

EasyJet may close 3 UK bases as it slashes staff

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Budget carrier easyJet may close bases at Stansted, Southend and Newcastle airports in England as it consulted with unions on steps to stay afloat amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pilot's union Balpa says that 727 easyJet pilots are at risk of redundancy - which equates to nearly one in three of its pilots in the U.K. Those cuts appear to be part of the airline's announcement in May that it would cut a third of its staff, or 4,500 jobs in all.

EasyJet CEO Johan Lundgren described the times as "unprecedented" amid the near halt of air travel globally. He said changes were necessary for the survival of the airline.

"Unfortunately the lower demand environment means we need fewer aircraft and have less opportunity for work for our people - we are committed to working constructively with our employee representatives across the network with the aim of minimizing job losses as far as possible," Lundgren said. "These proposals are no reflection on our people at Stansted, Southend and Newcastle, who have all worked tirelessly and have been fully committed to providing great service for our customers."

Brian Strutton, Balpa General Secretary, said that the [union](#) knows that aviation is in crisis and that some temporary measures to help the airline through to recovery would be taken.

"This seems an excessive over-reaction and easyJet won't find a supply of pilots waiting to come back when the recovery takes place over the next two years," he said.

EasyJet said it remains committed to its U.K. operations. It currently has 163 aircraft operating out of the U.K. at 11 bases serving 52 million people annually.

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