Northern Airports

An Airport Information Brochure

Manitoba
Transportation and
Government Services

Manitoba on the *move*

Northern Airports Operations

This information is produced by the Northern Airports Branch of Manitoba Transportation and Government Services for the general public and airport users. It should be noted that Transport Canada, Aviation Group is responsible for aviation safety and regulations throughout Canada.

Forward

Welcome to Manitoba's northern airports. The operation you see around you is just one component of a transportation system that reaches every community of the province. It may look quiet and uneventful right now, but that is the way it is meant to be. Every person, from the airport manager and the pilot to the equipment operator, plays a vital role in the safe and efficient transportation of people and goods by air. For many northern communities this is the only means of transportation.

This information is directed towards all airport users, including passengers, aircraft owners and operators, construction, and maintenance personnel. The intent is to orient you with the basic components of your airport and to stress the importance of safety awareness.

The responsibility for airport safety is in everyone's hands.

→ According to a study produced by the Institute for Risk Research of the University of Waterloo, based on injuries (passengers-km basis) scheduled air travel is 30 times safer than road travel. Canadian aircraft accident rates are typically at or below world rates, all of which display a declining trend.

Airport Descriptions and Brief History of the Community

Berens River Airport is a public-use airport with a 2,900-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights, serving the community of Berens River, population of 1,400. The community is located at the mouth of the Berens River on the east shore of Lake Winnipeg and is 277 km (172 miles) north of Winnipeg. The name honours Joseph Berens, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company (1812–1822).

Bloodvein Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,000-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights, serving the community of Bloodvein River, population 764. Situated on the east shore of Lake Winnipeg at the mouth of the Bloodvein River, the community is 216 km (134 miles) north of Winnipeg.

Brochet Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,000-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights, serving the community of Brochet, population 646. The community is situated on the north shore of Brochet Bay at the north end of Reindeer Lake and is 938 km (583 miles) northwest of Winnipeg. The French word *"brochet"* means pike.

Cross Lake Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,990-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights, serving the community of Cross Lake, population 3,745. The community is an extension of the Nelson River system and is located 526 km (327 miles) north of Winnipeg. The community and the lake were both named *"Cross"* because fur trade routes *"crossed"* them.

Gods Lake Narrows Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,420-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of God's Lake Narrows, population 1,318, and is situated at the narrowing of God's Lake; hence the name God's Lake Narrows. The lake has an area of 319 square miles and the community is 552 km (343 miles) north-northeast of Winnipeg. It was named in honour of the Great Spirit *"Manitou."*

God's River Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,530-foot crushed rock/clay runway serving the community of God's River, population of 427. The community is located on the north shore of God's Lake at the mouth of God's River and is 591 km (367 miles) north of Winnipeg.

Ilford Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,000-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights, serving the community of Ilford, population of 211. The village is located on the CNR Hudson Bay route at Moosenose Lake and is 694 km (431 miles) north of Winnipeg. It is named after a town in Essex, England. Ilford was a railhead for freighting operations into the once famous God's Lake gold fields.

Island Lake Airport is a public-use airport with a 4,000-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the communities of Island Lake (Garden Hill) and Stevenson Island, with a total population of 2,791. It is interesting to note that this airport is the third busiest airport in the province in terms of aircraft activity. The community is located on the northeast shore of Island Lake and is 476 km (296 miles) north of Winnipeg. The lake has an area of 550 square miles and the name is aptly descriptive. Explorer Samuel Hearne noted, "It was entirely full of islands which make the lake resemble a jumble of separate rivers and creeks."

Lac Brochet Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,220-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights, serving the community of Lac Brochet, population 676. The community is located on the north shore of the lake with the same name and is 1004 km (624 miles) northwest of Winnipeg. The French words *"Lac Brochet"* mean pike lake.

Little Grand Rapids Airport is a public-use airport with a 2,800-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights, serving the community of Little Grand Rapids, population 957. The community is located on the northeast shore of Family Lake and is 270 km (168 miles) northeast of Winnipeg. It is named for the rapids that flow between Family and Fishing lakes.

Norway House Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,922-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of Norway House, population 4,145. The community is located on the east shore of Little Playgreen Lake on the north end of Lake Winnipeg and is 455 km (283 miles) north of Winnipeg. Historically Norway House was important in the fur trade because of its strategic location. Here, in 1870, Rupert's Land was ceded to the rest of Canada and the province of Manitoba was born.

Oxford House Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,270-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of Oxford House, population 1,585. The community is located on the northeast end of Oxford Lake and is 578 km (359 miles) north-northeast of Winnipeg. Oxford House was founded by William Sinclair in 1798 and was a stopping point on the travel route from Norway House to York Factory via the Hayes River. The famous York boats were made here for many decades.

Pikwitonei Airport is a public-use airport with a 2,200-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the village of Pikwitonei, population 140. The village is located where the CNR Hudson Bay Route crosses the Pikwitonei River and is 634 km (394 miles) north of Winnipeg. It is named from the Cree and translates as "broken mouth," a descriptive name as the mouth of the river breaks up into several marshy lakes and rivers.

Poplar River Airport is a public-use airport with a 2,500-foot gravel/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of Poplar River, population 1,000 (approx.). The community is located at the mouth of the Poplar River on the east shore of Lake Winnipeg and is 344 km (214 miles) north of Winnipeg. Poplar River is an aptly descriptive name.

Pukatawagan Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,000-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of Pukatawagan, population 1,690. The community is located on the east shore of Pukatawagan Lake and is part of the Churchill River system. Pukatawagan is 706 km (439 miles) northwest of Winnipeg. The Lynn Lake branch of the CNR passes near the community, which is named from the Cree word *"Pukatawagan"* meaning fishing with a net.

Red Sucker Lake Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,000-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of Red Sucker Lake, population 637. The community is located on the north shore of Red Sucker Lake and is 539 km (335 miles) northeast of Winnipeg.

St. Theresa Point Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,400-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of St. Theresa Point, population 2,337, as well as Wasagamack, population 1,086. The communities are located six miles apart on the western shore of Island Lake (area 550 square miles). The airport is 470 km (292 miles) northeast of Winnipeg.

Shamattawa Airport is a public-use airport with a 4,000-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of Shamattawa, population 841. The community is on the east bank of the God's River at the fork of the Echoing River. It is 748 km (465 miles) northeast of Winnipeg. Shamattawa was the original name of the river. *"Shamattawa"* is Cree for big fork.

South Indian Lake Airport is a public-use airport with a 2,600-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of South Indian Lake, population of 887. The community is situated on the shores of Southern Indian Lake about 777 km (483 miles) north of Winnipeg. The community is named for the lake, which is shown as the Lake of the Southern Indians (Cree) on the Fidler map of 1814.

Tadoule Lake Airport is a public-use airport with a 3,200-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of Tadoule Lake, population 300. The community, named for the lake, is situated on the northwest shore of Tadoule Lake and is 982 km (610 miles) north of Winnipeg. The word *"Tadoule"* in Chipeweyan means "floating charcoal," a most descriptive name as when the lake was discovered its waters were full of charred wood from a recent forest fire.

Thicket Portage Airport is a public-use airport with a 2,220-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of Thicket Portage, population 204. The community is located along the CNR Hudson Bay Railway route where a portage exists between Landing and Wintering lakes. It is located 607 km (377 miles) north of Winnipeg. The local name is the Franklin Portage named after the Franklin expedition that used this route to get to the Nelson River system.

York Landing Airport is a public-use airport with a 2,840-foot crushed rock/clay runway with runway lights. It serves the community of York Landing, population 341. The community is located at the southeast end of Split Lake near the mouth of the Aiken River. It is located 694 km (431 miles) north of Winnipeg. The community of York Landing was established when people were relocated there from historic York Factory on the shore of the Hudson Bay at the mouth of the Hayes River.

Your Airport

No two airports are alike. While the components are essentially the same, the layout and number of facilities/buildings may be different. An airport is composed of a runway, taxiway, apron, terminal, equipment shop, fire hall, and security fencing. Some airports have many more facilities/buildings for aircraft operators.

→ Were you aware that even light aircraft will reach speeds well in excess of highway speeds on the runway before becoming airborne?

The Manoeuvring Area

Most runways are made up of crushed rock or gravel and are outlined by orange cones and lights.

Two digit numbers between 01 and 36 identify runways.

Orientation to magnetic north is used to identify runways. (The magnetic bearing that an aircraft flies on approach for landing designates the runway.) For example, an aircraft landing in a westerly direction (270 degrees) will use runway 27. The two-digit runway number represents the heading in tens of degrees.

Taxiways are designated routes for aircraft moving to and from the runway. Taxiways are identified by letters A-Z spoken phonetically (A-Alpha, B-Beta, C-Charlie etc.).

The network of runways and taxiways are known collectively as the manoeuvring area. The manoeuvring area is restricted to authorized personnel and equipment.

The Apron

Most aircraft will begin and end their flights on the airport apron. The apron is designated for the loading and unloading of passengers and cargo. Aircraft are also refueled and inspected on the apron.

→ Were you aware that pound for pound, aviation fuel is more explosive than dynamite?

The Airside and Movement Areas

Together the apron and manoeuvring areas are called the movement area. The land surrounding the movement area and enclosed by fencing is called the airside of an airport. Smoking on the airside of an airport is strictly prohibited. When entering airside space all passengers are encouraged to use the terminal building entrance only. Anyone not authorized to go airside must seek permission from the airport manager or his/her designate. Anyone not familiar with airside at the airport is strongly advised to request an escort or a tour to become familiar with the layout if they will be using airside regularly. Children must be under supervision while on airside of the airport.

All users should be familiar with signage at an airport. All unsupervised persons operating airside are to be properly instructed and receive the airport manager's permission to do so. Removing any misplaced articles and debris from the movement area prevents the risk of damage to aircraft. This should be a regular daily safety check for all airport operations.

→ Were you aware that a windsock is used to determine wind direction and velocity? A half-erect windsock indicates that the wind is from 5 to 8 knots (5–10 miles per hour). Fully erect, it indicates that the wind is greater than 15 knots (17 miles per hour).

→ Were you aware that objects sucked into an aircraft engine on the ground may damage it and cause it to fail once it is in the air?

Aircraft & Vehicular Traffic

Aircraft may operate in adverse weather conditions. Keep a good eye and ear out for traffic and be especially careful to make yourself visible when airside.

Airside traffic does not solely refer to aircraft. Several other types of vehicles may operate airside at any given time. Ambulances, snowplows and airport maintenance vehicles, to name a few, may be found moving on airside at any given time.

Registration letters and numbers identify aircraft. Canadian registered aircraft will show a five-letter registration starting with a C-F**** or C-G****. The registration is visible on the tail or rear section of the aircraft. Before walking out to an aircraft, make sure you are approaching the correct aircraft. Follow the pilot, agent or flight attendant's instructions.

A red flashing light on an aircraft indicates that it is about to start up; please stand clear. Flashing or rotating beacon lights are used on vehicles operating airside.

→ Were you aware that aircraft propellers rotate at speeds in excess of 1000 revolutions per minute while on the ground? This makes them virtually invisible to the human eye. Follow boarding and deplaning instructions carefully and stay clear of operating aircraft.

Working Airside

Operating a Vehicle

All drivers operating vehicles on airside are required to familiarize themselves with the Northern Airports Access Procedures before being allowed airside. The airport manager or designate will inform all airside operators of the rules and dangers associated with operating a vehicle airside.

→ Were you aware that airplanes, while being highly manoeuverable in the air, are sluggish on the ground? Aircraft always have the right of way over all other traffic on the ground.

Regardless of the possession of a license or waiver form, no person shall enter the manoeuvring area without a thorough check of the area. Anyone needing to go on the runway or taxiway will require the airport manager's expressed permission before doing so, and will do so only as instructed by the airport manager or designate.

→ Were you aware that unless otherwise specified, the speed limit on aprons is 20 km/h?

Driving on airside at night can be a whole new experience as lighting is very limited and different. Generally you have only your headlights and a maze of edge lights in several different colours. Coupled with problems of reduced depth perception and unfamiliarity with the operating area, interpreting these edge lights is often confusing. It is advisable to have an experienced supervisor take you around the airport at night to guide you around hazards not clearly visible.

Air Radio Communications

At all airports, persons wanting to operate equipment on the runway and taxiway should have a radio or be accompanied by an airport vehicle equipped with a radio. All persons operating a radio should have a Restricted Radiotelephone Operators Certificate. Your airport manager or regional airport manager will have information on how to receive this certificate. It is important for you to take as much time as is required to understand what others are saying to you.

Never proceed unless you are sure "beyond all reasonable doubt" of what is going on around you or what you are being asked to do.

Radios and vehicles are subject to breakdown just like any other piece of equipment. Know the procedures to follow if either one breaks down while on the manoeuvring area.

→ Were you aware that flashing runway lights or an aircraft flying low and overhead is a signal to move clear of the runway?

Prior to going airside, the airport manager and air traffic services (if provided) must be informed at all times as to the specific work to be done.

Emergency Response

Most northern airports are equipped with emergency vehicles (a truck equipped with a powder fire extinguisher and some with powder and foam extinguishers). To keep staff prepared for emergencies, regular emergency training is performed. All accidents or incidents should be reported whether they require emergency services or not. Emergency phone numbers should be posted in a conspicuous location for those instances where the Airport manager and staff are unavailable or off duty. In the event of an after-hours emergency, pay phones, where provided, give access to the local police detachment. Police should also be contacted, if you suspect that airport security is breached and the airport manager or staff is not available.

Airport Security & Safety

At northern airports, security is established in the interest of aviation and public safety. Security fencing (where provided) keeps all types of traffic, including pedestrians, off the runway. To keep airports safe it is up to all of us to ensure that this fencing is not breached. Remember to report anything that seems out of the ordinary, to the airport manager.

About Airport Staff

Your airport manager or designate is a professional with a lot of responsibilities. He or she is the final authority on airport operations and is the on-site representative of the Manitoba Government. Your airport manager and staff must also run a financially responsible and efficient business operation. The airport manager is also responsible for airport safety. Your familiarity with the operational requirements of the airport is important. Airport staff needs your help and cooperation, so please follow their instructions.

For more information about safety and security at your airport, please talk to your airport manager.