

Monarch to leave East Midlands

Long-established UK charter airline Monarch Airlines is to cease flying from its East Midlands Airport base at the end of April 2015.

The decision to close the base is part of a strategic review under the leadership of Andrew Swaffield, who was recently appointed CEO of The Monarch Group. Monarch also operates bases at the UK airports of Luton and Birmingham.

Following a review of its network strategy, the airline has decided to focus on offering customers greater flight frequencies and more sociable departure times to short-haul European destinations from its main UK bases.

AIRLINE TRANSFORMATION

These changes have already been incorporated into Monarch's summer 2015 schedule, much of which is already on sale. The airline now expects to add more flights to its programme for next summer in the coming months.

The change is part of the next phase in Monarch's transformation to become a scheduled European low-cost carrier. Monarch aims to complete the transition in advance of the arrival of its new narrow-bodied aircraft fleet of thirty Boeing 737 MAX8s, announced last month, which are expected to start entering service in 2018.

Andrew Swaffield, Chief Executive of The Monarch Group, commented: "Monarch's success in the future depends upon us delivering the best possible operation and quality of service for our customers - and at sustainable levels of profitability. It is for these reasons that we are taking important decisions to reshape our base network and flying schedule next year."