

# Canada's Central Mountain Air suspends key regional routes

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Key regional Canadian routes will be left without regular air connectivity soon as Central Mountain Air (9M, Smithers) (CMA), the only passenger air carrier plying them, has been forced to scale down its operations due to a lack of federal government support amid the crippling COVID-19 pandemic. CMA is the only passenger airline serving these routes, with KF Cargo (FK, Kelowna) also operating the Kamloops leg to Prince George, according to ch-aviation capacities module. In a strongly worded criticism of the federal government's lacking financial support, Chief Executive Officer, Bob Cummings, said: "Devastating declines in travel and extended provincial health advisories against non-essential travel have necessitated a significant scaling back of our scheduled operations for the foreseeable future," he explained. "The federal government has been promising for almost a year that help is on the way to support these essential air services, but no such support has been received or clearly outlined. Our customers and the communities we serve are bearing the brunt of this inaction. In addition to supporting the local economies with the transport of essential workers, our airline and its dedicated staff fly customers to medical treatments and transport medical supplies, mail, and other vital cargo." He added: "Recognising the crucial link our airline provides to the communities we serve, CMA continued to operate these routes, with one short suspension, since the start of the pandemic (March/April 2020) while sustaining losses. For more than 10 months, CMA leadership has sought to engage the federal government in support of airports and airlines, particularly in more remote areas. However, the promised necessary financial support has not materialised. At this time, without direct government support to assist in maintaining operations until demand resumes, CMA can no longer continue the provision of these essential air services," he said. According to the ch-aviation fleets ownership module, CMA operates a fleet of eleven aircraft, including seven DHC-8-100s, one DHC-8-300, three Do328-100s. It also deploys fourteen Beech 1900Ds, one DHC-2, and one Piper (twin piston) PA-31-350.

