

Redundancies to follow reorganisation at Edinburgh Airport

Edinburgh Airport today announced a restructuring process due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the aviation industry.

Around a third of its workforce will leave the business.

Following a lengthy and detailed consultation process with staff and unions, the airport has made the regrettable decision as it prepares for a prolonged recovery.

The airport directly employs 750 people and the redundancy process will begin today, covering all areas including frontline staff, management and support functions. The restructuring includes compulsory and voluntary redundancies across the business.

The airport consulted with staff and unions and its proposals on terms of redundancy were supported by more than 90% of people who took part in the ballot.

Colleagues who will unfortunately be made redundant will begin to receive letters as of 1 August and will leave the business on 31 October

Gordon Dewar, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Airport said: "This is a bitterly sad day for the airport and for those colleagues who are losing their jobs through no fault of their own but due to the impact of this dreadful pandemic.

“We have worked with unions and staff over the past four months to protect as many jobs as possible, but unfortunately we have to confirm this regrettable news as the business prepares for whatever comes next.

“Last year we welcomed a record 14.7 million people through our doors. This year we will be lucky to see a third of that and next year won’t be anywhere near where we have previously estimated so the business has to right size to be in a position to survive and recover when it can.”

The airport has used the UK Government’s Job Retention Scheme over the past few months as it has carefully considered the best approach to its recovery. It has helped to retain jobs, but the upcoming closure of the scheme and uncertain recovery of aviation means jobs will still be lost.

Gordon added: “The furlough scheme has undoubtedly helped us to retain jobs and we are grateful for the UK Government’s support, as well as that of the Scottish Government through things like rates relief. Despite this, we continued to burn around £3.5 million a month as passenger numbers dropped dramatically and airlines drastically scaled back operations. It will be a very long road to recovery, and we cannot successfully make that journey while we are set up as a 15 million passenger airport.

“Aviation was one of the industries to be hit first and unfortunately will be one of the last to fully recover, so job losses have been unavoidable. The situation has been exacerbated by the introduction of an ill-thought out and unworkable blanket quarantine policy which has massively impacted on passenger numbers.

“Aviation jobs rely on passengers and flights. That has been lost in this argument and despite us working with unions to make the case for directed support, we are still waiting to find out what will be done to preserve these jobs which are

crucial to any industry and economic recovery.

“Throughout the consultation we have striven to be fair, compassionate and seek an outcome that protects as many people as possible.

“We bitterly regret this necessity and all of our talented colleagues departing the business leave with our very best wishes. They are an incredibly talented workforce who have served Edinburgh Airport fantastically well and we will do what we can to help them find other employment. We are sorry to see them go.”

Lothian MSP Miles Briggs said: “Edinburgh Airport have had no choice but to make these redundancies, because of the impact of Covid-19 on the aviation industry, and my thoughts are with employees who will be made redundant through no fault of their own.

“These job redundancies reinforce the importance of investing in the South East of Scotland to grow the economy and create more job opportunities.

“Employees who are being made redundant must be fully supported to find new roles and develop new skills for career changes until the aviation industry recovers.”