

A MISSED BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

'IRELAND CANADA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION CALLS FOR YEAR ROUND DIRECT FLIGHTS BETWEEN IRELAND AND CANADA.'

Thursday 14 October 2010. The Ireland Canada Business Association today called for the continuation of direct flights between Ireland and Canada. The Association lamented the end of season stoppage of direct flights between Ireland and Canada and urged the airlines to address this issue by continuing direct flights all year round.

Trade relations between Ireland and Canada are strengthening with trade between the two countries totalling nearly €1 billion in 2009. There have also been a growing number of a bilateral research and development initiatives, investment project and joint ventures between the two countries.

Outside the window from October to May business people, academics and tourists wishing to travel to/from Canada and Ireland have to firstly go through the UK or the US with travel times taking fourteen to twenty two hours. This is not good for business or the development of trade.

According to Malachy P. Smith, Chairman of the Ireland Canada Business Association "The lack of year round direct flights is hurting Canadian companies who wish to invest in Ireland. Ireland is the fifth largest recipient of foreign direct investment from Canada and this investment needs to be facilitated not hindered with direct flights between Ireland and Canada. Ease of access is a key factor for Canadian companies when deciding on location for their European Headquarters and market access".

He added "In turn we have 220 Irish companies exporting to Canada with over 45 companies directly employing people across Canada. Ireland views Canada as an important trade ally and the Canadian market presents significant opportunities for Irish companies. The potential exists to substantially increase trade between Ireland and Canada but only with improved flight access.

ICBA recently undertook a small market analysis in Ireland which demonstrated a growing requirement for direct air access year round between the countries with Toronto – Dublin return as the most sought after route.

The board of ICBA made representation to the Honourable James Flaherty- Minister for Finance in Canada during the Minister's recent visit to Dublin for his Government's support in promoting and supporting direct air access.

And now Malachy P. Smith is calling on this Irish Government's Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment to actively look to Canada for new business and market access increasing the potential two way trade and tourism between the respective countries.

About The Ireland Canada Business Association

The Ireland Canada Business Association (ICBA) was founded in 1978 with the mandate of promoting and developing trade and industrial links between Ireland and Canada. The organisation is non-profit bilateral trade association (effectively acting as a quasi-chamber of commerce). The Association's members are typically drawn from a wide range of Irish and Canadian firms from the financial services, manufacturing and services sectors with operations in Canada or Ireland. An important aim of the Association for the coming year is to facilitate interaction among members with networking events of the highest calibre across both countries.

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