

NORTH RUNWAY OPERATIONS

The approval to build the north runway was received from the Minister of Transport in 1992. This culminated a lengthy environmental assessment including an independent review by the Environmental Assessment Review Panel. In granting approval for the runway, the Minister made 22 environmental commitments – 10 of which related to noise. As part of these commitments, the following restrictions are in place for the north runway:

- No operations between the hours of 10:00PM and 7:00AM*
- Use is primarily for landings; however, take-offs are permitted when traffic demand approaches capacity limits such as during peak times
- Minimal use of reverse thrust consistent with safe operating procedures

*These restrictions are exempted in case of emergencies or airfield maintenance.

While all operations on the north runway are in accordance with the Minister's restrictions, the following are uses that we often receive the most questions or concerns about.

Use During the Annual Summer Maintenance Program

Just like roads and highways, the runway system requires regular, ongoing maintenance to keep them in top working condition. Maintaining the airfield to a high standard ensures aircraft operate in a safe environment.

While regular maintenance is often carried out on a daily basis, there are repairs and projects that must be undertaken each summer that requires the shutdown of the south runway. During the work, the south runway will be closed nightly to allow crews to carry out the work. While the south runway is closed, the north runway will be used for all take-offs and landings.

The maintenance schedule is posted on our website – www.yvr.ca – to help our neighbors know when to expect changes to our normal runway operations. The schedule is reviewed annually and updated as needed. The exact duration of the closure will depend on the amount and type of work to be done.

Departures to Reduce Delay

While the north runway is used mainly for arrivals, the runway can be used for take-offs during peak periods throughout the day to reduce delay. These peak periods normally occur during the summer months when the volume of air traffic is high.

To better define 'capacity' and 'peak times', the Airport Authority completed an extensive airside capacity study that looked at delay and queue times at the airport. From this study, the following guidelines are used to determine when the airport is at capacity and when take-offs on the north runway should occur:

- When either landings or take-offs is between 35-40 movements/hour
- When the total of landings and take-offs is between 60-70 movements/ hour

In general, these guidelines are exceeded during the spring and summer months in the early morning, during the mid-day, and during the early evenings.