

Unite calls for crisis task force to save airport jobs

Unite calls for Civil Aviation Crisis Task Force within 48 hours as industry faces growing pressures

Unite the union has written to the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, requesting the immediate establishment of a Civil Aviation Crisis Task Force as the industry faces an unfolding crisis in the aftermath of Flybe falling into administration and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unite was informed yesterday that more than 100 jobs at Edinburgh Airport are at risk of redundancy where around 1000 workers are employed. The latest setback for Edinburgh Airport follows the news that 120 Swissport jobs are at risk of redundancy while up to 80 Swissport jobs are also at risk at Aberdeen and Glasgow Airports.

Unite, as the UK's leading civil aviation union, warns that Edinburgh Airport and others in Scotland could be on the brink of collapse without support and stabilising measures from the Scottish Government.

In yesterday's letter Unite Scottish Secretary, Pat Rafferty calls for the establishment of a Civil Aviation Crisis Task Force within 72 hours as the industry faces an unfolding crisis as big as that which faced the banking and financial services sector in 2007

Dear First Minister,

RE: CIVIL AVIATION INDUSTRY CRISIS TASK FORCE

I am writing to you with the utmost urgency regarding the crisis facing the civil aviation industry in Scotland. Unite has been informed that hundreds of jobs are at immediate risk of redundancy in Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh Airports. The situation as you know directly results from Flybe falling into administration and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The scale of the crisis facing the aviation industry in Scotland, and across the UK, is tantamount to the crisis facing the banking and financial sector crisis from 2007 onwards. Unite understands that several airports across the UK are on the brink of collapse which would have a devastating impact on workers and the general public. In these extraordinary times as the pandemic moves into different phases in Scotland it is incumbent upon us to bring forward contingency measures to enable airports to remain functioning and to stabilise the industry and prevent mass redundancies.

I wrote to the Transport Minister, Michael Matheson MSP, on 6 March proposing an immediate meeting and to date we have received no response to this proposal. I would urge you to initiate a crisis task force for the civil aviation industry within the next 72 hours as nations across Europe will begin to initiate measures to control and close down their airspace. Contingency measures must be established in order to prevent a collapse of the industry and with it protecting thousands of jobs.

Yours Sincerely

Pat Rafferty