

Opening Remarks – Aviation Day Canada (9-9:10am) by Jeff Morrison, President and CEO National Airlines Council of Canada

Thanks Michel, good morning everyone and welcome to the 2026 edition of Aviation Day Canada. Let me start by acknowledging we are on the traditional territories of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation, and we thank them for letting us live, work and play on this territory.

There's an old saying that the only constant in life is change, and for Canada's airlines and aviation sector, that saying has proven quite accurate since the last time we held this event in October 2024. For instance, over the past year, we've seen geopolitical events in places like Iran and Cuba having direct impacts on airline operations in Canada. Global aviation fuel prices have skyrocketed. We've seen drastic changes in our relationship with our southern neighbour that has impacted the US travel market. And domestically, a new government led by Mark Carney has taken a much more activist role in improving the competitiveness of Canada industry, which is having implications for aviation.

But despite a very different landscape compared to 2 years ago, some things remain the same. Les compagnies aériennes canadiennes demeurent le mode de transport le plus essentiel pour les personnes et les marchandises, assurant la liaison entre les différentes régions du Canada ainsi qu'avec le reste du monde. Elles

continuent de figurer parmi les chefs de file mondiaux en matière de sûreté et de sécurité, tout en poursuivant leurs efforts d'amélioration. À l'heure où le Canada cherche à diversifier ses échanges commerciaux et ses chaînes d'approvisionnement mondiales, ses compagnies aériennes restent un maillon crucial de l'économie des chaînes d'approvisionnement. *Canada's airlines remain the most critical and important mode of travel for people and goods linking Canada to each other and around the world. Canada's airlines remain global leaders in safety and security, and continue to make improvements. At a time when Canada is looking to broaden its trade and global supply routes, Canada's airlines remain a critical link in supply chain economics.*

And I'll add one more truism that remains the same – which is that Canada demonstrably remains the best country in the world in which to live. But that doesn't mean we can't do better. And for Canada's airlines and aviation in general, there are ways in which we should, and can be even stronger and more competitive. And that's why we're here today. Today's event has been organized to bring together leaders from airlines and throughout the aviation system to discuss critical issues facing this sector, and importantly, to discuss the vast opportunities that exist for airlines to contribute to Canada's national objectives. By the end of today, I am confident that every one of you will walk out of here with a broader and more informed perspective on what is needed to make air travel in Canada more competitive, more affordable, more accessible and more sustainable.

Events like today are not possible without solid partnerships. I want to thank the team at IATA for their strong collaboration with NACC on putting on today's event. I want to thank the small but mighty NACC staff team who work tirelessly today and every day with our members to strengthen Canadian aviation. I also want to thank each the sponsors for today's event whom Michel named and were on the screen, without whom this event would not be possible. I'd really encourage everyone to take a few minutes at the break to say hello at their booths and introduce yourselves.

And before turning it back to Michel, let me add a quick personal note. As we announced a few months ago, at the end of this year, I will be officially taking my retirement. And to all of you who have said I don't look old enough to retire, my rather inflated ego thanks you!. So aside from my 19 year old self thanking David Chilton and the book *The Wealthy Barber* for making this possible, today I want to thank everyone who I've worked and collaborated with over the past 4+ years. This has not been an easy role, but I'm confident that over the past several years, together we've been able to put NACC and the aviation sector more broadly on a stronger and more solid footing.

Merci donc, et profitez bien du reste de la journée. So with that, thank you everyone, and enjoy the day.

Closing Remarks

I want to start with where I finished my opening remarks this morning, and that is to thank all of you, all our speakers, the IATA and NACC staff, and the sponsors for making this event possible.

We've heard a lot today – the need to lower regulation, the need for a more affordable aviation policy framework, the need for labour stability, the need for greater accessibility, and the need for strengthened consultation and conversation. I hope that today was a step forward for all of us in achieving those respective goals. And as you leave here, I issue you this challenge - in whatever function you play, think of just one issue we discussed here today and serve as its champion in order to bring about a stronger, more competitive aviation system. Collectively and working together, we can achieve the vision discussed here today.

Once again, thank you everyone, and safe travels home!