

**S A E N**  
**Stop Airport Extension Now**

**STOP**  
**AIRPORT**  
**EXTENSION**  
**NOW**

**EMPLOYMENT AT SOUTHEND AIRPORT**



## Current employment

According to the welcome sign at the entrance to the airport, in August 2007, there were 36 companies employing a total of 1,541 people at the site.

Flightline went into administration the day after the sale of the airport to the Stobart Group, with the loss of 235 jobs. (Southend Echo, 04/12/2008)

One of the largest employers at the Airport, Ipeco, has also made around thirty redundancies in 2008. (Southend Echo, 02/10/2008)

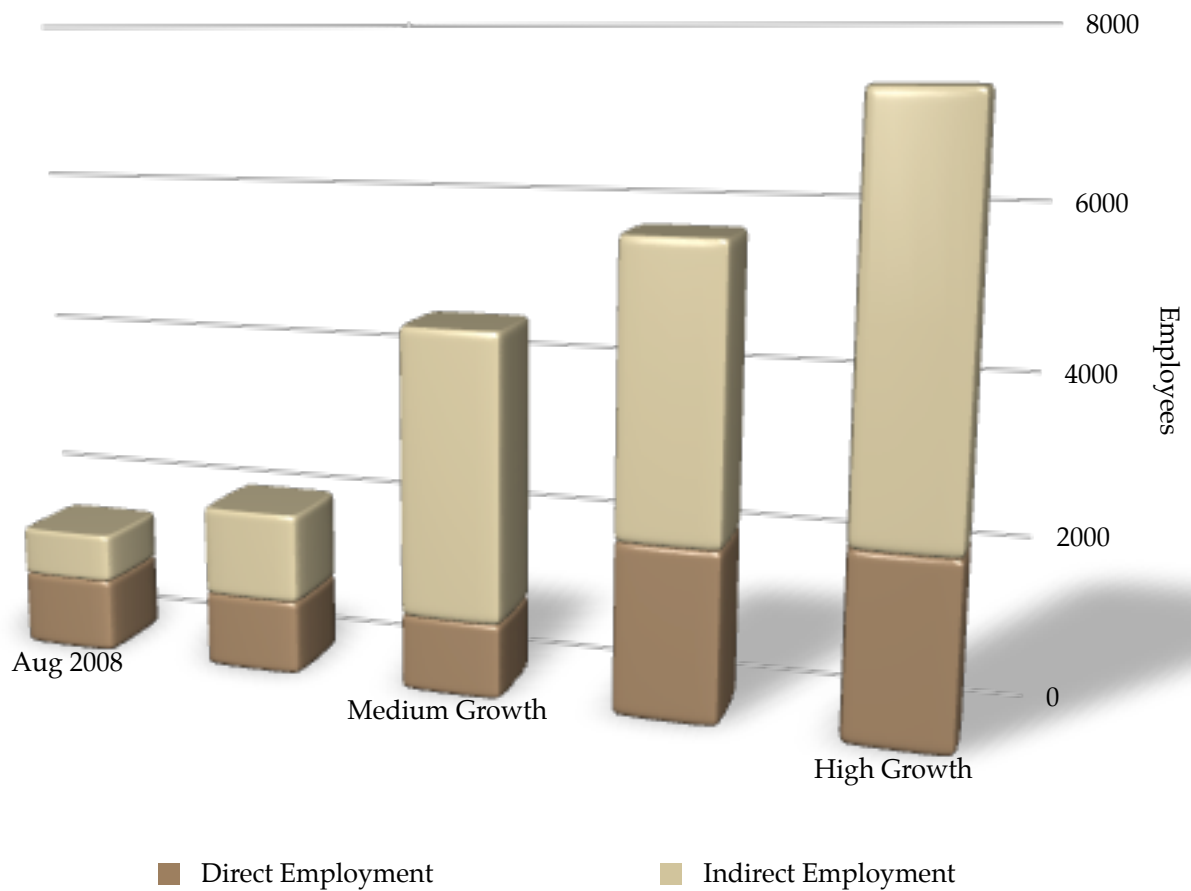
The Airport's website, *southendairport.com*, says that there are currently "more than 1300 people employed across the airport" and that it is "home to over 50 companies."

We have also learnt in the last few days, from a source close to the airport, that airport staff have been told there are to be 18 redundancies. These will mostly be of check-in staff, security and fire crew. This will not only mean the airport will no longer be able to take diversions from London City Airport, it will also reduce the airport's capacity to handle passengers. This suggests, as we suspected, that Stobart want to concentrate on freight rather than passengers. There is also strong evidence that prior to buying the airport, Stobart were kept in the dark about the exact nature of the financial situation of companies at the airport, which would account for the timing of the Flightline collapse.



Airport welcome sign, showing employment totals - Yellow Advertiser, 15/08/2008

## Future Employment



Employment forecasts for Southend Airport, based on the four growth scenarios in the Joint Area Action Plan

	DIRECT EMPLOYMENT	INDIRECT EMPLOYMENT	TOTAL
AUG 2008	930	611	<b>1541</b>
LOW GROWTH	930	1120	<b>2050</b>
MEDIUM GROWTH	930	3570	<b>4500</b>
MEDIUM GROWTH - AVIATION CLUSTER	2110	3570	<b>5680</b>
HIGH GROWTH	2280	5070	<b>7350</b>

The Southend Airport Master Plan, from July 2005, shows that the airport was using a “rule of thumb of 1000 jobs for every 1 million passengers”. However, in reality employment is much lower than this. For example, Bristol Airport, which handles 6 millions passenger movements a year, employs only 2,700 staff (Jeremy Birch, AirportWatch South West) - a ratio of 450 jobs per million passengers. Of course, not all

those jobs will be dependent on passenger numbers and indeed, RyanAir only employ 104 people for every million passengers per year that they handle (Jeremy Birch).

Southend want to model themselves on Southampton Airport - with 1.96 million passengers per year, they are just short of Southend's target of 2 million. However, Southampton only employs "more than 1200 [people] in 30 different companies of whom 200 are BAA Southampton employees" (BAA Southampton).

Luton politicians supportive of massive expansion of Luton Airport also make the claim that "for each extra million passengers per annum (mppa), a thousand (or more) jobs will be created." Figures based on actual survey data (rather than numbers plucked out of the air by the consultants promoting expansion) show that "the actual growth at [Luton] Airport ... has been around 100 jobs per million passengers per annum." (Luton And District Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise (LADACAN)) Note that the employment forecasts for expansion at Luton Airport were done by Halcrow, the same people commissioned to write the JAAP Issues & Options report for Rochford District Council.

### ***Impact on other airport uses***

What does not seem to have been dealt with satisfactorily by the Joint Area Action Plan is the impact that a substantial increase in passenger numbers would have on the other activities at the airport.

Assuming 100 passengers per plane, you would need a flight taking off or landing every 26 minutes, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to reach the airport's target of 2 million passengers a year. However, as Southend Council has said that they will not allow an increase in night flights, a flight would have to take off or land every 17 minutes between 7am and 11pm. This figure doesn't take into account the inevitable empty planes taking off and landing, so the true figure would be even higher. Of course, weekly and seasonal variations in demand would also mean that at peak times, planes would be even more frequent - perhaps one every five or ten minutes.

Clearly, with this level of demand for the runway from paying customers and the proposed expansion of the maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) business, other uses, such as flying clubs and the Southend Air Show, would be given a lower priority. Indeed, one of the areas intended for redevelopment in the High Growth scenario is "the area

currently occupied by the flying clubs to the east of the runways.” (p73, JAAP Issues & Options Report, June 2008)

The loss of the flying clubs and other businesses (such as the B52 bar) on the eastern side of the airport would mean that those currently employed in those businesses would lose their jobs as a result of the airport expansion.

Were the Air Show to be scrapped, the equivalent of 241 full-time jobs, more than £10 million per year of income and as many as 750,000 visitors to the town would be lost. (figures from Southend Borough Council)

### ***The effect of the “Credit Crunch”***

In order for the airport’s employment ambitions to be achieved, not only do they have to find up to £35 million to fund the expansion, they also have to find companies to move into the new buildings and provide thousands of jobs. In the current economic climate, with credit hard to come by and a lot of companies going into administration, it appears to be extremely unlikely that they will manage to do this.

As mentioned above, the companies already operating out of Southend Airport are struggling, with numerous redundancies and at least one company having gone into administration.

Creating jobs isn’t simply a matter of spending money on expanding the airport (even if the Airport can get the money to do it). There also has to be the demand from industry and the public for the goods and services the airport can provide and that demand is very thin on the ground at the moment.