



POSITIONING EDMONTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT FOR THE FUTURE

Preparing airports for future growth requires a holistic approach. A perspective that considers the organization as an interconnected whole will help drive synergy between business areas and enable each airport to reach its full operational potential.

Edmonton International Airport (EIA) is taking a holistic approach to progress toward its ambitious long-term goal. The fast-growing airport in Alberta, one of Canada's three Prairie Provinces, aims to become a vanguard facility and hub for business growth, driving the region's economic prosperity through both aviation and commercial development. Already among Canada's 10 busiest airports, EIA currently ranks fifth, with 8.15 million passengers in 2019. Although Alberta's economy is linked to diverse sectors, it is mainly dependent on revenue generated from the boom-and-bust cycle of the energy industry. Mindful of this cyclical impact, the airport seeks to attract increasing numbers of business travellers and tourists alike through facility modernization and by creating economic clusters of activity on its neighbouring tracts of land—servicing education, information and communications technology, advanced manufacturing and other identified strategic areas.

As EIA strives to strengthen its leadership role in the region, the past is a good indicator of future possibility. In its 60-year history, the airport has weathered economic ups and downs to grow from serving circa 400,000 passengers in the first two years of operation to 2 million passengers in 1980, to over 6 million in 2007, and over 8 million today. In that timespan, EIA

expanded its infrastructure base to accommodate greater-than-anticipated passenger increases.



Building on Past Success

To advance further, EIA is forming a comprehensive understanding of trends, apportioning investments to navigate future realities, and focusing on the development of human capabilities to drive the successful management of physical assets. One fundamental challenge for EIA was knowing how to effectively prioritize investment. EIA needed to develop an asset management strategy to provide a consistent approach to investment prioritization and better understand risk. Before it could move forward, the airport required a clear picture of its business processes and how they relate to each other, to organizational objectives and to the airport's ambitious long-term goal.

Today's asset management framework builds on the blocks put in place over the last few years during which EIA set out to more thoroughly

determine operational and maintenance costs, and enhance the processes associated with maintenance and assets. By better quantifying where money was being spent, management could identify overspend and ascertain the real cost of activities and services. With the help of an enterprise maintenance application, EIA realized it could use performance data to be more proactive in planning maintenance work and manage resources more effectively. Another key step was aligning daily decision-making with well-defined organizational goals. The current asset management framework also establishes the capabilities and skills people need to carry out airport operational processes and management roles, emphasizing communication, collaborative processes and a governance structure.

Creating a Clear Line of Sight

Getting the most out of existing infrastructure will take on a heightened focus in 2020, a planned effort which includes repurposing an unused terminal building. To modernize, EIA completed a digital strategy for the facility and is migrating to an integrated technology service model. This initiative, as well as a terminal optimization plan underway, will enhance services for passengers, tenants and carriers, and speed up passenger processes in the current terminal building.

By taking these steps, EIA is developing an agile operational environment where people are entrusted to adapt to current realities by adjusting decisions based on reliable data. The airport is also updating its master plan, which is predicated on continual improvement and a clear picture of future aviation activity and the infrastructure needed to service it. The plan calls for resilient infrastructure to cope with the impacts of climate change and new technologies. Considerations range from improved airside systems to how emerging technologies such as unmanned aerial vehicles, or drones, will impact operations and how new

mobility such as autonomous vehicles might be integrated into the EIA landscape.

All of these initiatives, pursued within a holistic framework, help EIA enhance airport operations and business practices, modernize, and make best use of its existing infrastructure and untapped real estate. A clear line of sight to well-defined goals has enabled targeted, responsive investments in infrastructure and helped form a shared sense of purpose for airport staff. These improvements position the EIA enterprise to support passenger growth and strengthen the regional economy for many years to come.

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