

Consumers Association seeks answers on cancellation of Canada-Iceland open skies agreement

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The Consumers Association of Canada (CAC) is seeking an explanation from Transport Canada for the apparent cancellation of an open skies agreement with Iceland. According to published articles earlier this month, Icelandair has been forced to cancel planned flights to Toronto as a result.

"Open skies agreements are critical to competition for international air travel. The open skies agreement with Iceland provided consumers with a cost-effective option for travel to Europe and a counterbalance to the dominance of Air Canada and the Star Alliance for this trans-Atlantic traffic," stated Bruce Cran, President.

The CAC is seeking answers from Transport Canada to the following questions:

- Why did Transport Canada cancel the Canada-Iceland open skies agreement?
- Who lobbied for an end to the Canada-Iceland open skies agreement?
- What rationale did Transport Canada use to justify this cancellation?
- Who does Transport Canada believe will benefit from this cancellation?
- Were consumer interests taken into account in cancelling this open skies agreement?

"As recently as a September 24th Transport Canada press release, Canada was boasting of its open skies agreement with Iceland. When did this end and why was it not reported by Transport Canada?" asked Cran.

The CAC has repeatedly asked to be consulted on Canada's approach to open skies, but to date have not been invited to be part of the process.

"The cancellation of these flights will affect competition. Therefore, consumers have a right to know what changed, why and whether consumer interests were taken into account in making this decision," added Cran.

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