

INDIGENOUS COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT PILOT ACS STUDENTS HAVE PERFORMED THEIR FIRST FLIGHTS

Rouyn-Noranda (March 23, 2022) –The Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue is proud to officially inaugurate its *Attestation of College Studies (ACS) in Multi-Engine Aircraft Flying Code and Float Plane Instruments*.

After a takeoff strewn with a bit of turbulence, this indigenous flight training, which is also open to nonnatives, is going wonderfully, and students are progressing as planned.

Sylvain Blais, Director General of the Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue, is quite happy with course progress. He insisted on paying tribute to the indigenous airlines that are Air Creebec, Air Inuit and Propair. "These businesspeople have gotten it right by developing airlines designed for their respective populations. Now we must give them the room necessary so that their businesses can grow even more," he said in support.

"In my view, this is another step in the right direction. We are working with indigenous communities from the area. We will be happy to see graduates return home and get involved in their communities," added Mr. Blais.

The CEGEP is also eager to thank the Centre québécois de formation aéronautique (CQFA), which carried out writing of the program and put the necessary staff at the disposal of our college to ensure the success of this first cohort.

Regarding the CQFA, its management said in addition that it was happy to highlight this important partnership. "As a member of the Quebec national institutes network, one of our mandates is to promote aviation throughout Quebec," emphasized Director Steeve Noreau.

The management of l'Aéroport régional de Val-d'Or (ARVO or Val-d'Or Regional Airport) was honoured that the Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue chose its site to initiate this first cohort. "With a 10,000-foot-long strip, students are pampered to be able to land on 1 of the 3 longest of these in Quebec. Furthermore, we proceeded with the improvement of offices to welcome students properly. They have a first-rate place here, quite close to the strip," specified Isabelle Yergeau, Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

For Jeremi Rodgers-Vallières, a student who began his classes in January, the training to become a pilot in a private school was too expensive. "It was out of reach for me, but with this new training offered by the Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue, I chose to leave my old job behind to devote all of my time to the dream that I have, which is to become a pilot," he explained.

The co-owner of l'École d'aviation de Rouyn-Noranda (Rouyn-Noranda Aviation School), which dispenses these classes, is also delighted about the smooth running of the training. "We are proud to be the official partner of the very first cohort of this completely new program," mentioned Étienne Lambert.

Moreover, to be able to meet the needs of the ACS, the Rouyn-Noranda Aviation School proceeded with the purchase of 5 Cessna 172 airplanes.

For the college, the mission to improve and increase the provision of training opportunities to indigenous peoples continues. The institution recently inaugurated the new *ACS in Police Technology for Indigenous Police Forces*, and the *ACS in Multi-Engine Aircraft Flying Code and Float Plane Instruments* improves the training offered to them even more.

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“To conclude, I want to reiterate that the first cohort will not be the only one. We will begin recruitment shortly for the next one to ensure continuity of this program. We’ll adjust our strategies and hope to reach the maximum number of 12 students,” specified the Director General of the CEGEP.

About This Training

The *Attestation of College Studies* training in *Multi-Engine Aircraft Flying Code and Float Plane Instruments* is given by the Cégep de l’Abitibi-Témiscamingue through l’École de pilotage de Rouyn-Noranda, but it is supervised by the Centre québécois de formation aéronautique (CQFA), which ensures that the standards and quality that have made the reputation of this national institute for around 50 years are respected.

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