



Ottawa, February 25, 2015

Memorandum D2-5-5

Progressive Clearance at Airports

In Brief

This memorandum has been updated as a result of a technical review

This memorandum outlines the guidelines for obtaining Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) authorization for international progressive flight clearance, and contains information relating to the movement of persons on progressive flights.

Legislation

[Customs Act](#), sections 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 98, 164, and 167

Guidelines and General Information

Definitions

1. For the purposes of this memorandum, the following definitions apply:

AOE – authorized airport of entry for clearance of all classes of scheduled and non-scheduled aircraft (passenger and cargo).

AOE/# – Airport of entry for the clearance of scheduled and unscheduled air traffic but with passenger restrictions as indicated by an appropriate numerical designator (e.g. AOE/120).

AOE/15 – Airport of entry solely for the clearance of persons arriving by general aviation traffic where the flights are unscheduled and the traveller capacity, including crew, does not exceed 15 people.

AOE-C – indicates an airport which is designated for CANPASS permit holder use only.

Canadian Inspection Services (CIS) – refers to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Canada Border Services Agency, Health Canada, and Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Domestic leg – a point to point movement within the territory of Canada of a progressively cleared flight or a progressively boarded flight.

Progressive flights –

(a) progressive clearance – a flight into Canada that offloads passengers and crew for CBSA clearance at more than one airport in Canada.

(b) progressive boarding – a flight departing for a foreign destination where passengers and crew board the plane at more than one airport in Canada.

Secure hold room – a room that has been approved by CBSA where international passengers and their goods remain in a controlled environment pending processing by the CIS, or until their departure to a point outside Canada, or to another point in Canada (for CIS processing).

Authorization Procedures

2. Airlines must first request authorization for progressive flights from the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA). Please refer to [Memorandum D2-5-1, Charter Access to Airports](#), for information on the CTA. Details including date(s), aircraft size, number of passengers, and estimated times of arrival must accompany the request.
3. Authorization must then be obtained from CBSA. The request for CBSA authorization, as well as any inquiries concerning secure hold rooms, boarding of domestic passengers, and all other requests for information of this nature should be sent to the Traveller Operations Division of the Canada Border Services Agency indicated below. The request should be accompanied by proof that the CTA has also authorized the flight.

Traveller Operations Division, Border Operations Directorate, Operations Branch
Email: OPS_TRAVELLERS-VOYAGEURS@cbsa-asfc.gc.ca
4. CIS authorization will be subject to the following conditions:
 - (a) The times of arrival or departure must be within the authorized hours of service of the intended airport;
 - (b) The aircraft passenger load must be within the capacity limits for each airport where passengers will deplane. For further information on airport capacity see [list of CBSA offices](#)
 - (c) Inspection services staff must be available;
 - (d) No domestic passengers may board for flights between Canadian airports, with the exception of what is noted in paragraph 15; and
 - (e) International garbage disposal facilities should be available for overseas flight arrivals.
5. The airline seeking progressive clearance privileges must finally obtain authorization from the local airport authority where they plan to arrive, and negotiate a time “slot” to ensure that times of arrival or departure will not conflict with other carrier service, or create peaking or congestion problems within the inspection services area. These arrangements must be made at all airports where passengers will enter or leave the aircraft. Authorization by the local airport authority must be done in conjunction with local CIS authorities.
6. In the event of equipment or weather problems, an airline may decide to clear all passengers at the first airport of arrival instead of using progressive clearance. In this case, the airline must immediately notify the CBSA superintendent at the second airport who will notify the inspection agencies at that location.
7. Airlines may wish to change aircraft or consolidate flights for the point-to-point portions of progressive flights in Canada. This may be permitted provided that secure hold rooms are used to ensure that passengers moving on a progressive basis are kept separate from domestic travellers and unauthorized personnel.
8. Prior authorization for the operation of progressive flights under these conditions must be obtained in writing from the Traveller Operations Division and will be granted if the time of arrival or departure of flights does not conflict with other scheduled charter or carrier services. This authorization should not be interpreted as allowing for triangular service (triangular service being the combination of both progressive clearance and progressive boarding). Triangular service is not a permitted option.

Secure Hold Rooms

9. Secure Hold rooms should:
 - (a) Be located as close as possible to inspection services facilities to enable easy spot checks;
 - (b) Be adequate in size for the estimated passenger load;
 - (c) Contain appropriate washrooms and conveniences for passengers; and
 - (d) Have direct controlled access from aircraft.
10. Airline staff will ensure:
 - (a) All passengers move directly from the aircraft to the secure hold room and stay in the room until they are escorted to their departing aircraft;

- (b) There is only one way passenger flow, to or from the room with no mixing of arriving or departing passengers. Passengers will be kept on the aircraft or in a secure hold room when mixing may occur;
- (c) Passengers will be escorted to inspection services if a flight is cancelled or a passenger or passengers insists on leaving the secure hold room;
- (d) Access to the secure hold room will be restricted to passengers and to airline staff participating in the progressive clearance system; and
- (e) Where passengers are moving directly from one aircraft to another for the completion of their progressive flight, all passengers must be accompanied between aircraft.

Duty Free Purchases – Outbound Flights

11. On an international flight to a point outside Canada involving progressive boardings at Canadian airports, boarding passengers may make duty-free purchases at the Canadian airport of embarkation, as long as they export these goods.
12. At airports where duty- and tax-free concessions are located in a secure hold room, foreign bound passengers may disembark into this area to make purchases provided the goods are exported.
13. In the event of a flight cancellation or passenger emergency, the air carrier must notify the on-site CBSA superintendent. Arrangements will then be made for either payment of duty and taxes on duty-free purchases, or the temporary storage of the goods for delivery to the passengers when their flight leaves.

Domestic Passengers

14. Domestic passengers may not be carried from one point in Canada to another point on the domestic leg of progressive flights.
15. Airline employees (but not their dependents or relatives) travelling on company business are an exception. However, the following conditions apply:
- (a) These persons will not be permitted to purchase or accept duty-free goods, including alcoholic beverages, immediately before or during the flight;
 - (b) Immediately upon arrival at destination, airline ground personnel must escort them directly to the Canadian Inspection Services area;
 - (c) They must make all goods available for examination;
 - (d) If they arrive after CBSA authorized hours of service, any applicable special service charges will be payable by the airline; and
 - (e) The airline must ensure that its employees are aware of these conditions.

Penalty Information

16. Permission to operate flights on a progressive basis is granted on the condition of adherence to these guidelines. Failure to comply may result in cancellation of progressive clearance/boarding privileges.
17. Local CBSA managers should report any deviations from these guidelines for investigation to the Traveller Operations Division, at the email address noted in paragraph 3.

Additional information

18. For more information, within Canada call the Border Information Service at **1-800-461-9999**. From outside Canada call 204-983-3500 or 506-636-5064. Long distance charges will apply. Agents are available Monday to Friday (08:00 – 16:00 local time / except holidays). TTY is also available within Canada: **1-866-335-3237**.

References	
Issuing Office	Program and Policy Management Division Traveller Program Directorate Programs Branch
Headquarters File	
Legislative References	<i>Customs Act</i> <i>Aeronautics Act</i> <i>Air Transportation Regulations</i>
Other References	D2-5-0 , D2-5-1 and D3-2-1
Superseded Memorandum D	D2-5-5 dated February 2, 2006