
News Release

December 1, 1998

THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA ANNOUNCE INTRANSIT PRECLEARANCE INITIATIVE

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy yesterday announced a new initiative to expand intransit preclearance services in Canada. "This initiative is a win-win proposition, which builds on our ongoing efforts to strengthen cross-border ties and facilitate business and tourist travel," said Secretary Albright. "This initiative is an excellent example of how Canada and the United States can work together to benefit the travelling public," said Minister Axworthy. "It demonstrates that we can make the border more innovative and efficient for the 21st century." Minister Axworthy and Secretary Albright expressed satisfaction with the great progress that had been brought to facilitating air services between the two countries through the Canada-U.S. Air Agreement, and expressed mutual interest in furthering that process.

In April 1997, Prime Minister Chrétien and President Clinton announced agreement on a pilot project for intransit preclearance services at the Vancouver International Airport. The pilot — launched in June 1997 — has provided a valuable service to over 70 000 travellers. The U.S. and Canada are now planning the extension of intransit services to other Canadian airports.

Under this initiative, all Canadian airports with existing U.S. preclearance facilities will be eligible for intransit preclearance services. Intransit services at Vancouver will be eligible for indefinite extension. Toronto's Pearson International Airport and the Aéroport de Montréal (Dorval) will be eligible for intransit preclearance in 1999. Calgary intends to follow in 2001. Edmonton, Ottawa and Winnipeg would be eligible after 2001.

Intransit preclearance cuts out the Canadian inspection process and allows U.S.-bound intransit passengers to proceed directly to U.S. preclearance facilities. This reduces the two-stop process to a one-stop inspection.

The travelling public would be the primary beneficiary of the new initiative. Travellers would enjoy more connections from Asia and Europe, greater choice of carriers and scheduling, and shorter transit times. Canada intends to introduce legislation shortly to allow intransit preclearance operations to go ahead.

- 30 -



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada