



NEWS RELEASE

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FIRST QUARTER RANKS KELOWNA AS 9TH BUSIEST AIRPORT IN CANADA

The first quarter of 2008 proved to be the busiest in the history of Kelowna International Airport, with March being the busiest month ever.

A total of 379,335 passengers used the Airport in the first three months of this year compared to 361,128 for the same quarter last year, an increase of 18,207 passengers or 5%. March brought 129,243 passengers compared to last year's record breaking 128,040, an increase of 1,203 passengers.

These statistics mean YLW was the 9th busiest airport in Canada during the first quarter of 2008, slightly ahead of Victoria.

"It shows the continued growth of the British Columbia economy and the support from the North, South and Central Okanagan Communities in making Kelowna International their airport of choice." states Sam Samaddar, Interim Airport General Manager. Passenger traffic has grown by 53% over the past 3 years." The airlines serving this airport are at a high load factor, passenger numbers are up, and business is strong. Having eight ski hills within a two hour driving distance and a high load factor on sun destined charters is a big factor in why our first quarter was so busy."

Several construction projects are underway at the Airport to deal with the growth that is expected over the next 3 years. The expansion of the departure room and pre-board screening area will be opened to the public on May 21, 2008. The runway extension and road and parking improvements are both expected to be complete by December 2008. Design work is underway for a further expansion of the Air Terminal Building to accommodate a new international arrivals facility and additional check-in capacity to be completed by the end of 2010.

Samaddar explains, “Expanding the infrastructure will provide a sustainable and efficient airport to move visitors and cargo to their final destinations. This will further benefit tourism, businesses and the regional economy.”

Kelowna International Airport has approximately 30 departures per day with non-stop service to Calgary, Edmonton, Las Vegas, Prince George, Seattle, Toronto, Vancouver and Victoria on five air carriers; Air Canada, AC Jazz, Central Mountain Air, Horizon Air and WestJet. Seasonal charter service is also offered to Cabo San Lucas, Cancun and Puerto Vallarta.

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Media Contacts:

Sam Samaddar
Interim Airport General Manager
250-765-5125 ext. 202

Jenelle Turpin
Airport Communications Coordinator
250-765-5125 ext. 207
cell: 250-317-0575
jturpin@kelowna.ca