



FOR RELEASE
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Air travel to gateway cities pilot project will launch this winter

WHITEHORSE—Highways and Public Works Minister Wade Istchenko announced today the Yukon government will conduct a pilot project to explore ways to reduce government airfare booking costs to the gateway cities of Vancouver, Edmonton and Calgary.

The pilot project will involve designated Yukon government personnel making 500 bookings to the gateway cities during a four-month period. The project will study the costs of flights booked, the time invested to make bookings, and the government's internal policy and reporting requirements.

"The current travel booking landscape has changed dramatically in the last decade with a number of new online tools available that make air travel booking fast and cost efficient," Istchenko said. "This pilot project will help us assess the benefits and any downside of using these tools within government."

Istchenko said he understands there could be implications for local travel agents and he added his department has met a number of times with local travel industry stakeholders to keep them informed of the pilot project's intent and scope.

"Many travel consumers around the globe are booking their own air travel," Istchenko added. "This has meant that travel agencies have had to adapt and diversify to remain relevant in the e-commerce age and the same reality is true for Yukon travel businesses."

It is expected that the project will save the government \$20,000 in booking fees. The overall savings could be substantially greater once the numbers are tallied at the conclusion of the pilot in the summer of 2014.

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Contact:

Elaine Schiman
Cabinet Communications
867-633-7961
elaine.schiman@gov.yk.ca

Alicia Debrececi
Communications, Highways and Public Works
867-667-3146
alicia.debrececi@gov.yk.ca

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