



CASE STUDY KELOWNA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



KELOWNA INTERNATIONAL (YLW) AIRPORT OVERVIEW

- > Annual passengers: 1.44 million
- > Daily flights: 64
- > Established: 1946
- > City of Kelowna population: 118,500

“Commissionaires help us keep customers – they’re more of a partner.”

Neil Drachenberg

MANAGER
AIRPORT SAFETY, SECURITY AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS
KELOWNA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

KELOWNA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The City of Kelowna has a population of more than 118,000 and is the largest city in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley.

Kelowna International Airport (YLW) plays an important role in the prosperity of the Okanagan Valley. YLW's total economic impact in 2010 was 2,730 jobs, representing \$140 million in wages and \$610 million in total economic output to the province of BC.

Established in 1946, the airport has seen many expansions and changes over the years, including a new terminal building, air traffic control tower and extended runway. The airport currently serves 1.4 million passengers annually and that figure is forecast to grow to 1.6 million by 2015. To accommodate this anticipated growth, the airport has a phased approach for new construction, to take place 2013-2016.

Serving a vibrant tourist destination such as Kelowna, means being attentive and responsive to visitors and customers. Neil Drachenberg, Manager, Airport Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness at YLW is responsible for the safety of visitors/passengers, and something more. Drachenberg wants to ensure that Kelowna's visitors have a positive impression of the city, beginning the moment they arrive at YLW.

CHALLENGES

Commissionaires have been working at YLW for more than 17 years - providing site security and access security. Commissionaires are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the airport's perimeter, patrolling the terminals and parking lots, performing gate checks, and enforcing the airport's restricted areas.

In 2011, YLW's management introduced a cultural shift for staff and contractors. “We took a hard look at ourselves and determined that we needed to be a more customer-focussed organization,” said Neil Drachenberg, Manager, Airport Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness. “We didn't know if Commissionaires would be part of that integral change, so we decided to put the contract out for proposals.”



“We receive exceptional productivity from Commissionaires. They’re really engaged.”

Neil Drachenberg

MANAGER
AIRPORT SAFETY, SECURITY AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS
KELOWNA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

COMMISSIONAIRES

National Office
201-100 Gloucester Street
Ottawa ON K2P 1T3
TF 888 688 0715
www.commissionaires.ca

KELOWNA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

SOLUTION

Drachenberg explained, “When we looked at all of the different aspects of customer service we saw that customers were complaining about parking ticketing. It was seen as punitive.” Commissionaires took this information and developed a detailed plan to address the concern as part of their proposal. The plan involved greeting visitors, helping them and opening doors. Drachenberg said, “Commissionaires won the contract again and we implemented their plan. Complaints decreased and ticketing went down. Commissionaires have been highly adaptive.”

Drachenberg believes that security is a difficult task to perform, especially telling people they are not allowed to do something, and delivering that message in a positive way.

“Commissionaires were the most reliable place to turn for security services. However, they provided not only the best proposal for security, but also for customer service.” Drachenberg explained that the turning point in the proposal was how the Commissionaires introduced quality assurance checks and audits to provide future cost savings and ongoing high standards of customer care.

RESULTS

“Commissionaires help us keep customers – they’re more of a partner and they have been doing this for a long time. When we challenged them to be an even better partner, they rose to the challenge,” said Drachenberg. He added that he has been very pleased to see Commissionaires proactively suggesting efficiency improvements.

“As a partner, Commissionaires will grow with us. We’re in a multi-phased expansion at the airport now and they are an integral part of that facility expansion,” said Drachenberg.

Drachenberg also commented on Commissionaires productivity. “We receive exceptional productivity from Commissionaires. They’re really engaged. It’s a perfect blend for us at YLW because we have people here who love working at an airport. They even come in on their days off to volunteer with our Airport Ambassador program. That’s how committed they are.”

The Airport Ambassador program is run by volunteers who want to promote the Okanagan area, and there’s a waiting list to join. The volunteers, who include Commissionaires, greet visitors at the airport and help them in any way they can. Said Drachenberg, “We receive reports of how helpful our ambassadors are and that includes participating Commissionaires. One in particular, a Commissionaire, provided exceptional assistance to a woman who arrived at the airport with children, baggage, and strollers in tow. She needed help unloading everything, but was concerned about receiving a parking ticket while she did so. Our Commissionaire/ambassador helped her and made sure her visit was smooth and stress free.”

“Commissionaires are a key part of our business because they interact with customers from the moment our visitors arrive curbside throughout their experience at YLW. We’re very pleased that Commissionaires had the flexibility to join us in making a culture shift toward superior customer service. They truly are our partners,” concluded Drachenberg.

About Commissionaires

Commissionaires is one of Canada’s leading security providers and the largest private sector employer of veterans. Founded on the core military values of dedication, responsibility and sense of mission, it employs 20,000 people from coast to coast to coast. It offers a wide range of security services including professional guarding, monitoring and surveillance, threat risk assessment, by-law enforcement, identification and fingerprinting services, and security training. Commissionaires is a completely self-funding not-for-profit enterprise. Its clients include an array of public and private sector organizations.