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SNOWBIRDS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION LAUNCHES "NO PAUSE - KEEP THE SNOWBIRDS FLYING" CAMPAIGN

The Snowbirds Alumni Association announced the launch of the "No Pause - Keep the Snowbirds Flying" campaign, a national initiative advocating for the continued operation of the Canadian Forces Snowbirds while awaiting transition to a new aircraft platform.

The campaign follows the recent announcement by the Government of Canada and the Royal Canadian Air Force that Snowbird operations will pause at the end of 2026 following the retirement of the CT-114 Tutor fleet. The Association acknowledges the significant operational pressures facing the Canadian Armed Forces, including personnel shortages and the long-term challenge of sustaining the ageing Tutor aircraft. However, it believes viable transitional options exist that would allow the Snowbirds to continue flying in a reduced capacity while preserving the specialized expertise and national outreach role that the team uniquely provides. The Snowbirds Alumni Association recommends that the RCAF consider partnering with the aerospace industry and also use reservists with previous Snowbird experience to permit a number of pilots and technicians currently on the squadron to be assigned to other fleets that need experienced personnel. The Association points to the recent precedent established by the Royal Air Force's Red Arrows which announced a temporary reduction from a nine-aircraft display to a seven-aircraft formation in order to facilitate its own operational transition and personnel requirements through the 2030 airshow season, thus maintaining continuity of operations and public engagement.

"The RAF Red Arrows have demonstrated that it is possi-

ble to adapt during periods of transition without grounding an iconic national team entirely," said LCol (Ret'd) Darryl Shyiak, Board Chair of the Snowbirds Alumni Association and former Commanding Officer and Team Leader of 431 (Air Demonstration) Squadron. "The 'No Pause - Keep the Snowbirds Flying' campaign is about encouraging Canadian decision-makers to explore practical transitional solutions that preserve the operational knowledge, public connection, and inspirational value the Snowbirds provide to Canadians." For more than 55 years, the Snowbirds have served as ambassadors for Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces, inspiring generations of Canadians through their world-class display of precision, teamwork, and professionalism. The team has performed for more than 150 million spectators across North America and remains one of the country's most recognized national symbols, its members role models for the youth of Canada.

The Association wishes to recognize the highly skilled Royal Canadian Air Force technicians and 431 Squadron's industry partners at L3 Harris, IMP Aerospace, and Magellan Aerospace whose professionalism and expertise have ensured the continued safe operation of the Tutor fleet for decades. "Canadians can remain fully confident in the professionalism, maintenance standards, and rigorous oversight that have supported Snowbird operations safely from the outset," said LCol (Ret'd) Dan Dempsey, former Commanding Officer and Team Leader of 431 (Air Demonstration) Squadron. "The issue before us is not whether the Snowbirds

should continue to inspire Canadians — it is how we ensure that their highly specialized skill sets are preserved through this transition."

The Association believes that maintaining at least a reduced operational capability during the transition period would help preserve critical air demonstration expertise, sustain recruiting and public outreach efforts, and ensure continuity for a program that has become deeply woven into Canada's national identity.

Through the "No Pause - Keep the Snowbirds Flying" campaign, the Association will engage Canadians, veterans, aviation stakeholders, community leaders, and elected officials in support of solutions that would allow the Snowbirds to continue flying on the Tutor while preparations are made for a future aircraft platform.

"The Snowbirds are far more than an aerobatic team," added LCol (Ret'd) Maryse Carmichael, also a former Snowbirds pilot and Commanding Officer of 431 (Air Demonstration) Squadron. "They are a symbol of Canadian excellence and a living connection between Canadians and the men and women who serve their country in all three military services — navy, army and air force. We believe Canadians want the opportunity to keep looking to the skies and seeing that inspiration continue."

"The Snowbirds have become a shining symbol of our very nation," added General (Ret'd) Rick Hillier, former Chief of the Defence Staff, "uniting us in our pride and accomplishment. They are one of very few Canadian symbols and are needed more than ever in these challenging times. Their absence from the skies would make us less."

WHITBY RESTRICT HOW YOU BBQ

WHITBY - According to Town Police - "All outdoor fires are regulated by the Town of Whitby's Fires By-law. Open air burning is considered the burning of any material outside of a building. Chimineas, firebowls and campfires are all examples of fires that are not permitted under the by-law. Under the By-law, the following devices are permitted: Propane or gas fuelled barbecues, Grills, Cooking appliances, Gas fireplaces approved for outdoor use by the Technical Standards and Technical Safety Authority of Ontario (TSSA) or other approval agency. For all other open air burning, a burn permit process is in place

to allow for the burning of brush related to farming and land maintenance. The Town of Whitby issues two types of fire permits to allow for the burning of brush related to farming and land maintenance. If you don't have an approved fire permit and have an outdoor fire, you may be subject to a fine and charged under the by-law and the Ontario Fire Code. "The Town's fun police are banning backyard BBQs." It's a claim we've seen circulating - especially as outdoor season heats up. So, let's look at what's actually allowed under the Town of Whitby's Fires By-law. Here's what you should know.

Residents can use a grill, barbecue, cooking appliance, or gas fireplace outdoors. Propane and natural gas fire pits are also permitted - and are a great alternative. What isn't allowed? Wood-burning fire bowls, chimineas, and campfires are not permitted. Open air burning means the burning of any material outside of a building - and restrictions are in place to help keep everyone safe. So much for that all natural wood burning on your stake. Many have cried that this is another example of government taking away citizens rights. What's your take?

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