

Issued: 7 June 2016

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 has historically operated 46 Doppler VHF Omni Range (DVOR) navigation beacons across the UK to provide an en-route navigation service as either stand alone beacons or 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 Navigation Strategy and following the extension of the mandate for the carriage of RNAV equipment to all levels in controlled airspace, the CAA has approved in principle a reduction in the VOR infrastructure from 46 to 19 sites. Equipment at the retained sites will gradually be replaced and each replacement will result in the facility being unavailable for use for approximately three months with any co-located DME also being unavailable during this period.

2 Scope

- 2.1 The replacement of Otringham (OTR), Berry Head (BHD), Lands End (LND Talla (TLA), Seaford (SFD) and Compton (CPT) has been completed. Replacement of Strumble (STU) commenced on 10 May 2016 and the work will take approximately three months. The next facility to be replaced is St Abbs (SAB) with work due to start on 16 June 2016 and again lasting approximately three months. Each replacement is subject to an impact assessment.

2.2 The unavailability of St Abbs (SAB) will have the following impacts:

- There are a number of promulgated ATS routes detailed in the UK AIP that are based on the SAB 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.
- Prestwick Area Centre – The unavailability of the SAB VOR during the replacement will not adversely impact operations.
- MoD – There will be minimal impact on MoD operations during the SAB replacement period.
- Edinburgh Airport – There will be a loss of track guidance on the Runway 06 GRICE SID (AD 2-EGPH-6-3) which is based on the SAB R 287. This will have little impact on operations but some mitigations may be put in place. A number of Visual Reference Points (VRPs) that reference radio navigation fixes from SAB VOR will not be available during the replacement period.
- Newcastle Airport – The SAB outage will have an effect on some Newcastle SIDs but this is mitigated by them issuing a NOTAM instructing crews unable to fly them without reference to SAB VOR to inform ATC prior to requesting departure clearance. ATC will then issue an alternative IFR clearance.
- Air Transport Operators – The unavailability of the SAB VOR and DME during the replacement period will not require any additional mitigations to be implemented and will not require any additional aircraft capability as:
 - o RNAV 5 is mandated within the UK at all en-route levels.
 - o There are currently no promulgated RNAV 1 procedures in the area impacted by the VOR replacement.
 - o The lower portions of SIDs that have been truncated remain unchanged and are defined by the remaining conventional navigation aids.

2.3 General Aviation – Little response was received from those GA airfields and organisations consulted on the SAB outage.

2.4 The next facility due to be replaced is Aberdeen (ADN) between July and October 2016. Details of the relevant information from its Impact Assessment will be promulgated in due course.

3 Queries

3.1 Any general queries or further guidance required as a result of this communication should be addressed to:

Airspace Regulation
Safety and Airspace Regulation Group
CAA House
45-59 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6TE

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7453 6553

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4. Cancellation

4.1 This Information Notice will remain in force until further notice.