

IMPASSE AT STANSTED AIRPORT TALKS AS IMPACT OF 90 GROUND STAFF REDUNDANCIES MAY LEAD TO CHRISTMAS FLIGHT DISRUPTION SAYS GMB

Ryanair dictating staffing levels at ground handling agent Swissport as 90 staff to be made redundant at end October

Talks between GMB and Swissport, the ground handling agent for Ryanair at Stansted Airport, over a 30 days notice to GMB for 90 redundancies of ground services staff at end of October have reached an impasse with no agreement or progress in how to handle to issues involved. The company plan meetings with ground staff on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday next week to select the 90 staff to be made redundant.

In a separate but related initiative the company have issued 90 days notice, which expires on 12 December, to unilaterally introduce a new shift system for the remaining ground services staff at the airport. GMB contend that the new system is unworkable and will lead to disruption and delays for passengers on flights to and from the airport at Christmas time.

Gary Pearce GMB Regional Officer said **“Talks between GMB and Swissport, Ryanairs handling agent at London Stansted Airport, have now reached an impasse over their intention to make 90 members of staff redundant at the end of October. There is also stalemate over a 90 day notice to unilaterally introduce a new shift system for the rest of the ground service staff from 12 December. This new shift system that Swissport plan to impose will require staff to work six days without a break and restrict the amount of staff that can take their children on holiday during their summer, Easter and Christmas breaks.**

GMB is concerned that the reduction in staffing levels and an unworkable shift system could result disruption for passengers on flights in the run up to Christmas. The staffing reductions will also cause staff who load the aircraft to be forced to throw some passengers bags the full length of the baggage hold (approximately 18 feet) or the equivalent of having a bag dropped from a first floor window.

Swissport claim that Ryanair have told them to reduce the number of staff they employ on the Ryanair contract at Stansted. GMB consider that Ryanair are putting their passengers a poor second in terms of customer service.”

End

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