

Issued: 11 December 2014

NATS VOR Replacement Programme

This Information Notice contains information that is for guidance and/or awareness.

Recipients are asked to ensure that this Information Notice is copied to all members of their staff who may have an interest in the information (including any 'in-house' or contracted maintenance organisations and relevant outside contractors).

Applicability:	
Aerodromes:	All Aerodrome Operators
Air Traffic:	All ATS
Airspace:	All NATMAC Representatives
Airworthiness:	Not primarily affected
Flight Operations:	All AOC Holders and General Aviation Pilots
Licensed/Unlicensed Personnel:	Not primarily affected

1 Introduction

- 1.1 NATS currently operates 46 Doppler VHF Omni Range (DVOR) navigation beacons across the UK to provide an en-route navigation service as either stand alone beacons or, more commonly, co-located with Distance Measuring Equipment (DME) beacons. The age of these facilities means that either replacement or withdrawal has become necessary. In line with the ECAC-wide (European Civil Aviation Conference) Navigation Strategy and following the extension of the mandate for the carriage of Area Navigation (RNAV) equipment to all levels in controlled airspace, the CAA gave approval in principle for the reduction of the VOR infrastructure from 46 to 19 sites. The facilities at the sites identified for retention will gradually be replaced with new equipment and each replacement will result in a period of approximately three months when the facility is unavailable for use.

2 Scope

- 2.1 NATS have identified the first VORs to be replaced under this programme and the work started in April 2014. The first three sites are Otringham (OTR), Berry Head (BHD) and Lands End (LND). Each replacement will be subject to an Impact Assessment.
- 2.2 The replacement of OTR commenced on 22 April 2014 and the work was completed at the end of July. However, subsequent problems have delayed the return to service of the facility until 16 December 2014.

2.3 The replacement of BHD is scheduled to commence on 7 January 2015 and is planned to be complete by 7 April 2015. The following points have been identified in the relevant Impact Assessment and should be noted by all airspace users:

- There are a number of promulgated Air Traffic Services (ATS) routes detailed in the UK Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) that are based on the BHD VOR. All of these routes are within airspace where the carriage of RNAV 5 equipment is mandatory and therefore the unavailability of the VOR will only reduce levels of redundancy and will have minimal impact on these routes.
- **Exeter Airport** – There are several procedures at Exeter Airport that make operational use of the BHD VOR, and the Exeter MATS Part 2 contains procedural separations based on BHD. However, as the airport is equipped with radar +, these procedural separations are only used in times of radar failure. The Senior Air Traffic Control Officer (SATCO) at Exeter Airport has confirmed that there will be no major impact to the airport operation during the replacement of the BHD VOR.
- **Bristol Airport** – The initial part of the Bristol Airport Arrival from BHD to EXMOR is contained within the ATS route N862 which is mandatory RNAV 5 airspace and is controlled by NERL or delegated to Cardiff. Although the Standard Arrival (STAR) is defined conventionally on the chart using BHD VOR and DME, the unavailability of the VOR will not impact the ability of aircraft to execute the STAR. The Bristol EXMOR Standard Instrument Departure (SID) has EXMOR defined by a conventional fix from Brecon (BCN) VOR/DME.
- **Cardiff Airport** – The initial part of the Cardiff CDF 3D Arrival from BHD to EXMOR is contained within the ATS route N862 as above and similarly the unavailability of the VOR will not impact the ability of aircraft to execute the STAR.

The Cardiff EXMOR SID is defined by the BHD VOR/DME. (Noting that in the Cardiff STAR and Bristol's SID, EXMOR is defined by a VOR/DME fix from BCN).

During the period when BHD is unavailable it will be necessary to temporarily redefine the Cardiff EXMOR SID from the BCN VOR/DME. This mitigation will be published in an AIP Supplement to be released on 18 December 2014 and follow up Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) action.

- **Guernsey Airport** – BHD provides a VOR/DME navigation fix for the SKERY and BINGO significant points on SID charts. The SATCO at Guernsey Airport has confirmed that there is no foreseen operational impact for Guernsey or Alderney as a result of the unavailability of the BHD VOR.
- **Jersey Airport** – See the above paragraph for Guernsey.
- The unavailability of the BHD VOR will have minimal impact on Air Transport and General Aviation.

2.4 Details of the replacement period for Lands End (LND), including relevant information from its Impact Assessment, will be promulgated nearer to the commencement of the work. The start date for this work has yet to be finalised but should be soon after the completion of the BHD replacement.