



## LETTER TO PREMIER MCGUINITY

The Honourable Dalton McGuinty, Premier  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 1A1

### Re: Ornge Ambulance Services

Dear Mr. Premier,

The Air Transport Association of Canada (ATAC) has represented the air transport industry in Canada for over 75 years. Our membership is made up of approximately 175 operators, flight training units and commercial aviation support industry companies throughout our country.

We have written to you in the past on the issue of ORNGE, the Ontario provincial air ambulance operator. We feel that the time has come for your government to take a serious second look at the mandate given to ORNGE to operate its own fleet of air ambulances.

It has been reported that the province still intends to continue operating this service despite the growing controversy over ORNGE management. ATAC adamantly believes that this would be a serious mistake. Clearly, the prospect of a monopoly provider of air ambulance services continuing to both operate flights while it also contracts flights from private operators is ethically very questionable.

We do not believe that there was ever a credible case made to justify the move from a private deliverer of air ambulance services by reputable and responsible regional air carriers to a government monopoly provider. The takeover of those services by ORNGE was not based on complaints of bad service but seemingly on ORNGE management's desire to build an empire using public funds. Private operators had provided a continuous, competitive, scandal free and much appreciated service for decades. In fact, the medivac services offered in Ontario prior to the ORNGE takeover had earned a distinguished reputation worldwide for its excellence.

Not only was the service provided by private operators of excellent quality, these air ambulance contracts also facilitated an even better service to the outlying communities they serve and for which air transport is a vital lifeline. The medivac services accounted for up to 30% of their business. It should also be brought to your attention that ORNGE used confidential and privileged financial information gathered under false pretences from these operators to build their business case just months before taking over these contracts.

Mr. Premier, there are absolutely no indications that the people who depend on air ambulances are now provided with a better service but there is ample proof that this decision was based on an untrustworthy business plan tabled before the provincial authorities.

We ask that you reconsider this very expensive decision, sell the ORNGE fleet and resort to offering this extremely important health service through the experienced hands of the highly competitive private sector under the continued oversight of the Ontario Government.

ATAC is most willing to assist in any way possible to help restore the exceptional reputation this service had enjoyed for many years while in the hands of Ontario air carriers. The added benefit is that in these fiscally sensitive times people of Ontario will be better served in a more efficient and less expensive manner.

Sincerely,

John McKenna  
President and CEO

cc Tim Hudak MPP, Leader of the Opposition  
The Honourable Deb Matthews, Ontario Health Minister  
ATAC Board of Directors

On March 16, 2012, ATAC sent the following letter to Premier Dalton McGuinty about the ongoing crisis surrounding Ornge, Ontario's Air Ambulance Service provider. While not questioning the need for a public central dispatch and coordinator of air ambulance services, ATAC denounces the fact that Ornge went way beyond its mandate when it withdrew the ambulance services from private sector operators in order to create its own service. The result is that costs are up and service is down. Other victims of Ornge's ambitious empire building are the residents of outlying Ontario regions because the sustainability of the regular air service providers they use was improved by these private air ambulance contracts.

ATAC encourages everyone concerned by the need for an efficient, sustainable, and responsible air ambulance service to write to Premier McGuinty, asking him to put an end to Ornge's shameful use of public funds and ask the private sector operators to once again supply this much needed service.



700 - 255 Albert Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6A9  
Phone: (613) 233-7727  
Fax: (613) 230-8648  
Website: [www.atac.ca](http://www.atac.ca)