extra for this stuff and now carry-on charges are crawling in your wallet. Check the weather (instead of loads of baggage), prep the Luscombe and make a statement on arrival by stepping out of the cockpit in your fashionista winter garments. Prepare an overnight kit, grab a ride to a nice hotel and get to the hill unencumbered. Many resorts provide free shuttles too. What a great way to use your plane. Pack light, bring your aircraft's winter outfit too and make sure fuel and block heater plug-ins are available. You're not circumnavigating the globe; ditch the four wheeler and cut loose the Thule casket.

You don't need to fly to major airports that warrant their own VTA charts but you can use their large scale maps to navigate to a GA friendly piece of asphalt within range. Many regional ski retreats have nearby airports that aren't advertised but don't take my word for it, do some Canada Flight Supplement research and find your own airport and accommodation. Here's a short list I compiled, in no particular order, from across Canada where you can find tow-bars, T-bars and some après-ski bars. It's a big country so please forgive me if I left out your "go-to-slope" and "fly-to" airport. Happy "Foreflighting!" 

WINTER FUN RESORT AREAS STATIONS DE SPORTS D'HIVER

OTTAWA ON/GATINEAU QC: Edelweiss Valley, Calabogie Peaks Resort, Mont Cascades, Mont Tremblant, Ski Vorlage, Camp Fortune, Mount Pakenham

MONTRÉAL/VILLE DE QUÉBEC CITY QC: Mont Sainte-Anne, Le Massif de Charlevoix, Mont Sutton, Ski Bromont, Mont Orford, Stoneham, Mont Blanc, Sommet Saint-Sauveur, Owl's Head

ATLANTIC CANADA ATLANTIQUE : Wentworth NS, Poley Mountain NB, Crabbe Mountain NB, Sugarloaf NB, Marble Mountain NL, White Hills Resort NL

MANITOBA: Assessippi, Minnedosa Ski Valley

ALBERTA/ BRITISH COLUMBIA/ COLOMBIE-BRITANNIQUE: Whistler Blackcomb, Banff Sunshine Village, Lake Louise, Revelstoke, Big White, Kicking Horse

GA AIRPORTS NEARBY WITH SERVICES AÉROPORTS GÉNÉRAUX À PROXIMITÉ AVEC SERVICES

Rockcliffe (CYRO), Gatineau (CYND), Carp (CYRP), Mont-Tremblant (CFYJ), Mont-Laurier (CSD4), Maniwaki (CYMW)

Lachute (CSE4), St. Hubert (CYHU), Jean Lesage International (CYQB), Trois-Rivières (CYRQ), Sorel (CSY3), Lac-à-la-Tortue (CSL3), Charlevoix (CYML), Victoriaville (CSR3)

Debert (CCQ3), Trenton (CYTN), Stanfield International (CYHZ), Deet Lake (CYDF), Stephenville (CYJT), Gander International (CYQX), St. John's International (CYYT)

Yorkton (CYQV), Dauphin (CYDN),

Canadian Rockies International (CYXC), Golden (CYGE), Fairmont Hot Springs (CYCZ), Squamish (CYSE), Pemberton (CYPS), Revelstoke (CYRV)

LIEUX DE VOL

STATIONS DE SKI ADAPTÉES AUX PILOTES PRIVÉS



PAR PAUL TOMASCIK



L'hiver n'est pas encore terminé, alors autant en profiter. Si vous tapez « vol vers station de ski populaire Canada » sur Google, les grandes compagnies aériennes vous enverront invariablement à un grand aéroport. Horreur! Pourquoi accepteriez-vous de vous frayer un chemin dans des terminaux bondés en traînant avec vous bagages à enregistrer et sacs de ski, tout en respirant la mauvaise humeur d'une horde de voyageurs mécontents? Oubliez tout ça. Pour garder le sourire, pourquoi ne pas plutôt faire usage de votre propre appareil par l'intermédiaire de votre exploitant des services aéronautiques à l'aéroport local (FBO) qui, lui, ne manquera pas de vous sourire en retour? Vous maximiserez ainsi l'utilité de votre aéronef grâce à vos talents de pilote. Autre possibilité : louez un appareil qui vous emmènera, vous et les vôtres, directement au cœur d'une fantastique expérience de ski, de planche à neige, de motoneige ou de randonnée hivernale. Autrement dit, devenez votre propre agent de voyage et votre propre compagnie aérienne. N'est-ce pas là la raison pour laquelle vous êtes devenu pilote – pour pouvoir vous évader sans entraves?

Il existe bon nombre de stations de sports d'hiver prisées dans toutes les régions du pays qui sont accessibles par avion privé. En fait, certaines offrent une grande souplesse d'accès par les airs. Préparez donc votre propre itinéraire et essayez-vous au ski nordique. Avec un peu d'organisation, vous pourrez aussi vivre l'expérience ultime en ski alpin. Dévaler sur la poudreuse ne remue pas votre altimètre intérieur? Pas de problème : restez plutôt sur le plancher des vaches et optez pour une balade en ski de fond. Toutes les stations de ski dignes de ce nom proposent des pistes pour ceux qui préfèrent glisser tranquillement et admirer la nature au lieu d'effaroucher les oiseaux. Certaines destinations comme le Killarney Mountain Lodge exploitent leur propre aéroport (CPT2) sur place, et il existe d'autres endroits au pays qui offrent des avantages similaires. Par exemple, l'Auberge Montebello, une escapade hivernale rustique au Québec, n'est pas loin de l'aéroport de Gatineau et des pistes d'atterrissage en dur qui parsèment le paysage autour de Montréal.

Voici un bref plan de vol à envisager : Envolée à bord de votre propre appareil – Uber – Hôtel – Location – Ski. C'est aussi simple que ça! Pas besoin de vous encombrer de vos planches à neige, de vos bâtons de ski et de vos bottines, puisque vous pouvez louer le tout sur place. En

effet, à moins que vous ne pilotiez un Cessna Caravan ou un Pilatus PC-12, ces bagages encombrants ne rentreraient pas dans l'appareil de toute façon. De plus, les transporteurs nationaux et régionaux vous facturent un supplément pour ces articles et commencent même à vous faire payer pour les bagages en cabine. Vérifiez plutôt la météo (au lieu de vous dépêtrer avec vos bagages), préparez le Luscombe au décollage et faites-vous remarquer à l'arrivée en émergeant du cockpit dans vos vêtements d'hiver dernier cri. Il vous suffit de préparer une petite trousse pour la nuit, d'attraper un taxi vers un hôtel confortable pour ensuite accéder aux pistes sans vous casser la tête avec votre fourbi. De nombreuses stations de sports d'hiver proposent également des navettes gratuites. Vous conviendrez que c'est une manière fantastique de voyager à bord de votre propre appareil. Emportez le minimum et faites enfilier à votre aéronef sa propre tenue d'hiver en vous assurant que les prises de carburant et de chauffe-moteur fonctionnent bien. Après tout, vous ne vous apprêtez pas à faire le tour du monde : laissez donc votre 4x4 et le gros coffre Thule dans le garage!

Nul besoin d'atterrir dans l'un de ces grands aéroports qui nécessitent leur propre carte de la zone terminale. Vous consulerez simplement les cartes à grande échelle des installations aéroportuaires pour trouver votre propre piste accueillante pas trop loin. Sachez que de nombreuses stations de ski régionales disposent d'aéroports situés à proximité qui ne sont pas toujours publicisés. Vous le constaterez par vous-même en consultant le Supplément de vol – Canada pour trouver votre propre aéroport et hébergement. Sans ordre particulier, voici une courte liste que j'ai compilée des endroits au Canada où on retrouve, dans un faible rayon, à la fois des remorqueurs d'avion, des téléskis et quelques bars où prendre un verre après une journée de ski bien remplie. Le pays est vaste, alors pardonnez-moi si j'ai omis votre piste de ski préférée ou l'aéroport où vous aimez bien vous poser. Bon « Foreflighting »! 🛩️



FLYING INTO CANADA'S POLAR BEAR CAPITAL

“You’ll be forgiven for thinking that the only reason to fly into Churchill, MB is to see the polar bears,” says Andrew Niemyer. He’s led the Cirrus Owners and Pilots Association’s annual flight into the remote northern location since 2017. “The trip is an experiential event. We lure people in with the promise of polar bears, and they come away with so much more.”

The region surrounding Churchill, MB, AKA “The Polar Bear Capital of the World,” is home to the largest polar bear migration in the world, but that’s not all. The town of about 800 people is as old as Canada, offering a warm welcome and a wide variety of things to see and do. The town’s cultural makeup is primarily Metis and Indigenous, and tourism is the economy’s lifeblood. With his flock of Cirrus aircraft, Niemyer advises that the trip, which quickly sells out, is generally scheduled in the last half of

August to avoid the first snow.

Past President of the Cirrus Owners and Pilots Association, he is also a founding trustee of the association’s Safety and Education Foundation. A retired US Naval Flight Officer, Niemyer has held his private pilot’s licence since 1989 and has various ratings, including

The landscape conveys an impression of absolute permanence. It is not hostile. It is simply there—untouched, silent and complete.

—Edmond Snow Carpenter, ‘Arctic Dreams’

multi-engine, instrument, land, and seaplanes. He says he can’t overstate the life-changing nature of the trip.

▲ Button Bay Bear #6 - F climbing in Rocks looking at Boat

“My first trip was inspiring and rewarding. That tundra landscape is unforgettable, it gets into your blood,” he says with enthusiasm. “Now it’s like going back to visit family. We all have those places that speak to something inside us; Churchill is that for me—it’s different than anywhere else.”

AN OASIS OF ARCTIC WILDLIFE AND HISTORY

It depends on the season, but the variety of wildlife is intricately woven into the fabric of the Churchill community. “We learn an enormous amount about polar bear zoology. How they really exist, not just the mythology,” Niemyer explained. “They are the largest predators in the region, and people cannot conceive of just how big they are.”

Churchill offers a unique wildlife experience that will leave you in awe. About 60,000 belugas frequent the Churchill River basin and Hudson's Bay from June to September, making the whale watching spectacular. Arctic hare, wolves, and fox are abundant, and the region is a twitcher's paradise in May and June. The weather is dramatic and capricious but hiking and kayaking are popular summer pastimes. Snowshoeing is a favourite winter activity; dog sledding can be done year-round. Niemyer also notes, "You should be prepared to witness the most stunning, breathtaking and amazing aurora borealis."

The region's history is fascinating. With signs of human habitation dating back 4,000 years, the modern town was initially established as a fur trading post by the Hudson's Bay Company. Churchill was host to a Canadian-authorized American Air Force Base during World War II, now the airport. Wapusk National Park, Prince of Wales Fort, Cape Merry, Sloop Cove and York Factory National Historic Sites are all in the vicinity, chronicling the area's past.

THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME IN THREE SHORT LEGS

Flying with a group of between 10 and 12 aircraft, the trip is done in three legs. The first stop, Winnipeg, MB, is almost due north from Fargo, ND (KFAR), where Niemyer is based. The flight legs are relatively short: 1 3/4 hours to Winnipeg International Airport (CYWG), then, 2 1/2 hours to Thompson (CYTH) and a final 1 3/4 hours northeast to Churchill (CYYQ). "Flying over the great plains and the boreal forest is amazing, but it's like you've gone to another planet to see the tundra," Niemyer observed. "When you cross the provincial highway and Thompson's ski area—those last human structures giving way to the endless forest and then the tundra landscape—it's awesome in the true sense of the word."

Participants attend a meet-and-greet in Fargo the day before and receive a detailed briefing before they leave to ensure everyone is fully prepared. They get the dos and don'ts and practical details, like always



▲ Pod of six breaching belugas



▲ Button Bay Bear #7 - D



▲ Cirrus Churchill 2024 Group

bringing rain gear, waterproof hiking boots and cold weather gear. These items are available in Churchill at the local "Northern" store, but as Niemyer attests, "at eye-watering prices," so he always advises coming on the trip with all those items already packed. Other considerations for the week-long trip include guidance on crossing the US/Canada border, airspace facts and procedures, information on landing fees and airport protocols.

"This is the trip of a lifetime for some pilots, and it will stretch their flying capabilities," he explains. "Yet, I have heard from many that they felt more confident in their flying after the experience. Pilots must be instrument-rated to make the trip, but they will undergo a panorama of pilot experiences besides the sights and sounds. The weather can be tricky with rain, a low ceiling, and fairly high winds, but the Churchill airport authority is awesome, and you should remember to bring your own chocks."

The group uses an IFR flight plan in a non-radar environment. "It would be ill-advised to use VFR with a group of 10-12 aircraft," he clarified. "But happily, there's even a bush pilot radio frequency (Called "In Route communications" by NavCanada ATC) we monitor that helps us build a clearer picture of what's going on. Besides the Churchill airport, CYYQ, the town is home to Canada's only deep-water port and has a water aerodrome."

REJUVENATION FOLLOWS A DISASTER

Gateway to the Arctic and Hudson's Bay, the world's largest inland sea, the isolated town was fly-in only between May 2017 and November 2018. Record flooding washed out portions of the community's vital rail line, its only surface-based transportation link, wreaking havoc on the community's economy. "SeaWalls Churchill" a 2017 project sprung from that disaster, rejuvenating the town's outlook.



▲ Miss Piggy



▲ PBHF Front Mural

Focused on ocean conservation, a team of eight artists painted 18 large-scale murals on local buildings and structures in the surrounding area. The project offered residents hope while highlighting to the rest of Canada and the world, the critical importance of the rail line. A special surprise awaits aviation geeks with ‘Miss Piggy,’ the 1979 wreck of Lamb Airway’s Curtiss C-46 Commando twin-prop cargo aircraft. Self-guided tours of the various murals can be undertaken but people are reminded to be polar bear-safe.

The variety of accommodations is surprising for a small, remote community. With a typical stay of four nights, the Cirrus Owners and Pilots Association has a longstanding relationship with the very well-appointed Lazy Bear Lodge. Other lodgings include the Polar Inn & Suites, Iceberg Inn, Seaport Hotel, and the Churchill Hotel. Several bed and breakfasts are also available. As for food, the area is a foodie mecca with dishes like elk meatloaf, arctic char and bison stew that incorporate herbs and berries from the surrounding tundra.

“It’s hard to leave Churchill once you’ve been there,” Niemyer reflects.

“At the rail depot, next to the auditorium, there’s a plaque with a quote from a book by Edmond Snow Carpenter called ‘Arctic Dreams,’ which reads: *The landscape conveys an impression of absolute permanence. It is not hostile. It is simply there—untouched, silent and complete.* I can certainly relate.”

The 2025 Cirrus – North Central Ultimate Arctic Adventure is tentatively planned for Saturday, August 23, 2025, through Friday, August 29, 2025. Details will be published in spring 2025.

MORE ABOUT GETTING TO CHURCHILL

Airport Details

CYYQ, is located on Hudson’s Bay, about 7 km from the town centre. A far north destination, and considered a “remote” airport, the airport building is open from 08:00 – 16:30 every day. It is operated by Transport Canada and has a flight service station.

- Time zone: UTC-06:00 (CST)
- Coordinates: 58°44’21”N 094°03’59”W
- Two runways:

RUNWAYS			
Direction	Length		Surface
	ft	m	
07/25	4,000	1,219	Gravel
15/33	9,195	2,803	Asphalt

- Car Rentals: Tamarak Rentals Ltd.
- North Coast Taxi Company: (204) 675 2345
- Winter Parking Rates (for spaces with Electrical Outlets): \$5/day
- Medical: Keewatin Air
- Terminal building is open 7 days a week 08:00 - 16:30
- Vending machine
- NAV Canada Flight Service Station
- Refuelling Service (but not 100LL gas, because you have to order it in yourself)
- Landing fees vary from airport to airport

- ATC is at Winnipeg Centre
- IFR plan in a non-radar environment
- Flight service at Thompson is Churchill Radio

CHURCHILL’S NUMBERS REALLY ADD UP!

- 3 Guided Tundra Vehicle Tour Operators for polar bear and wildlife viewing
- 2 Dogsled Tour operators
- 6 Northern Lights Tour operators
- 4 Bird Watching Tour operators
- 4 Beluga Tour operators
- 7 Hotels: Aurora Inn; Churchill Hotel; Iceberg Inn, Lazy Bear Lodge, Polar Inn & Suites; Seaport Hotel; Tundra Inn
- 10 Bed and Breakfasts, Boarding House, Short term rental accommodations
- 4+ Restaurants including Cafe at Lazy Bear Lodge, Reef Restaurant at the Seaport Hotel, Tundra Inn Pub and Dining Room
- Itsanitaq Museum: Inuit Carvings and Artifacts
- Distance from airport to downtown: 8-10 minutes (7-8 km)
- Parks Canada Visitor Centre in Churchill’s VIA Rail station
- Churchill Rocket Research Range
- Polar Bears International

PRO TIPS

- It’s best to plan well in advance. Accommodations can book-up six months before northern lights and polar bear season.
- Plan to spend 4 days to fit in all the outdoor activities.
- Plan to eat interesting traditional foods.
- Pack waterproof hiking boots, cold weather gear and rain gear.
- Pilots must carry mandated survival gear for all onboard. 🛖

BEACHED

GA FRIENDLY BEACHES



BY PAUL TOMASCIK

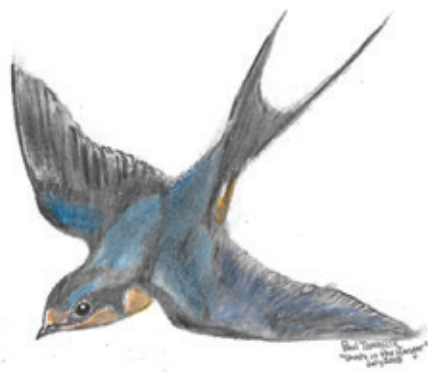
Ready for a change of scenery? Take advantage of your plane's range by flying to a GA friendly beach near you — or maybe — one that's not so close.

Late spring, summer or early fall are the ideal times of year to fly your family or friends for some rest and relaxation by the water. If it's winter when you seek a respite from the cold then obviously southern latitudes will have to beckon. Let's plan for a seaside getaway where you can fill your deck shoes with sand and take a dip in an ocean, lake or river instead of a crowded pool to refresh yourself.

Choice locations and travel options for beachscapes are endless. North America is surrounded by beaches of all kinds and when it comes to Canada, we have more coastline (and lakes and rivers with natural beaches) than any country on earth. If your winged conveyance sits on wheels or is a flying boat or both, then you can get to many waterfront retreats "sans voiture."

If your winged conveyance sits on wheels or is a flying boat or both, then you can get to many waterfront retreats "sans voiture."

Beaching it requires less gear. Leave the snowshoes, skates and skis behind until next season's winter fun (unless you are following my thoughts in the article a few pages back on GA friendly ski resorts). The useful payload is more flexible too;



it can include deflated water toys, towels and a telescoping beach umbrella, which are much lighter and take up less space. Weigh the loaded cooler if you bring one; you'd be surprised how heavy it can get, which means it will affect your weight and balance significantly.


If you plan to follow the migration routes of waterfowl and small songbirds in late fall or early winter then the first leg of your down-south sojourn may require some winter stuff. Pack for safety and necessity without compromise. Your time-machine should be prepped as it transcends the ice age to the warm water world of sea, salt and sand – and back. If its seawater you crave, give your plane a thorough wash when you return to cleanse it of corrosion inducing salt-laden air and water that might creep into the airframe's nooks and crannies

I've wetted your appetite with several fly-in beach resort areas to tease your curiosity. Plan your own GA beach excursion to one of thousands of locations in North America. Water aerodromes abound if you fly a floatplane or ease your pontoons gently onto a sandy bar nesting quietly in an isolated piece of paradise. Always

call ahead for accommodation options, fuel availability and tie-down/docking reservations.

CONSIDER THESE FLY-IN DESTINATIONS AS A START:

- **Florida Keys Marathon International airport (KMTH)** boasts a 5,000 foot runway located in the midst of the Florida Keys chain and all it has to offer. Hotels and beach resorts, such as Tranquility Bay Beachfront Resort, Isla Bella Beach Resort, and Faro Blanco Resort & Yacht Club are spectacular and there is a free EAA Museum on-site
- **Hilton Head Island airport (KHXD)** in South Carolina is close to the Westin Hilton Head Resort and Spa on the beautiful Atlantic Ocean
- **Pacific Sands Beach Resort in British Columbia is easily accessible from Long Beach airport (CYAZ)** near Tofino; it has a rare private float plane water landing strip parallel to a 5000 foot paved runway
- **If you're more adventurous, fly to the Caribbean.** With a little guidance, you can fly yourself to these picturesque islands for a trip of a lifetime. See the AOPA guides for more information Flygv.com, a private charter company, lists the best beaches in America along with accommodations in Florida, California, Georgia and South Carolina, which are prime water-fun destinations in the United States.

So sit by the fireplace, grab your swim masks, flippers and favourite drink and get in the mood to get beached. Spring is just around the corner. 

THE COLD TRUTH

FLYING UNDER THE WEATHER



BY TYLER HAUGHEY

Owner of Level Flight, a COPA corporate member

Many have heard the saying, “It’s better to be on the ground wishing you were in the air than in the air wishing you were on the ground.” Typically, we think of this as advice about weather conditions, but it’s worth expanding that wisdom to include our own physical fitness to fly. As pilots, we know the rule of not flying when sick, but where exactly do we draw the line?

Before diving in, I should clarify – I’m an airline pilot and not a doctor – this article isn’t intended to be medical advice. Always consult your Civil Aviation Medical Examiner (CAME) for guidance specific to your situation.

First, let’s define ‘under the weather.’: No, I don’t mean under the clouds. In this case, ‘under the weather’ is that all-encompassing term for when we just don’t feel 100%. It can be as minor as a stuffy nose or as serious as a full-blown flu that keeps you in bed all day. If you find yourself calling for your mom to bring you some ginger ale as you lay in agony with a temperature of a 104, the go-no-go decision to fly is a no-brainer. But what about when you wake up with a slight cold or a mild stomach ache? That’s where things get tricky.

I remember attending a seminar years ago where a well-known CAME in the YYC area spoke on the effects of alcohol consumption and flying. At the time, the regulation was still 8 hours bottle to throttle, and he was trying to impress upon us how important it is to consider how alcohol affects us beyond that 8-hour mark. Even though the alcohol is out of your system, the lingering effects – the hangover – can still impact your performance. That’s a bit like being sick. Sure, you might be legally fit to fly, but are you really safe to fly?

I bring up this story because the hangover is like being sick with any other illness. Sure, we may be legal, but are we safe?

Even mild symptoms like a stuffy nose or a slight cough can have unforeseen consequences when flying. The way our bodies react to altitude, pressure changes, and the demands of piloting an aircraft can amplify the effects of seemingly harmless conditions. A common cold, for instance, can lead to ear or sinus blockages that could be more dangerous at higher altitudes.

When faced with a decision to fly while feeling unwell, it’s crucial to step back and look at the bigger picture. Here are a few considerations:

- **Medications:** Are you taking medications that could impair your ability to operate the aircraft? Again, always check with a CAME as your family doctor might not know the implications as it relates to aviation.

- **Symptom Impact:** Do your symptoms affect your ability to operate the aircraft, stay focused, and make good decisions? If I’ve got a pounding headache I know I’m not going to be at my best.
- **Judging Severity:** It’s hard to decide not to fly, especially if the illness you are concerned about would not make you take a day off work (assuming you are not a professional pilot). We always need to play on the side of caution with this one. The office jockey won’t have to worry about a blown ear drum taking the elevator from the ground floor to the 17th floor of the office tower. You, however, may very well have to worry about it as you climb your aircraft to 10,000 feet. How “fit to fly” will you be when your eardrum bursts? I know it may feel weak, but sometimes we must “take a knee” when others would keep playing the game.

As pilots, there’s a certain mindset that often leads us to want to “push through” and fly even when we’re not feeling our best. Whether it’s a personal sense of responsibility, the desire to keep a tight schedule, or simply feeling that we’re “good enough,” we can be reluctant to admit when we’re not 100%. But recognizing that being honest about our limitations is part of being a pilot.

Before you commit to flying with any symptoms, ask yourself a series of questions:

- Can I focus and make decisions clearly right now?
- How severe are my symptoms, and could they worsen in-flight?
- Could I safely handle an emergency if one occurred?

Being proactive about these evaluations can help assess if you’re fit to fly, or if it’s better to delay the flight until your inner Maverick is at its finest.

Being responsible for the safety of yourself, your passengers, and the people on the ground starts with an honest self-assessment. Consider your current situation and the different ways it may change over time. Perhaps you feel ok now, but what if your symptoms worsen during the flight? Starting a flight with “I think it’ll be ok” is not a good idea. Take the day to relax, kick up your feet, and return another day when your inner Maverick is at its finest. 🛩️

IT'S ONLY ICE

AND I ONLY HAVE WHEELS

BY BERNIE RUNSTEDLER

To land a Lockheed C-130, empty weight 75,800 lbs with a 19,000 lbs payload (or 34,455kg with a 8,636kg payload) on ice, it has to be 85 inches thick (216cm). It also has to be good solid ice—not the mushy kind you get down in the ‘Banana Belt’ around Toronto. After the ‘ice runway’ is marked off, a few guys with an ice auger drill holes down the centre of the runway to double check the thickness.

With all the fuss about global warming in the news lately, you'd wonder if all these potential runways, available in Canada only during the winter, are long gone. Don't worry, they're not.

The first time I had the experience of landing on ice, with wheels, was on a lake. The only passenger in the plane was a young child and he wasn't complaining. The weather looked a bit iffy up ahead and, although we were close to home, it was wise to land for a bit.

I was familiar with the lake, having ice fished there earlier in the year. It also meant that 27 inches (68.6cm) of ice would more than support the small airplane. Someone also had the foresight to plow off the snow making a clear, albeit narrow, short strip to land on.

Like most landings, if you have a good approach, you're going to have a good landing. Setting up for a short, softfield landing, I looked around. While there were no obstacles, there was a noticeable snow berm at the end of the runway. Right in the way of my approach.

Slowing the airplane right down with lots of flap and no power, my wheels just skimmed the berm. My landing was stellar. Of course, you don't want to brake because you'll slide. But gravity always does its thing and we stopped before the end of the strip.

▲ Landing on the left side of the lake, the strip looks a bit crooked

One of the occupants of the cottages along the lake saw us land and invited us in for hot chocolate. Soon, the storm blew over and we got ready to depart. Again, things were done differently. The coefficient of friction for ice and wheels is very low. That means, you may do some sliding, especially at high revs. It's a great time to practice a short, softfield takeoff. Remember, the flaps and rudder are your friends, the brakes are not. My takeoff and flight home were uneventful.

Every so often there's a fly-in held on the Ottawa River. The Ottawa flows from Lake Timiskaming to Montreal (about 789 miles or 1271 kms). In winter, it freezes pretty solid. While all the landing procedures remain the same, the one variable is the ice. Because of currents, the ice thickness may change. I always feel the bravest pilot is the first one to land. If his airplane doesn't go through the ice, it's okay for the rest of us to land.

This particular flight had to be exemplary, I was bringing my wife. A girl from Saskatoon, she loved the Canadian winter and this was something new for her to experience. Fortunately, all went well. My landing, the spectacular lunch and my takeoff, were all great. Air Canada could not have done so well coming out of Pearson.

While not encouraging you to do something deliberately dangerous, it expands your skill set while opening up more places to fly. One last thing, because it's not a certified aerodrome, your insurance company may growl at you for doing this or, if you're renting a plane, they may simply tell you, "You're not allowed to do that". It's Canada, it's winter. If you have the opportunity, try it! 🛩️

ASK AN INSTRUCTOR

TRANSITIONING TO NEW AIRPLANE TYPES



BY MIKE ANDREWS

Most pilots learn to fly in typical trainers like Cessna 152/172s, Piper Cherokees, or Diamond DA20/40s. This is common practice because they're reliable and simple; students can focus on the basics of flying, without much complexity or speed. However, many pilots eventually seek to move on from primary training aircraft, and that is today's topic.

Although fixed-wing licences cover blanket types, like Single Engine Land, hopefully, most pilots would not jump into a taildragger or retractable gear airplane on their own for the very first time. Until experienced with various power plants, systems, and design characteristics, it is advised to seek instruction on airplane differences. (Did you know — rotary pilots require specific ratings for each type of helicopter?).

Even as a younger instructor, I'd look to more experienced pilots for guidance in new airplanes and can personally attest to the discomfort of not being proficient in landing a new type.

GETTING STARTED: AIRCRAFT MANUALS AND OTHER RESOURCES

In the beginning, my advice is to review the airplane's POH/AFM/Operator's Manual. Look for familiar similarities and distinct differences in normal and emergency procedures, limitations, systems, speeds, etc. YouTube can be of benefit here too. Then, locate an appropriately experienced commercial pilot to highlight and instruct the



▲ Super Stearman Photo by Tony Puerzer

unique characteristics and flight operation of the plane. It should be acknowledged— while licensed Flight Instructors can legally instruct in nearly any airplane they're rated for, it is wise to find someone specifically experienced with the characteristics you're learning. For instance, although permitted, an instructor without tailwheel time is not recommended to teach tailwheel.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GROUND SESSIONS AND FLIGHT TRAINING

When helping someone learn a new type, I start with a ground session, covering major differences from what the pilot is used to. We'll dive into theory, systems, operation, and procedures as applicable. Then, length of flight time and number of air lessons will vary with pilot skill, airplane type, and insurance requirements. We start with airwork handling, normal takeoffs and landings, then emergencies and anything additional; a similar structure to any aviation

training. Some of my career favourites so far have been a Wilga, SuperStol, Super Stearman, Glasair, J3 Cub, Zlin, Velis Electro, and more.

COMMON DIFFERENCES AROUND AIRCRAFT TYPES

Design Characteristics:

- High/Mid/Low wing - Differences in fuel systems, ground effect, crosswind handling, and potentially lateral stability.
- Wing Aspect Ratio - Affects glide capability and performance.
- Flaps - Usually mechanical, electrical, or absent. Certain planes require flaps during takeoff. Aerodynamic effects change based on design. Example: Cessnas with big, draggy Fowler Flaps, versus plain flaps.
- Empennage - Pitch handling changes subtly between stabilators, T-tails, etc. Size of surface areas affect slow speed aerodynamic control.

- Aircraft Weight - Affects aerodynamic stability and effort of mechanical controls.
- Tricycle vs. Tailwheel - On the ground, taildraggers are inherently unstable in the yaw axis. Performance capabilities and methods of takeoff and landing differ significantly. This will be a future article topic.
- Landing Gear - Operational differences with fixed vs. retractable gear. Handling variations between suspension type, tire specifications, steerable vs. non-steerable, and spacing distance between wheels.
- Other Unique Features - This may include slats/slots, speedbrakes/spoilers, de-icing equipment, a pressurized cabin, a canard, or more.

Classes:

Further class ratings are required for multi engine airplanes, seaplanes, and high-performance airplanes, as each requires their own particular knowledge and skills. Even within classes, distinctions can be found, like centreline thrust vs. conventional twin engine, or floats vs. floating hull for seaplanes.

Power Plants:

Various engines have significant differences in functionality, pilot operation, and considerations for longevity. Variations include:

- Carbureted vs. fuel injected
- Turbocharged, supercharged, or normally aspirated
- Horsepower and power limitations
- Piston configuration/orientation
- Geared vs. direct drive
- Constant speed vs. fixed pitch propellor
- Cowl flaps/shutters
- Turbine vs. piston vs. electric
- Manufacturer differences

Generally, higher horsepower and/or greater complexity of an engine means more awareness and management required by pilots. The airplane is also likely flying at faster speeds, requiring greater airmanship and anticipation.

Cockpit Technology:

While not type specific, this is worth noting – with today’s digital



▲ Wilga Photo by Mike Andrews



▲ C170 Photo by Mike Andrews



▲ Glassair Photo by Mike Andrews

instruments and avionics, learning a new cockpit can be just as involved as learning a new airplane type, particularly for IFR flying.

BECOMING PROFICIENT IN NEW AIRCRAFT TYPES

After considerable practice, mastering new airplanes and operating procedures become easier. Once familiar with an aircraft’s handling characteristics, you can more effectively self-evaluate your performance. After all, an airplane is an airplane – one must just be prepared for everything that it has to offer. As a personal example, I had about 2,800 total, and 45 tailwheel hours

before I felt comfortable teaching myself a new but simple tailwheel type unaccompanied.

THE BENEFITS OF GAINING EXPERIENCE WITH DIFFERENT AIRPLANES

Experiencing differences between airplanes significantly strengthens a pilot’s understanding and overall awareness of flying machines. As an aviator, the empowering advantages of learning to fly various platforms cannot be overstated.

Remember, experiences are all around you, should you only ask.

Happy skies. 🛩️

SAFETY QUIZ

WINTER OPERATIONS



BY MIKE ANDREWS

1. The main principle of the Clean Aircraft Concept is:

- Surface contaminants will increase the rate of ice formation.
- The CARs require that aircraft must always be clear of ice on the ground and in flight.
- The CARs prohibit takeoff when frost, ice or snow is adhering to any critical surface of the aircraft.
- Any de-ice/anti-ice fluid must flow off of the wing by rotation speed.

2. With respect to airplanes, Critical Surfaces are defined as:

- Wings, control surfaces, propellers, stabilizers, and fuselage upper surface for airplanes with rear-mounted engines.
- Cowling, propellers, fuselage, control surfaces, and stabilizers.
- Control surfaces, propellers, stabilizers, and fuselage upper surface for airplanes with rear-mounted engines.
- Wings, propellers, fuselage, and stabilizers.

3. The Cold-Soaking Phenomenon can occur on the ground, creating frost on the wings, even when ambient temperatures are above freezing. This is primarily because:

- The amount of moisture in the air.
- Active precipitation.
- Warm fuel supplied by a fuel truck to a below-freezing temperature airplane after a long flight in cold air.
- Below-freezing temperature fuel inside the wing tanks after a long flight in cold air.

4. When ambient temperatures are below freezing, to prevent frost from forming on a hangared airplane, a procedure that is commonly used involves:

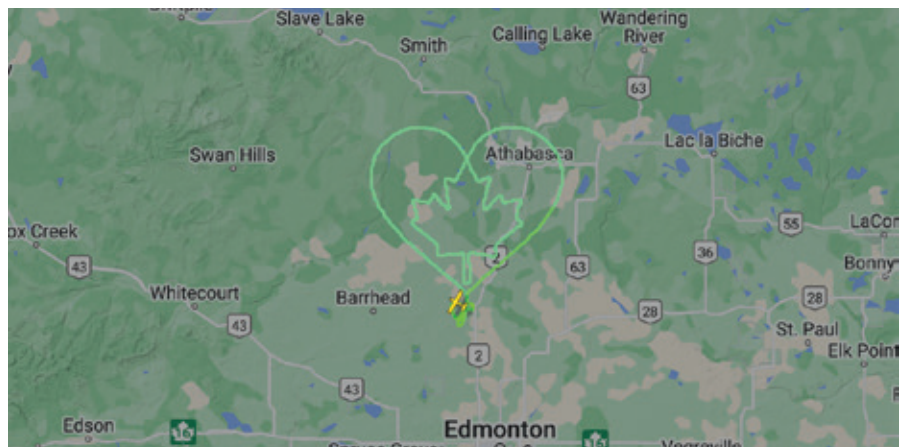
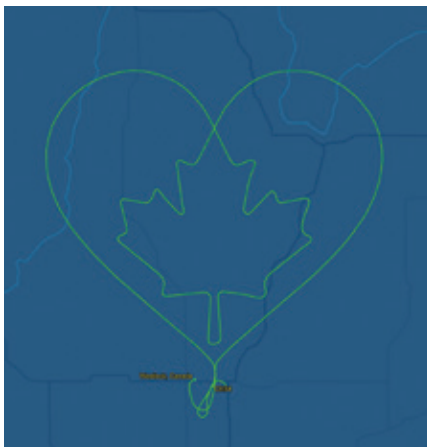
- Bringing the warm airplane out of the hangar as quickly as possible.
- Opening the hangar door to allow cold air inside, around the airplane, before moving the plane outside.
- Using cold water to cool down the warm airplane.
- Adding cold fuel to the wing tanks to cool the wings down.

References:

- Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM) — Airmanship (AIR) 2.12.2 Aircraft Contamination on the Ground - Frost, Ice or Snow
- Guidelines for Aircraft Ground - Icing Procedures - TP14052 --- 10.2.1 Aircraft in Hangars

Answers located at bottom right hand side of of page.

▼ This past Valentine's Day, Dan Charrois and his wife, Jeannie went beyond the traditional datenight by flight planning a more 'intricate' route than the typical straight line from point A to B. Inspired by Michael Jones from Ontario who drew a maple leaf in the sky on Feb 5, they showed their support and love for Canada through skywriting over Alberta. Aircraft registration is CGDJE for those wishing to flight track on flightaware.com. Dan Charrois is the current captain for COPA Flight 139 - Westlock (CES4).



STAY CURRENT WITH THE COPA AVIATION ACADEMY

BY GEORGE FARRINGTON

The COPA Aviation Academy (<https://copa.myabsorb.com>) is a first of its kind in Canada platform designed to meet the evolving needs of pilots, whether they're new to the cockpit or seasoned professionals. Created with the assistance of Public Safety funding, the Academy offers unparalleled benefits for pilots seeking to maintain their 24-month licence recurrency and further their aviation education beyond basic licensing requirements.

STREAMLINED 24-MONTH LICENCE RECURRENCY

Maintaining a pilot's licence requires adherence to strict regulatory requirements, including recurrent training every 24 months. The COPA Aviation Academy makes this process more convenient and effective than ever before.

Through its comprehensive online platform, the academy offers tailored courses that meet Transport Canada's regulatory requirements for recurrency. These courses cover crucial topics such as air regulations, flight operations, navigation, and emergency procedures. With an intuitive user interface, pilots can access these modules at their convenience, allowing them to fit recurrency training into their busy schedules.

Moreover, the academy's courses are crafted by experienced aviation professionals, ensuring they are up to date with the latest industry standards and best practices. The combination of high-quality content and user-friendly delivery ensures pilots not only meet

their regulatory requirements but also sharpen their skills and knowledge in the process.

BEYOND COMPLIANCE: ENHANCING AVIATION KNOWLEDGE


While regulatory compliance is essential, the COPA Aviation Academy goes far beyond the basics. It offers a wide array of educational resources designed to enrich a pilot's knowledge and improve their overall proficiency.

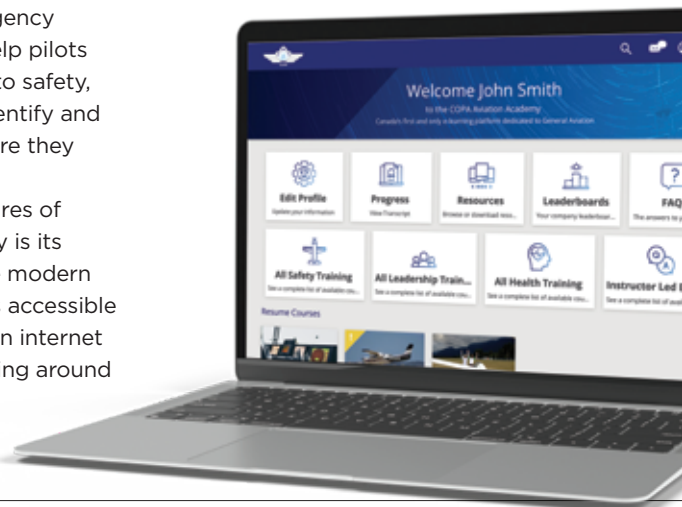
Pilots can access specialized courses that delve into a range of advanced topics such as loss of control, navigation and communication, and aviation safety. By broadening their knowledge base, pilots are better equipped to handle complex flight scenarios and improve their understanding of different aspects of aviation.

The academy places a strong emphasis on safety, offering courses that focus on risk assessment, decision-making, and emergency response. These modules help pilots build a proactive approach to safety, enhancing their ability to identify and mitigate potential risks before they escalate into critical issues.

One of the standout features of the COPA Aviation Academy is its flexibility. Designed with the modern pilot in mind, the platform is accessible 24/7 from any device with an internet connection, instead of working around the schedule of online or in person safety seminars. This means pilots can

learn at their own pace, whether they're at home, on the go, or between flights. The academy also incorporates interactive elements such as quizzes, video tutorials, and scenario-based training, making learning engaging and effective. These tools help pilots retain critical information and apply it in real-world situations.

The COPA Aviation Academy is more than just an educational platform; it's a comprehensive resource for pilots committed to excellence. By simplifying the 24-month licence recurrency process and offering a wealth of advanced educational opportunities, the academy empowers pilots to stay at the forefront of their profession. Whether you're looking to meet regulatory requirements or enhance your skills, the COPA Aviation Academy is your gateway to ongoing success in the skies. 



BUILDING A CULTURE OF AVIATION SAFETY

IN ATLANTIC CANADA



BY EDGAR ALLAIN

In October 1999, I joined Transport Canada's Civil Aviation group in the Atlantic Region, working in the System Safety Branch. Around that time, Wayne Malone, the Regional Director of Civil Aviation, had started holding annual meetings with key aviation industry personnel, a philosophy that was being encouraged by our national headquarters.

The success of these meetings became the foundation for what would later be known as the Regional Aviation Safety Council (RASC), held every 6 months and alternating between Halifax, Nova Scotia, and St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, typically in May and in October respectively.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR AVIATION SAFETY

In the beginning, the RASC was with all stakeholders in plenary. Later, we added breakout sessions so smaller groups could focus on specific aviation topics. These proved to be quite successful but for the last number of years, the RASC has gone back to an annual event in conjunction with the Atlantic Operations Consultation Meeting (AOCM), a successful NAV CANADA initiative, creating good lines of communication and collaboration with Transport Canada and industry stakeholders.

It was found that doing our events paired over two days brought in a larger audience for both NAV CANADA and Transport Canada. It's been a great way to improve communication and collaboration.



▲ Photo from an exercise in Greenwood - Annapolis - COPA and CASARA members working in attendance.

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS IN SAFETY OUTREACH

Aside from the RASC, the Atlantic region has been active in sharing safety knowledge in the delivery of safety seminars to COPA, the Civil Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA), as well as Atlantic region flight schools and flying clubs.

Interestingly, during the COVID 19 pandemic, we were among the first regions to deliver safety seminars virtually and attracted large audiences despite the movement restrictions at that time. Within the past year, the Standards Branch in the Atlantic region has delivered safety seminars to:

- Six presentations to four flight schools: Debert Flight Center, Moncton Flight College, Gander Flight Training and Annapolis Valley Flight Training;
- Nine presentations to COPA Flight 2 Fredericton, COPA Flight 193 Saint John, COPA Flights 57 Charlottetown, COPA Flight 125 Summerside and PEI Flying Association; COPA Flight 147 Annapolis Valley, COPA Flight 97 Avalon, COPA Flight 195 Central

NL, COPA Flights 27 Havelock, COPA Flight 188 Debert; and

- CASARA members from all four Atlantic provinces.

In collaboration with industry, the Atlantic Region is also actively participating in the development of the Air Taxi Safety Campaign, a national initiative focused on creating safety resources for air taxi operators based on a recommendation from the Transportation Safety Board (Investigation Report AH150001, recommendation A19-02). The completion and delivery of the program nationally and in the Atlantic Region is expected in 2026.

VIRTUAL TOWNHALLS: THE NEW ERA OF ENGAGEMENT

Further to the RASC and Safety outreach, the region has also started holding Transport Canada -Industry Virtual Townhall events. These meetings are two hours in duration, allowing industry and Transport Canada to discuss relevant topics. In January of 2023, our first Virtual Townhall event was themed around the changes to Fatigue Risk Management Regulations, which also included engagement with our national headquarters team.

In November 2024, we held another Townhall on a range of subjects, including safety for air taxis, low-visibility operations, and common airworthiness findings. These virtual meetings are a great way to keep the conversation going and share updates with the aviation community.

/ Continued on page 34

SAFETY IS BORING... UNTIL IT'S NOT

THE UNSEEN POWER OF SAFETY IN AVIATION

BY MIKE SATTLER

Safety is boring. I mean, who has ever seen a headline screaming, “Today in Aviation, Nothing Happened”? Where is the grandeur? What is exciting about telling tales about flights that didn’t have a “Holly Sugar Honey Iced Tea” moment? There is no paperwork, no statue erected in your honour. Safety is unseen, quiet, and boring. And that is the point. Safety is invisible, because nothing happened.

Every day, thousands of GA, commercial, and military aircrew do what they love to do. And face it, if we didn't love being in a three-dimensional environment, we would get on doing other things. None of us need to fly, but the satisfaction we all get from viewing the BIG horizon keeps us going back for more. Even those of us employed to use our skills and training, do so because we want to.

I once worked in a windowless building for 11 months as an electronic technician supervising the repair of complex avionic systems. There were no windows due to thermal insulation. The building had to be kept at a constant temperature and pressure, for the calibration systems to be correct. It was fantastic work from a technical perspective. It also drove me mad. As soon as I could, I was back on flight ops.

So, what is all this safety stuff? I don't know. Ask your family. Ask your friends. What do they think about you being safe? Why do they think safety is so NOT boring?

Safety is a mindset that encompasses all you do. With aviation, it can be as subtle as waiting half an hour for the forecast winds to abate, or as dramatic as the mountain valley 180 turn. It is a very difficult subject to narrow down to one or two elements. But let's try anyway.

Let's start with my old favourite: Cowards Rule. If you feel the weather/track/airspeed (whatever) feels wrong, you are right. The human animal is geared to survival. That little 'feeling' is the subtle hint that you should reconsider the flight today. Maybe it is something to do with the mechanical condition of the aircraft, maybe the winds enroute are causing concern, maybe the arrival time at your destination is uncomfortably close to an incoming weather system (or nightfall for those not night rated). Any number of issues can cause us to reconsider.

Then there is the maintenance side of things. I will put on my PRM (Person Responsible for Maintenance) hat. For those of you who have Owner Maintenance approval, there is

the added issue of Human Factors in Maintenance. Have you accounted for all your tools? Is the lockwire too loose, (or too tight)? There is a reason certain maintenance actions require an Independent Inspector. Even as a PRM, if I was carrying out a task, I felt no hesitation in calling in another set of eyes to ensure the task was done correctly. Even if that other set belonged to an apprentice.

Safety in aviation is the art of managing the risks. That does not mean paranoia, it means respecting the scenario we are presented with. We are all human, and we can all make unintentional mistakes, hence my getting apprentices to check my work. Actions such as deciding where to source parts for our aircraft (OEM or Joe's Handy Shed!), it is asking yourself "should I?", then ask others if they agree. It is stepping away and looking at the big picture. Being safe in maintenance takes as little as five minutes, but it may save a life.

The cool thing is, I learnt my safety habits by listening. Listening to my trade masters as an apprentice maintainer. Listening to my flight instructors and the "there I was" stories. Listening to my family. Listening to my inner voice. I learnt my habits and mindset. It is how we all acquire safe habits. So how can you learn? Start by reading. Transportation Safety Board's Air Transportation Safety Investigations and Reports web page is a great source of insight. As aviation knows no bounds, check out the similar sites for other countries. COPA's Flight magazine is also an invaluable source of knowledge. The experiences of others may save you from a similar scenario.

The EAA also has a very informative website. But, if you are not into getting tangled in a/(the) web, why not spend time at your local COPA Flight? Or how about attending a season refresher at your local flying club? As a professional, I am constantly training. Between safety seminars, simulator sessions, or just having a Check Pilot beside me every couple of months as we carry out our routine Competency Check Rides, I have it easy. The training comes to me. But in the private flying world, a little chasing down may be required.

/ Continued on page 34

WHAT WILL AN ELECTION MEAN FOR GENERAL AVIATION

BY ANDREW FITZPATRICK

One of the challenges contributing to a magazine like Flight is that by the time these words reach your eyes, everything below may be out of date and look downright quaint. As I type the dust is still settling on what has been an unprecedented week in Ottawa with the Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister resigning in spectacular fashion on the morning when she was scheduled to deliver a fall economic statement in the afternoon. Just a few hours ago our usually photo-op and sound-bite happy Prime Minister presided over the swearing in of freshly minted cabinet ministers while making no statement and avoiding reporters. By the time you read this Justin Trudeau may or may not still be Primer Minister, we may or may not be in the midst of Liberal Party leadership contest and we may or may not be in the midst of an election campaign. Uncertainty abounds. What if anything does this mean for General Aviation?


The bottom line for General Aviation, as with everything else falling under the jurisdiction of the federal government, is that we can expect governance to take a back seat to politics until after the next election. We should not expect to see any major policy initiatives pass the House of Commons, aviation related or otherwise. The one small bright spot in all this is the Ministry of Transport, inherited by Anita Anand upon the departure of Montréal MP Pablo Rodriguez for greener provincial pastures, has remained with Anand being alleviated of responsibility for

Treasury Board. The transport portfolio has seen a succession of Ministers since the departure of former Astronaut Marc Garneau in 2021, suggesting the file has not been a priority for the Trudeau government. Anand represents some level of continuity and will be better able to focus on transportation issues having shed Treasury Board. However, don't expect undue attention to be paid to General Aviation in the months or weeks remaining until the next general election. Expect the Transport Minister's efforts to be focused on more voter-friendly matters like charges for carry on bags and other airline fees.

An election is a sure thing in 2025, by October at the latest but most likely earlier. If the polls are to be believed, it is likely that Canada will have a new government led by the Conservative Party of Canada. What does this mean for General Aviation and what can COPA and GA do to prepare?

For organizations like COPA, a change of government is an opportunity. There will be new ministers, new ministerial staff and new Commons Committee members. Some may be pilots and aviation enthusiasts, and they should be identified, but most will be a blank slate. We must be ready to engage with these new faces to share our message about the importance of General Aviation and our concerns about such things as regulatory mandates, fuel availability, and the loss of airports. While polls suggest the conservatives will win many more seats in urban ridings than in

An election is a sure thing in 2025, by October at the latest but most likely earlier. If the polls are to be believed, it is likely that Canada will have a new government led by the Conservative Party of Canada. What does this mean for General Aviation and what can COPA and GA do to prepare?

past elections, they will likely still dominate in rural areas. The kind of areas that have small airports without scheduled airline service. The kind of places where General Aviation not only flourishes, but is often a lifeline. Combined with their lower tax and regulatory burden inclinations, this greater familiarity with the realities of Canada outside of large urban centres should help our next government better understand the value of General Aviation to Canada and Canadians. The possibility is there, it falls to us to seize it. 

WHAT IF I LOSE MY MEDICAL?

BY GEORGE FARRINGTON

Losing a civil aviation medical certificate can be a challenging and disheartening experience for any pilot. Whether due to a new medical diagnosis or an unforeseen health issue, this scenario is not uncommon and can leave pilots questioning their future in aviation. COPA recognizes the gravity of such situations and offers guidance on navigating these turbulent waters.

UNDERSTAND THE IMPLICATIONS

The loss of a civil aviation medical certificate immediately grounds a pilot from exercising the privileges of their licence. Under Canadian Aviation Regulations (CARs), it is illegal to operate an aircraft without a valid medical certificate corresponding to the pilot's licence. This applies whether the licence is for private or commercial operations.

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR CIVIL AVIATION MEDICAL EXAMINER (CAME)

If a diagnosis or health issue impacts your ability to meet medical standards, your first point of contact should be your Civil Aviation Medical Examiner (CAME). They can provide an insight into how your condition aligns with Transport Canada's medical requirements and what steps you can take to potentially regain your certification.

For conditions that may temporarily disqualify you, your CAME might recommend treatments or therapies that could restore your eligibility. Open and transparent communication is crucial to creating a clear path forward.

NOTIFY TRANSPORT CANADA

It is your responsibility to inform Transport Canada about any medical condition that could affect your ability

to safely operate an aircraft. While it may feel daunting, timely disclosure demonstrates professionalism and ensures compliance with CARs. Transport Canada's Civil Aviation Medicine (CAM) branch will assess your case and determine the next steps.

CONSIDER THE CATEGORY 4 MEDICAL CERTIFICATE

For private pilots, a Category 4 medical certificate is an option worth exploring. It has less stringent requirements compared to Category 1 or 3 certificates, making it a viable path for recreational flying. Although this may not restore full privileges, it allows pilots to continue their passion for aviation in a limited capacity.

Please note, that a medical condition standing in the way of a Category 3 medical may prohibit access to a Category 4, as certain medical conditions must be disclosed upon submitting a Category 4 application and will require consultation with a CAME. A Category 4 medical is not a failsafe solution to the loss of a Category 3 medical.

HELP AND ADVOCACY SUPPORT

COPA provides advocacy services to its members facing medical certification challenges. We can help point you towards resources, navigate Transport Canada's processes, and enquire on your behalf on the status of your

medical with Transport Canada, if no information has been received through Transport Canada's own communication channels. We also encourage members to join discussions with other pilots who have faced similar challenges, as shared experiences can provide valuable insights and emotional support.

STAY ENGAGED WITH AVIATION

Even if flying privileges are temporarily or even permanently affected, many avenues remain to stay connected with aviation. COPA's network offers numerous volunteer opportunities, from participating in youth outreach programs to supporting local aviation events, and we strongly suggest engaging with a COPA Flight near you, even if not actively flying.

Focus on Health and Recovery

Your health should always be the top priority. Seek appropriate medical care, follow treatment plans, and work toward recovery. A proactive approach to health may open doors for reapplying for your medical certificate in the future.

/ Continued on page 34

BALANCING NATIONAL ADVOCACY WITH LOCAL SUPPORT

THE ROLE OF COPA



BY JAMES FERRIER

General Aviation (GA) is the lifeblood of the aviation ecosystem, encompassing an array of activities from recreational flying and pilot training to medical transport and agricultural operations. This sector serves as a critical economic engine, connecting communities, fostering job creation, and providing essential services. COPA plays a pivotal role in protecting and advancing the interests of this diverse community. However, COPA's effectiveness lies in balancing two interconnected mandates: advocating for national policy issues while supporting local advocacy efforts that address the needs of local aviation stakeholders

NATIONAL ADVOCACY

National advocacy is crucial because aviation operates within a framework of federal regulations and international agreements. Issues like airspace modernization, environmental standards, infrastructure investment, and safety regulations demand cohesive, high-level engagement with policymakers and regulators. These matters often transcend local interests and require a unified voice to ensure national policies align with the broader needs of the aviation industry.

For example, advocacy for unleaded aviation fuel initiatives, ADS-B implementation, or addressing pilot shortages requires coordinated lobbying at the national level. An

organization like COPA can consolidate data, develop compelling narratives, and engage with government, national agencies, and international bodies to ensure GA and industry priorities are addressed effectively.

Without a strong national advocacy presence, General Aviation risks fragmenting from industry leaving disparate regional GA voices struggling to make a cohesive impact. A united front strengthens credibility and ensures GA retains its ability to influence critical decisions that affect all stakeholders.

LOCAL ADVOCACY

While national advocacy is essential, aviation's lifeblood flows through local airports, local operators, and community aviation programs. Local stakeholders face unique challenges, such as rising tenant costs, landing and user fees, zoning disputes, noise regulations, and airport funding challenges. These issues require grassroots advocacy tailored to specific needs and concerns of local communities.

For instance, a small airport in a rural area might need to find funding to survive, while a larger airport might face pressure to address environmental concerns from nearby residents and local politicians or face closure. Local advocacy ensures these distinct needs are not overlooked in the broader national conversation.

Local engagement also strengthens general aviation's connection to communities, fosters public support and highlights the economic benefits of aviation at a grassroots level.

Local engagement also strengthens general aviation's connection to communities, fosters public support and highlights the economic benefits of aviation at a grassroots level. Whether it's a small general aviation airport advocating for continuing support from local government or a flight school seeking access to airspace for training, local efforts are essential to the industry's overall health.

BALANCING NATIONAL AND LOCAL ADVOCACY

The challenge for COPA, lies in balancing these two interconnected but distinct advocacy roles. While focusing on national issues, the association must also empower local stakeholders to address their specific challenges effectively.

1. Bridging Priorities

COPA must recognize how national and local priorities intersect. For example, federal policies on airport funding may directly impact local airport infrastructure projects. By understanding connections, the organization can advocate for federal programs that benefit local stakeholders, ensuring that national policies are responsive to local needs.

2. Providing Resources and Expertise

COPA is equipped to provide resources, training, and expertise to support local advocacy efforts. We develop toolkits, sponsor research, and can offer guidance on regulatory and other processes. By doing so, we look to empower local stakeholders to be effective advocates within their own communities.

For instance, COPA might provide local airport users with data and templates to demonstrate the economic benefits of the airport, strengthening the case for local government support.

3. Amplifying Local Voices at the National Level

Local issues often highlight trends that merit national attention. COPA can act as a conduit to amplify local concerns and incorporating them into a national advocacy agenda as needed. This ensures the association remains tuned to the needs of grassroots stakeholders while advancing industry-wide goals.

4. Encouraging Collaboration

Facilitating collaboration between local and national stakeholders is another key role for COPA's national office. By fostering dialogue through conferences, forums, and joint initiatives, the association creates opportunities for shared learning and collective action.

THE PATH FORWARD

As aviation faces rapid change, the need for advocacy has never been greater. COPA must take a dual approach: leading the charge on national issues while equipping local stakeholders to advocate effectively in communities.

The association's success depends on integrating these efforts seamlessly. National advocacy provides overarching strategy, addresses systemic challenges and shapes policy at the highest levels. Meanwhile, local advocacy ensures the diverse needs of GA, local airports, and communities are met, creating a stronger, more resilient industry.

Ultimately, the synergy between national and local advocacy strengthens the aviation ecosystem, enabling it to thrive in a complex and ever-changing landscape. COPA embraces this dual focus to ensure that aviation remains a vital driver of economic growth, innovation, and connectivity for years to come. ✈️



▲ This is a magnificent, rare cloud formation that looks like a grey turbulent ocean. It was ahead of a fast-moving cold front leading a thunderstorm and taken in early October east of Ottawa by COPA member, Paul Tomascik. It may look fake, but it's real, Paul assures our readers! Can you classify it?



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(Continued from page 26)

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Our goal is to continue improving aviation safety with further participation and engagement with COPA, CASARA and Industry with the desire for continuous improvement, engaging as many disciplines as possible, and promoting positive safety culture. COPA members have been instrumental in the success of this outreach initiative with the provision of locations, promotion, and helping with logistical support.

With the efforts of COPA, our flight schools, and others these initiatives make a difference in enhancing aviation safety. Transport Canada Civil Aviation in the Atlantic Region sincerely thanks COPA and all those who have assisted. Your efforts make a difference, and we're excited about what we can accomplish together, in the future. 

(Continued from page 27)

SAFETY IS SILENT, UNSEEN, THANKLESS

So, safety is silent. It is unseen. It is thankless. It is boring. It is essential to the enjoyment of aviation by your family, yourself, your friends and all of us. "Cowards Rule" has never failed me in 42 years of flying. I have never been berated by an employer for being safe. I have never had my family or friends refuse the offer of a flight with me. And I intend to keep it that way. Enjoying the freedom to fly, sometimes means taking a step back and asking, "should I?"


Be Safe and smooth. 

(Continued from page 26)

KEEP HOPE ALIVE

Many pilots who lose their medical certificates initially find the process overwhelming but ultimately discover new ways to enjoy and contribute to the aviation community. Whether through modified privileges, advocacy efforts, or alternative roles, there is life in aviation beyond a medical diagnosis.

COPA is Here to Help

At COPA, we are committed to supporting Canadian pilots through every stage of their journey, including challenging times like the loss of a medical certificate. We encourage you to leverage our resources, connect with our community, and let us help you navigate this difficult process. Together, we can ensure that your passion for aviation continues to soar. 

WHY COPA MATTERS

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF A COPA MEMBERSHIP?

While there is no one-size-fits-all reason to be a COPA member, the underlying goal is to protect every Canadian pilot's Freedom to Fly.

Our advocacy efforts involve lobbying Transport Canada, negotiating with NAV CANADA, engaging elected officials at all levels of Government, and maintaining a network of pilots to help monitor thousands of airports across Canada. We leverage the collective support of thousands of pilots to back our greater cause to preserve General Aviation in Canada.

Of the hundreds of issues we face every day, some of our most important focus areas include ensuring GA pilots receive air traffic services, enabling the longevity of GA in Canada, and removing lead from aviation fuels in a way that works for the entire General Aviation fleet.

WHY DO WE EXIST?

The Canadian Owners and Pilots Association was founded in 1952 to speak as a unified voice for General Aviation in Canada.

Since then, we've grown to meet the ever-changing needs of the Canadian aviation community and remain the only national organization that represents Canadian GA.

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT?

Consider contributing to the COPA Flight Safety Foundation which supports our scholarship program and safety initiatives and renewing your membership today!



DID YOU KNOW?



General Aviation has an excellent safety record, with an estimated 30,000 pilots flying approximately 37,478 aircraft
(Transport Canada, 2023).

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