

Swissport Noticeboard

27 Mar 2020

13/11/2020

Dear GMB member,

The GMB is devastated that Swissport have chosen not to furlough those staff earmarked for compulsory redundancy. We know this will be desperately sad news for many of you.

Swissport had a chance to do the right thing, sadly they chose not to. We condemn them for this. Their staff will now face a Xmas of uncertainty and, in the GMB's view; it needn't have been this way.

But the government must take responsibility for this too. The Chancellor's inaction, dithering and delay has meant that thousands of jobs that could have been saved will now be lost. Their inability to act decisively has caused this.

The GMB believes that the news of a vaccine changes the outlook for airlines and travel and is another reason why Swissport could have saved more jobs.

We called on Swissport to do a deal with us to offset the employer contributions associated with using furlough, but they declined.

We will do all that we can to keep campaigning on this issue but for today I'm just sorry that we couldn't do more and that your employer chose this path.

In Solidarity,

Nadine Houghton

GMB National Officer

06/11/2020



Dear GMB member,

As you know, the government have announced a further extension to furlough. Unite and GMB have today written to Swissport to ask them to save Xmas for thousands of you currently facing redundancy by delaying your termination and putting you on furlough instead. Please see the letter below. We will of course keep you updated.

Dear Pauline and Liam,

As you might expect, I am writing to you on behalf of GMB and Unite to formally request that Swissport work with your trade unions, as we have done throughout this Pandemic, to find a path that allows for the furlough of those staff currently facing both CR and VR.

Both trade unions recognise the enormous difficulties faced by Swissport and the merry go round of government announcements that are making planning for the future virtually impossible.

We understand your concerns regarding the cost implications of continuing with the furlough scheme both in terms of NI and Pensions and the potential for increased redundancy liabilities. We do not believe these barriers are insurmountable and we are committed to reaching an agreement with you that allows for creative solutions to offset these costs.

Swissport now has the chance to save thousands of jobs, at least for the short term and certainly for Christmas. With the new lockdown restrictions many of your staff could be looking at a protracted period of unemployment; but it doesn't have to be that way if you work with us and act now.

We look forward to discussing this with you in more detail.

Many thanks,

Nadine and Oliver.

Nadine Houghton

GMB National Officer

Date: 03/11/2020

Dear GMB member,

The furlough extension is a welcome relief for many of you, but for those of you whose redundancy notice started on the 31st October, the news was bittersweet.

The GMB has today agreed to an extension of the furlough agreement we reached with the company back in April, allowing Swissport to take advantage of the furlough



extension. But what does this mean for those of you who left by way of compulsory redundancy on the 31st October?

We have asked Swissport to extend the employment of those staff leaving by redundancy to allow them to be furloughed. This would be cost neutral to Swissport but would offer a lifeline to those of you facing unemployment. We have written to Swissport to urge them to consider this and we await their reply.

The outlook for the aviation industry is still bleak and the GMB is still demanding targeted support for the sector; that's why, this month, we are meeting with the new Aviation and Maritime Minister, Robert Courts MP, to make the case on your behalf.

Prior to the announcement of the furlough extension the GMB had reached an agreement with Swissport regarding the Job Support Scheme, the scheme that was intended to replace furlough. The JSS has now been superseded by the furlough scheme, but when furlough ends, we expect the agreement regarding JSS to kick in. Although - as with all these things - the government may decide on something completely different by the time we get there!

We will of course keep you updated and will keep pushing Swissport to use the furlough scheme instead of pressing ahead with mass redundancies.

Nadine Houghton

GMB National Officer

Date: 23/10/2020

Dear GMB member,

The Chancellor's announcement yesterday, that the flexible furlough scheme will be extended, has given some hope to many workers like yourselves. Sadly, for many, the news comes too late, but we do not believe this needs to be the case for Swissport employees.

The end of the furlough scheme means many of you are due to be made redundant from the 31st October, although we know that Swissport have not yet issued redundancy notices to those leaving.

We have asked Swissport to do all they can to use the Chancellor's scheme to save jobs now - both those jobs currently at risk and any potential future redundancies. They have committed to updating us on this at the beginning of next week.

We signed a national agreement in August to mitigate C.837 job losses, Swissport have informed us that this figure is now C.720. However, the feedback we are getting from local stations is that the figure is in fact much lower. GMB members agreed to the mitigation measures to save jobs; if those jobs are not being saved many will rightly be asking why we reached agreement in the first place.

If the cost of the mitigation measures outweighs the jobs saved, we will unfortunately, consider walking away from the national agreement. We do not want to do this. We entered into agreement in good faith. We believed it was the best way to save as many



jobs as possible, but as the amount of jobs saved decreases, the sacrifices no longer seem worthwhile.

GMB members have paid a heavy price; they have faced lay - off's, they have used their Annual Leave entitlement to continue accessing Furlough and they are facing redundancy. Now Swissport must do all it can to access the extended furlough scheme to save as many jobs as possible.

We will keep you updated on any progress in these discussions.

Stay safe!

Nadine Houghton

GMB National Officer

Date: 09/10/2020

Your GMB representatives will soon be meeting with station managers to begin consultation on how the mitigation measures, negotiated nationally in August, will be applied at each station. This includes a 20% reduction in hours, cross utilisation of certain roles and an agreement around rostering and Scheduling.

The outcome of these talks is that a certain number of roles will be saved, however we will not be able to save every job.

Sadly, the government have been woefully lacking in providing sector specific support to the aviation industry, the Furlough scheme has sustained many of our jobs but the replacement, Job Support Scheme, does not give the support employers need to keep workers on.

This means that the mass redundancies we have been consulting on will come into effect as of the 31st October.

We continue to press government for an aviation specific bail out and are calling for a joint trade union meeting with the new Aviation Minister as soon as possible as well as a meeting with the Shadow Treasury team to talk them through the pit falls of the new Job Support Scheme and why it isn't fit for purpose for aviation employers.

Your local reps will keep you updated on the outcome of local talks once they have concluded.

Take care and stay safe.

Nadine Houghton

GMB National Officer



Date: 01/09/2020

NATIONAL BALLOT RESULTS AND FURLOUGH SCHEME

Dear GMB member,

Thank you to those of you that took part in the recent national ballot concerning temporary mitigation measures to save jobs.

The national ballot outcome was 58% in favour of acceptance and 42% against.

Swissport have now also confirmed they will be extending their use of the Furlough Scheme and will be allocating accrued annual leave entitlement to 'top up' the employer contributions that employers are now required to make to continue accessing the scheme. This means that you will continue to receive 80% of your pay up until the end of October but you will also be required to use up some of your annual leave entitlement to continue to receive this. We are awaiting details from Swissport concerning how much annual leave entitlement a full-time equivalent worker is expected to make.

The time brought through continuing furlough is now essential to allow local discussions to take place meaningfully. It buys your representatives and local managers' valuable extra time; we hope this time will be used wisely. We now expect the mitigation measures agreed nationally to be used as a basis for local negotiations.

Following all of this we now await the revised job cut figures; this should include a reduced amount of compulsory redundancies once the voluntary redundancies have been announced and the mitigation measures have been considered. We expect these numbers to change following local negotiations and dependent on what mitigation measures specifically are agreed at each location.

Your local representatives and officers are best placed to keep you updated on the outcome of the local talks they will be having with your managers.

Thank you for your continued support through this difficult time. I hope that the furlough extension through to the end of October gives you some, albeit brief, certainty.

Many thanks,

Nadine Houghton

GMB National Officer

Date: 20/07/2020



Dear GMB member,

I am writing to update you on the GMB's negotiations with Swissport.

As you know, the aviation industry is in turmoil, there is huge volatility which is making negotiations extremely difficult. We want to do all we can to protect jobs and keep skills in the industry for when the upturn does arrive. This is at the forefront of your negotiating teams mind.

We met with Swissport yesterday, they outlined the scale of the redundancies they are looking at, but they also made suggestions concerning measures that might be taken to save jobs and bring the overall headcount reduction down.

It is worth noting that Swissport are looking for a number of things, including 'efficiency, productivity and flexibility'. The GMB will not negotiate and recommend any proposals that we do not believe to be in the interests of our members, but we are open to putting forward proposals that we believe would allow Swissport to achieve the things they are looking for whilst protecting jobs and our members' work life balance.

The GMB is completely committed to ongoing negotiations with Swissport and we will do so in good faith. Your negotiating team is meeting shortly to put together our proposal to protect jobs, we will share this with you once it is finalised.

So whilst the GMB is making this commitment to our members we are now looking to Swissport to make a commitment to you; Swissport must now extend the Furlough arrangements for all employees not now back at work and extend the consultation period to allow us to meaningfully engage and develop proposals. If Swissport are serious about protecting jobs and building a company fit for the future they must now commit to this.

We will continue to update you as things move forward.

Stay safe.

Nadine Houghton?

GMB National Officer

Date: 07/07/2020

Redundancy Risk Update

I am writing to update you on the current redundancy situation in Swissport.

As you will know the company have announced that over 50% of its workforce are currently at risk of redundancy. Since the announcement the GMB has spoken out in the



press, lobbied government, organised a demonstration outside the Scottish Parliament and in Wales we have helped secured funding for Swissport from the Welsh government to protect jobs at Cardiff airport. We have, as you would expect, also been in talks with Swissport about what happens next.

So, what does happen next? At this stage we still have more questions than we have answers. The questions we have asked so far include; how much will it cost to furlough staff into August (when employers have to pick up NI and Pension costs) What is the timeline for consultation? How much do Swissport expect Redundancy payments to cost? What are Swissport basing their modelling on?

We have had responses to some of our questions but not all, we will continue to seek answers in order to be able to consult meaningfully and ensure we have access to all the information we are entitled to during a redundancy consultation.

In addition to all of this, we are entitled to be consulted concerning the selection criteria used for selecting individuals for redundancy. This negotiation has not started yet and until this happens we do not believe that meaningful local consultation can take place and until local consultation takes place we do not yet believe that there has been enough about the consultation itself that has been meaningful to warrant the clock starts ticking on the 45 day statutory consultation period.

Clearly though we hope and aim to reach a position that mitigates against as many job losses as possible. We will fight to save every job and that means continuing to lobby government, it means both Swissport and GMB members being open minded about options to protect jobs and we of course await the results of the Voluntary Redundancy exercise.

As soon as we have more news we will update you and will be organising a FB live event at the earliest and most appropriate opportunity.

I know these are difficult times but I hope you are all keeping safe and well, GMB will continue to fight for you.

Nadine Houghton

GMB National Officer

Date: 25/06/2020

Swissport Announcement



Yesterday's announcement from Swissport was devastating.

I can only begin to imagine how anxious and fearful for the future you must all be feeling right now.

I hope it goes without saying that your GMB representatives will be going above and beyond to save as many jobs as possible.

We are currently exploring what options may be available through both conversations with government and with Swissport. We are still at an early stage in the process so will keep you updated as things progress.

In the meantime though please ensure you contact your MP using the GMB Save Our Airports Campaign Page: <https://www.gmb.org.uk/campaign/email-your-mp-save-our-airports-our-jobskeep-our-regions-flying>

You must keep telling MP's what we need to see from Government if we stand a chance of saving jobs, regional airports and the aviation industry. Please make sure you share the campaign pagewith your friends and colleagues too.

We will shortly be organising a FB live Q&A and an Aviation Workers Facebook Rally too. We will keep you updated on when these will be happening.

In solidarity,

Nadine Houghton
GMB national officer

Date: 19/05/2020

Please see below the text of a letter sent to the head of Swissport HR regarding health and safety concerns relating to your return to work:

'Thank you for your email Pauline,

However it has done very little to alleviate my concerns, in fact it has exacerbated them.

Apologies that I've had to resort to quoting Health and Safety legislation but under the current circumstances and in light of the language you have used in your email (weekly reviews and Risk Assessments being 'shared') The GMB's view is that this simply does not comply with your obligations under various health and safety legislation.

You will notice that H&S reps have a right to inspect the workplace; our reps at LPL have been denied this opportunity, despite government guidance stating that Furloughed reps can carry out collective representation.

The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations (SRSCR) 1977 apply to employers who recognise a trade union and require that they consult with officially appointed safety representatives on matters concerning health and safety for



those groups of employees they represent. The function of union appointed safety representatives is to:

- represent employees generally and when you consult them about specific matters that will affect the health, safety and welfare of the employees;
- represent employees when Health and Safety Inspectors from HSE or local authorities consult them;
- investigate accidents, near misses, and other potential hazards and dangerous occurrences in the workplace;
- investigate complaints made by an employee they represent about their health, safety or welfare in the workplace;
- present the findings of investigations to you;
- inspect the workplace;
- with at least one other appointed representative, request in writing that you set up a health and safety committee; and
- attend Health and Safety Committee meetings as a representative of your employees.
- **Employees or their representatives must be given enough information to allow them to take a full and effective part in the consultation and they must have enough time to consider or express their views. You must take time to listen and consider their views before you make any decision.**

I am unclear how simply 'sharing' risk assessments and having weekly briefings allow our reps to carry out the functions they are legally entitled to carry out in any meaningful sense nor how the actions Swissport are currently taking comply with your requirements as an employer with a recognised trade union.

Moreover, on a more practical note, why wouldn't you want our reps involved in the risk assessment and workplace inspections prior to a return to work; their input and expertise is invaluable and having their input helps you bring your colleagues back safely and to a more harmonious workplace, to be blunt it's in your interests to work with them.

We raised this issue with Grant Shapps yesterday and we know that Jason is appearing in front of the Transport Select Committee tomorrow, we will be asking our sponsored MP's to raise this issue directly with Jason.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks,

Nadine Houghton
GMB National Officer'



Date: 18/05/2020

As we prepare for a gradual return to work in aviation I wanted to write to update you on the steps your union is taking to make sure that any return is safe for you - our members.

We have this morning written to Swissport to remind them of their responsibility to work in partnership with GMB Health and Safety Representatives when planning the reopening of operations. We have asked them to make sure they are working jointly with local GMB representatives when conducting risk assessments; this is particularly important at a local station level where your union reps will have expert knowledge of the processes and jobs you do as well as the workplace itself.

The GMB supports a return to work but only if it is safe. The GMB will play a key part in making sure this is the case. Aviation workers are key workers and must be able to return to work with confidence.

The GMB is meeting with the Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, today and we will be making our key demands clear:

- Risk assessments carried out with GMB health and safety reps well in advance of any return to work.
- Adequate PPE provision including for check-in and security staff.
- Removal of the need to manually clock in / out (e.g. when using clocking in machines)
- No to check-in staff conducting temperature checks unless fully trained, adequate PPE, increase in pay and supported by the science.
- Hand sanitisation points throughout airport.
- Adequate Plexi Screens in place.
- Social Distancing signage.
- Passengers to wear face masks.
- Possible Anti Gen test and evidence from passenger prior to travel.
- We support a Covid death in service payment for all key workers but recognise that the best way to spend public funds is preventing the deaths in the first place.

As always, we will keep you updated on the steps GMB is taking to protect you at work. As we return to the workplace your input and action will be essential in this and we will be asking you to get more involved in your union as this progresses.

In Solidarity,

Nadine Houghton

GMB National Officer



Redundancy Consultation Paused

Date: 13/05/2020

Following campaigning from the GMB we are delighted to announce that Swissport have (once again) paused the redundancy consultation process that they were due to restart this week.

Swissport had previously indicated to your GMB representatives that they intended to begin consultation on redundancies this week.

But as many of you will have seen, following pressure from the GMB and other trade unions, the Chancellor has now extended the Furlough scheme until the end of October. We await detailed guidance on this, but the current reports suggest that staff will be able to work part time from July whilst also being furloughed. We are yet to discuss what this looks like with Swissport.

A gradual, tapered return to work means that the GMB will now need to consider what a 'safe' return to work looks like for aviation workers and we are working with other unions and the DfT on that. We will provide more detailed advice and guidance on this moving forward. We are concerned however that Swissport appear to have begun carrying out risk assessments without first consulting and involving GMB health and safety representatives and we will challenge them on this.

We will now also need a bespoke financial package for the aviation industry. We know that flights will not return to pre Covid levels for some time, but when flights do pick up it is essential that the industry does not lose the skilled, trained workforce it currently has. The GMB is clear; any bespoke packages **MUST** come with guarantees that protect workers. Taking taxpayer money while cutting terms, conditions and jobs will not be tolerated.

We will continue to keep you updated.

Take care and stay safe.

Nadine Houghton

GMB National Officer.

Date: 03/04/2020



Furlough virtual Q&A events

In these difficult times, your union is ensuring we are still able to answer your questions and give you advice. We can't see you face to face as much as we'd like but we have organised two 'virtual' events for our members.

We want to answer your questions on furlough and any other employment questions you may have so we've organised the following:

Facebook Live Event - 12:30 Tuesday 7th April

(this will be a short talk on Furlough arrangements with time for a few questions and comments)

(Click the 'Get Reminder' button once on Facebook to sign up for an alert when we go live)

Live Webinar Q&A on furlough and your rights at work - 12:30 Wednesday 8th April

(this will be a more in depth sessions with much more time for questions and comments)

We look forward to seeing you!

Nadine Houghton
National Officer, GMB

