



Canada Border Services Agency
Vancouver International Airport District
Passenger Operations

September 10, 2020

To the representatives of post-secondary institutions,

Over the past decade, the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) at Vancouver International Airport District (VIA) has seen significant increases in the amount of international travellers arriving each year. This has also resulted in a significant increase in the number of study permits issued at VIA. In the calendar year 2019, VIA processed nearly 7,000,000 travellers and issued over 58,000 study permits. Currently, during peak periods in August and early September, students arriving at YVR seeking a study permit may see delays depending on the YVR traveller volumes at the time of entry. The desire to improve service delivery while reducing wait times and operational pressures has led to the mutual interest of the YVR Airport Authority (YVRAA) and VIA Passenger Operations in piloting the new Voluntary Compliance Portal (VC Portal), which provides CBSA and YVRAA with advance notification on permit requiring travellers. Although this portal can be utilized for work permits and study permits, the initial launch phase of the portal will be focused on study permit issuances.

The current COVID-19 environment is expected to reduce the international student volumes but due to health screening requirements and risk mitigation measures, there may be some delays as we process travellers efficiently and safely. As the permit issuance process may cause significant congestion within the voluntary compliance (VC) area, there is a need for an innovative solution to ensure appropriate health and safety measures can be observed. The VC Portal initiative will allow CBSA and YVRAA to appropriately respond to the challenge of border management within the COVID-19 environment. With appropriate advanced notification, CBSA can effectively collaborate with YVRAA and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to ensure that quarantine related documentation can be completed efficiently and social distancing measures can be implemented to greater effect. Strategic overflow areas can be prepared for utilization when the VC area reaches occupancy limits, and the overall time each client spends interacting with officers and other clients can be drastically reduced.

The VC Portal is hosted on the YVR website (<https://www.yvr.ca/en/students>) and allows for students to voluntarily submit their personal identification information found in their pre-approved applications from Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). The information provided gives advance notice to the CBSA, and gives time to review and print the study permits prior to the student's arrival to YVR. Using the Portal is completely optional, and it will only be used to expedite the process.



To be eligible, the student must meet the following criteria:

- Initial entry into Canada must be at the Vancouver International Airport (they cannot connect to YVR through a domestic flight); and
- They must have a pre-approved study permit application from IRCC, and
- They must submit all the mandatory information at least 72 hours in advance through the Portal.

The students will need to submit the following information for processing:

- Unique Client Identifier (UCI)
- Control Document Number (optional)
- Last Name
- First Name (optional)
- Date of Birth (optional)
- Passport Number (optional)
- Passport country of issue (optional)
- Planned Date of Arrival to Vancouver
- Arriving Flight Number

Although the information is collected on the YVR website, it is immediately delivered to the CBSA without being retained by YVRAA. This information will allow CBSA Officers to review applications prior to the student's arrival, potentially identify administrative errors, and prepare documents in anticipation of arrival which should reduce the student's time spent at the airport.

To ensure the success of this pilot program, we need your assistance in communicating this information to your students. As this is a pilot project, we do not believe it will be effective for us to communicate directly with the students. We need your institution to communicate with your students to help them understand what the VC Portal is, and how it can benefit them. To assist you and your team further, we have prepared an FAQ to complement this letter in helping you become familiar with the VC Portal.

We thank you for your interest in the VC Portal and your cooperation in informing your students about this new initiative. Should you have any further questions upon your review of this letter and the FAQ, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

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Vancouver International Airport District
Passenger Operations