

Air Services to Colombia

There are no direct, scheduled air services from Canada to Colombia. Daily connecting flights to Colombia are available via Miami, Los Angeles, New York, other U.S. and Caribbean points and Mexico. The originating carriers are Air Canada, Canadian Airlines International, Delta and Air Panama, Western and Aerocondor. Charter services for passengers and cargo are available on an "as required" basis.

Import Controls

There is a prohibited import list that is altered periodically depending on economic and national considerations.

All eligible imports require an import licence which must be issued by the Import Division of INCOMEX (the Foreign Trade Institute). When a registration application is accepted, the Import Division of INCOMEX issues an "Import Registration Certificate." Both import licences and registration certificates are valid for nine months.

INCOMEX categorizes eligible imports under a "free list" and under a "prior approval list." Processing of import licences for goods under the free list tends to be only a bureaucratic formality, whereas requests for imports under the prior approval list are subjected to much more scrutiny.

Exchange Control

Pursuant to the basic legislation, Decree Law 444 of March 22, 1967, as amended, all foreign exchange operations are subject to control. Regulations require companies to use U.S. dollar-denominated exchange certificates (*certificados de cambio*), issued by the central bank and authorized credit institutions, when buying or selling foreign currencies.

When importers apply for an exchange licence from the Exchange Office of the Banco de la República through a commercial bank they submit, inter alia, one copy of the "Import Registration Certificate." However, prior to the exchange licence being approved and foreign exchange for remittance abroad obtained, an advance import payment deposit (*depósito previo a la nacionalización de mercancías*) of 35 per cent of the registered amount must be made in Colombian currency with an authorized bank before customs clearance. Importers then receive non-negotiable,