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St Helena Airport

Navigation Aid Highlight: DVOR



THEN - Bradleys Camp
December 2012
© Remi Bruneton



NOW - Bradleys Camp and DVOR Platform
November 2014
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Work has recently taken place near Bradley's Camp to prepare for the installation of a key piece of navigation equipment, the **Doppler Very High Frequency Omnidirectional Radio Range Measuring Equipment**. With a name like this, it is no wonder that we refer to it simply as the **DVOR**.

The DVOR is a flight navigation aid commonly installed at airports. It enables aircraft to determine their position and stay on course by receiving radio signals transmitted by a network of fixed ground radio beacons. It uses frequencies in the very high frequency (VHF) band. The DVOR is particularly suited to the St Helena topography as it offers improved performance at demanding locations owing to its wide-aperture antenna system and the utilisation of the Doppler effect.

The DVOR will include a 30metre diameter counterpoise which will be installed on the recently completed raised platform near Bradleys Camp. Basil Read has subcontracted Thales to install the DVOR. Thales is the world leader in air navigation aids; their systems are used in more than 170 countries worldwide. For more information see www.thalesgroup.com.

The close proximity of the DVOR to the habitat of the endemic mole spider required special protection measures to be undertaken by the Airport Project. This included pre-construction monitoring of mole spider activity, fencing to restrict vehicular access to sensitive areas, as well as careful micro-siting and construction of the DVOR and supporting platform to ensure it does not intrude or encroach on the mole spider habitat.



An example of a DVOR
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A final note on the DVOR

The site for the DVOR has been carefully planned. The location at Bradleys has been chosen because it is the best solution for sending/receiving radio signals for airport purposes. We are making sure that environmentally sensitive locations (e.g. the mole spider habitat) nearby are not affected by the construction work. Alongside this, we have not just considered spiders but have also given thought to people, particularly the nearby residents. This type of navigation aid is commonly used throughout the world and is perfectly safe. We can therefore confirm that the DVOR poses no risk to persons or property.

Welcome to Emergency Planner



On 12 January 2015 a newly appointed Emergency Planner, Ian Johnson, stepped foot on St Helena (see <http://www.sainthelena.gov.sh/emergency-planning-for-st-helena/>). Ian has over 40 years' experience and his most recent role was as the Civil Contingencies Officer for Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service. Essentially this was an emergency planning role where Ian was responsible for the incident response plans for all major risks, including aviation related risks at Carlisle Airport and Walney Aerodrome.

Ian will now be working to maintain and exercise the Island's Major Incident Plan. His focus will be on gearing up for Airport opening and for the worst case scenario of an aviation incident. Ian is therefore already involved in preparing the Aerodrome Emergency Plan.

Prior to the flight trials planned for July 2015, there will be a series of exercises to test the Aerodrome Emergency Plan. More on this will follow in future Updates.

Air Traffic Control Tower



View from the Air Traffic Control Tower
January 2015

Representatives from Basil Read's subcontractor 'Thales' arrived on-Island on 3 January 2015. Thales will be installing the air traffic control (ATC) equipment, navigation aids (including the DVOR) and aeronautical ground lighting (AGL). The console in the visual control room located at the top of the control tower has now been installed. This will be used by the Air Traffic Controller.

In November 2014 it was announced (<http://www.sainthelena.gov.sh/enhancing-safe-flights-with-uk-met-office-weather-forecast-service/>) that the UK Met Office will be responsible for providing an on-Island weather forecasting service. The on-site Forecaster will operate from one floor below the Air Traffic Control Tower in the Combined Building at the Airport. The Forecaster's role will be to provide an internationally compliant forecast service to the Airport, including weather briefings for airlines and pilots operating to and from St Helena. The Forecaster and Air Traffic Controller will therefore work very closely together.