

Industry veterans brought in to boost Southend airport's fortunes

By Phil Davies | 22 October 2015 at 08.26 GMT

[0 Comments](#)



Two industry veterans have been appointed by the owner of Southend airport as it seeks to attract more airlines and boost passenger levels.

Former Luton and Bournemouth airport managing director, Glyn Jones, has been confirmed as chief executive of the aviation division of Stobart Group while ex-Cardiff airport chief executive, Jon Horne, becomes chief operating officer.

Stobart Aviation comprises Southend airport, Carlisle Lake District airport and Stobart Air, in which the group owns a 45% interest.

The two industry specialists were appointed last month to lead its operations, Stobart confirmed today as it disclosed that underlying earnings [EBITDA] at its aviation division in the half-year to August slumped by £1 million to £400,000 over the same period in 2014.

This came as revenue fell from £12.3 million to £11.9 million with a drop in passenger numbers from 628,000 to 504,000.

Much of the decline came from a drop in passengers following easyJet cutting capacity at Southend airport.

Stobart said: "As previously reported, London Southend airport and easyJet have worked together to determine the optimum capacity for the routes currently operated.

"As a result of this process, passenger numbers have dipped during the period but load factors and yields for easyJet have improved materially and performance of the easyJet network across 13 existing routes is strong."

The improved performance of easyJet has led to the start of new routes to Lanzarote and Lyon in November and December and Paris in February 2016 albeit with reduced capacity on other routes.

Adria Airways launched a three times per week service to Maribor in Slovenia on June 1.

“This affirms the potential of the London Southend Airport proposition and its passenger appeal,” Stobart said.

“Our target is to deliver 2.5 million passengers annually by 2018. Our ongoing work to attract more airline business and the feedback we receive demonstrates the growing awareness of the airport and the opportunity to serve demand from London.

“London's runway capacity remains in short supply, with additional runway capacity in the south-east potentially 10 to 15 years away. This brings London Southend's available capacity into increasingly sharp focus.

“Consideration is being given to the development of airport assets including runway improvements, and proposed new routes at Carlisle Lake District airport. We have been shortlisted for route support on our proposed networks.”