



# News Release - For Immediate Release

## Airport Reports Another Year of Record Traffic

**January 19, 2009 Deer Lake, NL** Despite a worldwide economic downturn and higher fuel surcharges for most of the year, the Deer Lake Regional Airport experienced a 5.5% increase in passenger traffic and established an all-time record of 293,847 passengers in 2008. The new record surpassed the previous mark set in 2007 by an additional 15,315 enplaning/deplaning passengers. Passenger traffic at the airport has increased 123% since the year 2000. This past year represents the eight consecutive year of traffic increases at the regional airport. As a result of this growth, the Deer Lake Regional Airport now has the distinction of being the 4<sup>th</sup> busiest airport in Atlantic Canada, following Halifax, St. John's and Moncton.

Todd Lee, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Airport Authority attributed the growth to the wide range of passenger airline services available to the travelling public. "This past year we had an extensive schedule and an increase in capacity by airlines such as Air Canada, Air Canada Jazz, Air Labrador, Provincial, Sunwing and WestJet," said Lee. "This level of service helps stimulate the market by maintaining competitive airfares and providing more options for the traveler, resulting in more people flying and using the airport," added Lee.

Considering the economic recession worldwide and the slowdown in the Alberta oil patch that has resulted in the loss of charter flights for commuting workers, Airport Manager Jamie Schwartz is still optimistic that traffic levels will be maintained in 2009. "Most major airports are forecasting marginal traffic decreases or limited growth as we move through this recession and it is our hope that travel patterns will be maintained," said Schwartz. "We are always looking for new opportunities and we are very pleased that Sunwing has extended its Cuba winter program from Deer Lake from 7 to 10 weeks," said Schwartz. "This new and enhanced service is just one example of our efforts to create more travel opportunities that will encourage more travel in 2009," added Schwartz.

The Deer Lake Regional Airport serves Western Newfoundland with twenty-four regularly scheduled flights each day to destinations including Toronto, Halifax, Montreal, St. John's and Goose Bay with connections worldwide. Air Canada, Air Canada Jazz, Air Labrador, Provincial Airlines, WestJet and Sunwing now offer a regular or seasonal service to and from Deer Lake.

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