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Stelios calls for sack vote

EASYJET'S founder has demanded a vote on whether to sack a director in a row over a £4.5bn aeroplane order.

Sir Stelios Haji-Loannou's asked for a meeting of the shareholders to decide whether to remove Andreas Bierwirth from the airline's board.

It follows through on a threat from the businessman, 53, who is Easyjet's biggest shareholder, to sack a director every seven weeks if the company did not take steps to cancel its order of 107 aircraft from Airbus.

The Luton-based carrier

grounded all its planes earlier this week as demand for flights collapsed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Easyjet's board said it is 'considering the contents' of Sir Stelios's request and will announce its decision in time.

Sir Stelios said earlier this week that the Airbus order, which will see £4.5bn paid to the European plane maker over the next three years, is Easyjet's 'main risk to survival'.

He said he is concerned the airline did not consider the crisis to be a "force majeure" – a

legal term for unforeseen circumstances that allow a business to get out of a contract.

Sir Stelios said: 'In short, I would rather spend shareholders' scarce money paying lawyers to defend Easyjet against a potential legal action by Airbus demanding payments for dubious penalties rather than buying overpriced planes that will sit on the ground or fly their passengers at a loss.'

■ Wizz Air has said the number of passengers it is carrying dropped by 36pc in March, as it cut capacity by 34pc.