

# Call for airport cash to come home

Steve Wallace has the right idea, but the wrong tree.

The mayor of Quesnel recently fired off a letter to the Vancouver International Airport Authority requesting a meeting. He wants to discuss distributing a share of that airport's budget surplus with regional airports in the province.

Ever since local airport authorities such as Quesnel's began taking over operation of airports from the federal government — and lost the federal subsidy once provided by Transport Canada — the issue of how to make airports pay for themselves has been a problem.

Because a majority of flights out of the Interior are routed through Vancouver, and from which Vancouver realizes a profit, Mr. Wallace suggests Interior airports deserve to receive a portion of the money taken in by Vancouver every year.

"What we've said is that YVR [Vancouver Airport] is very successful because of the regions," says Mr. Wallace. "Of the \$60 million-or-so surplus they have, they should cut it back by 10 per cent and send it back to other airports."

That formula would mean approximately \$300,000 for the Quesnel airport.

Prior to privatization, the airport received about \$500,000 per year in federal subsidies.

Prince George Airport manager Steig Hoag agrees the money should probably be re-invested into B.C. airports. But he says Mr. Wallace is asking the wrong people.

"He may be barking up the wrong tree. He should probably be appealing to the federal government."

The Vancouver Airport Authority does have a surplus of approximately \$60 million. But that money is paid back to Transport Canada.

According to conditions of its lease agreement, YVR doesn't even have the authority to make such a decision as Mr. Wallace is asking it to, says Mr. Hoag.

Even if an agreement is made with the federal government to share revenues coming out of Van-

couver, Prince George would probably not be eligible.

The Prince George airport is in the process of transferring operations to a local airport authority. But because it has been categorized as a national airport, one of 26 across the country, the airport cannot be purchased by the authority and must be leased.

Still, Mayor Colin Kinsley, who is a member of the airport transfer committee, would like to see a redistribution of the money from Vancouver that is currently going back to Ottawa.

"I think they should have it paid out in a dividend and distribute it equally among regional airports throughout the province."

## UNBC offers language courses

The University of Northern B.C. will once again offer a variety of language courses during the spring and summer.

Two introductory German language and two beginner Japanese language courses will be offered at the Prince George campus.

The German courses, offered through the Goethe Institute, have been popular in the past and have typically had waiting lists.

Students who complete the

courses will be able to communicate in a German-speaking environment and be of help to German-speaking tourists visiting the Prince George region.

As well, two First Nations language courses will be offered through UNBC. A Nisga'a language course is being offered in the Nass Valley and a Haida language course will be taught on Haida Gwaii in July and August.

All courses are fully credited UNBC courses.

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