



STAFF REPORT

Title: Letter - Minister of National Defence

Meeting Date: April 15, 2025

Executive Summary:

The City of Cold Lake has received a letter dated March 21, 2025 from the Minister of National Defence, the Honourable Bill Blair, as a response to the City's letter dated December 13, 2024.

The City's letter informed the Minister of National Defence of the AME-S project and requested that any opportunities to partner with the federal government on the project as well as opportunities to partner with the Canadian Armed Forces for maintenance training be explored.

It should be noted that Portage itself has reached out to the Canadian Armed Forces to explore the option of assisting with training for its members entering the aircraft maintenance trades. It is the City's understanding that Portage College's initial enquiries were met favorably.

The minister's reply to the City of Cold Lake confirms the possibility that the school can assist with training of CAF members and confirms prior talk between Portage and the Canadian Armed Forces. The ability for the program to be considered by the Canadian Armed Forces for training hinges on Transport Canada accreditation being achieved. The Canadian Armed Forces intends to contract out basic Aircraft Maintenance courses starting in late 2025.

The project's main focus is attaining transport Canada accreditation by completing the instructional space required to deliver the program. Accreditation required that a space suitable to deliver the approved curriculum be completed and ready to accept students.

Background:

The City of Cold Lake and Portage College have been working towards establishing an Aircraft Maintenance Engineering school at the Cold Lake Regional Airport.

To date, the City has facilitated a number of milestones that have brought the partnership towards the completion of this project. These include but are not limited to:

- Design of a dedicated facility to house AME-S, AME-M, and flex space that could accommodate a pilot school, drone pilot instruction etc.
- Detailed design of the AME-S phase of the dedicated facility



- Purchase of the AME-S curriculum
- Purchase of a hangar as instructional space
- Licence agreements for communications towers required to establish Portage's communication network at the hangar and terminal
- Established relationships with potential funding partners in the defence and aerospace field – investor relations and partnership building
- Assisting with the design of a hangar expansion to meet the required footprint for instructional space
- Facilitating the extension of 3 Phase Power to the hangar with ACTO Electric.

Portage College has also facilitated a number of milestones that have brought the partnership towards the completion of this project. These include but are not limited to:

- Establishing the relationships needed at Advanced Education to facilitate the delivery of the program
- Hiring an AME-S program coordinator and instructor
- Brokering the purchase of the AME-S curriculum and updating the curriculum as required
- Achieving Transport Canada accreditation of the curriculum
- Achieving provincial approval required for the college to begin advertising the AME-S program
- Placed orders for much of the machinery, tools, and equipment needed to deliver the curriculum at the space
- Working with Transport Canada to understand the requirements of the program accreditation and begin work towards achieving the accreditation
- Establishing contact with the Canadian armed forces to explore training opportunities
- Developing the course material and relationships required to deliver dual credit courses and feeder courses at the high school level
- Working with 4 Wing to ascertain whether any partnership can be developed to provide assistance with tools, training materials, decor or instruction for the school.

Alternatives:

- The Committee may direct administration to prepare additional correspondence on this matter.
- The Committee may pass or defeat a motion to accept this report as information.

Recommended Action:

Administration recommends that the Committee accept this report as information.



Budget Implications (Yes or No):

No

Submitted by:

Kevin Nagoya, Chief Administrative Officer