



Helicopter Association of Canada

www.h-a-c.ca

We proudly salute our 2013 Corporate Sponsors

AgustaWestland, Bell Helicopter Textron Limited,

Dulude, Taylor Inc. & Boston Marks Insurance Brokers, Eurocopter Canada, GE Capital, Heli-One,

HELICOPTERS Magazine, Honeywell International, NAV CANADA, Pratt & Whitney Canada,

Rolls Royce, Safran Turbomeca Canada, Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, StandardAero,

Vector Aerospace, Vertical, Willis Global Aviation

May 8, 2013

Honourable Jason Kenny
Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism
325 East Block
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Honourable Minister:

The Helicopter Association of Canada's members collectively operate over 80% of the commercial helicopters in Canada today.

The Association has been watching with interest the discussion relating to the use of temporary foreign workers in Canada, and prospective changes to the Accelerated Labour Market Opinion process under discussion and, we feel that you should be aware of the importance of temporary foreign workers to our industry segment.

The Canadian helicopter industry depends on highly skilled seasonal foreign workers to supplement the growing shortage of experienced helicopter pilots in Canada.

The global shortage of experienced helicopter flight crews has drawn many experienced Canadian pilots to international locales both in support of Canadian companies working internationally, but also to work for foreign companies. Experienced Canadian helicopter pilots and Maintenance Engineers are sought-after around the world, and during the busy summer months, many of our members have difficulty finding qualified Canadians to meet their needs. The recognition of foreign aircraft maintenance qualifications makes temporary access by foreign maintenance personnel even more complicated.

Furthermore, a growing number of our Canadian clients impose experience requirements that make it difficult to find and employ newly-licensed Canadian helicopter pilots and, the seasonal nature of the helicopter business only aggravates the problem when the demand for experienced crews spikes during the summer months. The process of building time and experience as a helicopter pilot is difficult and time-consuming and, the transition from a newly-licensed helicopter pilot to a readily-employable pilot is a challenging one for both pilots and employers. It takes years of experience to be able to read weather, perform external load operations, or just manage the new more sophisticated aircraft our customers demand. A pilot with 1,000 hours on a small piston engine powered aircraft is not the same as a pilot with experience on a new generation multi-engine aircraft

In Canada, helicopter operators generally have a very short operating season and sometimes unpredictable demands - on short notice for extra flight crews in a busy fire season, for example, can aggravate the shortage. We absolutely need access to temporary English and French-speaking foreign workers, sometimes on an accelerated basis.

Our foreign contractor-pilots are generally paid according to Canadian flight crew standards. It is not a question of finding a cheaper temporary source of experienced flight crews – but one of simply finding experienced temporary flight crews.

Any changes to the temporary foreign worker program should contemplate the needs of our industry for seasonal pilots and maintenance personnel. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter to ensure that service to our customers is not interrupted by a short-sighted change to the temporary foreign worker program or to the accelerated Labour Market Opinion process.

We would be pleased to meet with you at your convenience on this issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Fred L. Jones BA LLB
President and CEO
Helicopter Association of Canada

“Bringing the Industry Together”

130 Albert Street, Suite 500
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4
Office: (613) 231-1110 x239
Cell: (613) 884-1422
Fax: (613) 369-5097
Website: www.h-a-c.ca