News

LaGuardia Airport runway reopens, days after crash on tarmac killed 2 Canadian pilots

AP — The runway where two pilots were killed in a collision between a jet and a fire truck reopened Thursday morning at New York's LaGuardia Airport, which had been operating at limited capacity all week as investigators examined the wreckage and work crews cleaned up debris.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey said the tarmac resumed operations at around 10 a.m. after the runway and its associated infrastructure were "repaired, inspected, and confirmed" to meet Federal Aviation Administration regulations for safe operation.

The agency, which oversees the region's airports, said reopening the second of two runways at LaGuardia, one of the busiest airports in the nation, will help "restore full operational capacity," though it advised travelers to still check with their airline for flight status.

LaGuardia continues to register the most delays and cancellations among airports in the country with more than 300 canceled in the last 24 hours, according to Flight Aware, a flight tracking website.

The bodies of the two Air Canada pilots, meanwhile, were being repatriated to Canada.

Pilots carried the casket of Jazz Aviation first officer Mackenzie Gunther off a plane at the Ottawa International Airport on Thursday afternoon. Capt. Antoine Forest's body was then flown from Ottawa to Montréal Trudeau International Airport.

Gunther, 30, and Forest, 24, died when their Air Canada plane collided with a firetruck after landing at LaGuardia.

Hundreds of pilots and flight staff waited in the rain, lined up in front of Air Canada's Montreal headquarters to honor Forest.

Capt. Tim Perry, president of the Air Line Pilots Association Canada, said the pilot community is mourning the two young aviators.

"No family should go through this," he said,

The destroyed Air Canada plane and the fire truck were towed from the crash site late Wednesday as the National Transportation Safety Board continues its investigation.

The agency said Thursday that the truck has been placed in an undisclosed, secure location and deferred to questions about the status of the plane to Air Canada, which didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

The airline has said the plane would be placed in a hangar and that it would soon begin the process of reuniting passengers with their baggage and personal belongings.



Michael Rousseau, the company's CEO, also apologized Thursday for his inability to express himself in French after facing calls to resign over his English-only message of condolence.

The crash happened late Sunday night as an Air Canada regional jet arriving from Montreal and carrying 76 people struck an airport fire truck that had initially been cleared to cross the runway to respond to a separate incident aboard another plane.

Roughly 40 people were treated at hospitals for injuries, including the two firefighters and a flight attendant who survived after being thrown onto the tarmac while still strapped in her seat. Most have since been released from the hospital.



Pilots carry the casket during the repatriation of Jazz Aviation First Officer Mackenzie Gunther, in Ottawa, Ontario, Thursday, March 26, 2026. Gunther died Sunday after his Air Canada Express plane collided with a fire truck at New York's LaGuardia Airport. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS VIA AP

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