

**ST HELENA ACCESS PROJECT  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT  
SUPPORT CONSULTANCY**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

*The Consultant will supply the following services to the Government of St Helena*

**1 Brief Description**

1.1 This assignment requires the consultant to provide specialist environmental services to the Government of St Helena in connection with the design, construction and operation of an aerodrome and associated facilities at Prosperous Bay Plain, St Helena, to be financed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

1.2 The work will include the conduct of an environmental impact assessment (EIA), the preparation of an environmental management plan (EMP), and the development and implementation of a public consultation and disclosure plan (PCDP). The consultant will also provide technical assistance to the relevant authorities in St Helena in: identifying and commissioning any further environmental studies and mitigation actions that may be indicated; in monitoring compliance with the EMP; and in implementing the PCDP. The Consultant will also provide support for environmental institutional capacity building and training in environmental assessment, management and regulation.

**2 Background**

2.1 The island of St Helena, an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom, is of volcanic origin and covering some 47 sq miles. It is located in the South Atlantic Ocean approximately 4,000 miles from the UK, 700 miles southeast of Ascension Island, 1100 miles west of the coast of Angola, and 1,700 miles from Cape Town, South Africa. The Island's population is around 4,000 persons, about a fifth of whom live in the capital, Jamestown. The economy is small and is mainly based on offshore employment, agriculture, fishing and more recently a small but growing volume of tourism. Most commodities are imported and St Helena relies heavily on UK aid to support the standard of living of the population.

2.2 The shared goals of the St Helena and UK Governments are sustainable improvements in social and economic well being evidenced by a lower requirement for budgetary aid. The DFID programme in St Helena is wide-ranging, providing budgetary aid (about £6 million annually to meet the

recurrent budget deficit), approximately £2 million per annum for shipping costs, development assistance for education, health, governance and infrastructure and the provision of key technical and management staff for posts in the St Helena Government (SHG). DFID's annual spending over the last decade has averaged £8-10 million, and in recent years has risen to £13-14 million.

2.3 St Helena has no airfield and the only regular means of access is via the Royal Mail Ship 'St Helena' (RMS), which calls at the island around 25 times per year. All goods and equipment are transported by sea and the maximum size and weight of any single component is limited by the ship's cargo space and capacity of its cranes. Fuel is delivered separately by tanker. The roads are narrow and tortuous, meandering along steep inclines. This, combined with a lack of heavy transport, limits the size and weight of equipment that can be transported on the island.

2.4 Following an extensive feasibility study, carried out by Atkins Management Consultants in 2004, DFID has agreed to facilitate air access to St Helena, through the construction of an aerodrome at Prosperous Bay Plain with a 2,250m runway capable of supporting the safe operation of Airbus A320, Boeing 737-800 or other similar aircraft, and the establishment of regular scheduled services. Once air services are established, the UK Government's subsidy for the operation of the RMS will cease, and all future sea access will be arranged on a commercial basis. The RMS is due to be retired from service in or around 2010.

2.5 The site selected for the construction of an airport at St Helena is located within a kilometre of the eastern coast of the island, on Prosperous Bay Plain, a relatively level area (approx 2.25km<sup>2</sup>) of dry, unpopulated land with little vegetation, at an elevation of around 300m above sea level. It is bounded to the north, east and south by rugged topography and high sea cliffs. The Plain (outside the boundaries of the aerodrome site) has been proposed as a protected area within the scope of the Land Development Control Plan, largely because of its unusual geological and landscape features and the unique assemblage of invertebrate fauna (including a number of endemic species) associated with these.

2.6 The central basin of Prosperous Bay Plain – an area of about 60ha – has been identified as a 'hotspot' of invertebrate endemism, deserving of an enhanced level of protection and international recognition. This was confirmed during ecological studies carried out in 2003-04 by UK specialists at the request of the SHG. The Plain is also an important habitat (among others on the island) for the endemic Wirebird and a number of endemic and indigenous plant species.

2.7 It is expected that the construction of the aerodrome, with associated earthworks, will involve the disturbance of approximately 100ha of the land surface of Prosperous Bay Plain and adjacent areas, including approximately 15% of the area of the central basin. In determining the optimum runway alignment and the location of the terminal and other facilities, the feasibility

study has taken full account of the environmental factors noted above. It has sought as far as possible to balance the technical and regulatory criteria for the establishment of air access at St Helena, with the need to protect and, if possible, enhance the environment at the chosen site and within the area of influence of the airport and access routes. The project provides an opportunity to bring about a long-term beneficial effect by arresting the gradual and uncontrolled decline of the adjacent habitat whose global biodiversity significance has only recently been fully appreciated.

2.8 The aerodrome and associated facilities will be established – and operated and maintained for a period of ten years after completion of construction – under a Design/Build/Operate (DBO) contract.

2.9 These terms-of-reference should be read in conjunction with the attached project memorandum, which provides the basis for DFID support for the project.

### **3 Purpose**

3.1 The purpose of this consultancy is to ensure that:

- a) the implementation of the access project meets the highest possible standards of environmental management;
- b) any potential negative impacts are identified and minimised;
- c) advantage is taken of any opportunities for creating beneficial environmental effects where these can be identified and further developed; and
- d) stakeholders, including civil society, have opportunities to contribute to the process of environmental assessment and management and to be kept informed of its progress;
- e) every opportunity is taken to develop or upgrade local skills and institutional capacity in environmental assessment, management and regulation.

### **4 Scope of the work**

4.1 The Consultant will:

- a) develop a work programme, to include the scope of work identified below, that is coherent with achievement of the wider access project implementation schedule and that will deliver outputs in a timely and coordinated way;
- b) undertake a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed project, drawing on earlier work as appropriate, which will identify and assess the potential environmental impacts, and design appropriate mitigation, management and monitoring measures;
- c) develop an Environmental Management Plan for the project, and ensure that that this plan and all relevant findings of the EIA process –

as they become available – are used to inform detailed design and the preparation of the Contractor's Environmental Management Plan (CEMP);

- d) assist the SHG with the development and implementation of a Public Consultation and Disclosure Plan (PCDP) for the environmental assessment and management process and support its further development;
- e) produce an Environmental Assessment Report to include a Public Consultation and Disclosure Plan (PCDP) and an Environmental Management Plan (EMP);
- f) so far as may be appropriate to the achievement of the objectives of this environmental consultancy, work closely with the Consultant commissioned to undertake the Social Impact Analysis (SIA) in order to ensure synergy between these complementary studies;
- g) building on earlier work and in consultation with the relevant authorities in St Helena, further develop – to the extent possible – an assessment of the range of environmental issues and impacts from potential economic development (especially tourism) likely to arise from improved access, and develop prioritised recommendations for any further investigations that may be required;
- h) undertake a functional analysis of current institutional arrangements in St Helena for environmental investigation, planning, management and regulation, and where capacity constraints are identified, plan and implement a programme of training and support to strengthen such capacity in ways that will be of future benefit to the sustainable development of the island, in particular in the area of environmental assessment and regulation;
- i) assist the SHG with the identification and commissioning of any additional environmental baseline studies and mitigation activities that may be identified as essential to the achievement of the project's environmental management objectives;
- j) assist the SHG with monitoring compliance with the Contractor's Environmental Management Plan (including implementation of mitigation and restoration activities);
- k) provide support to the SHG in the identification and drafting of any legislation, regulations and guidelines that may be required to strengthen the environmental management of this project in particular, and the application of good environmental assessment and management practice in St Helena more generally.

## 5 Main Tasks and Outputs

To be confirmed.

## **6 Competency and Expertise Requirements**

6.1 The Consultant must be able to draw on the services of an appropriately qualified and experienced team covering the range of skills required by these terms-of-reference. These may include environmental impact assessment, environmental management and compliance monitoring, environmental legislation, risk management, public consultation processes, landscape management and restoration, biodiversity conservation, institutional capacity building and project management.

6.2 The Consultant should seek, as necessary, to make use of existing local and/or international specialist expertise on St Helena's environmental resources.

6.3 The Consultant will have practical experience in and/or understanding of the special circumstances of the UK Overseas Territories (or similar small islands) and the constraints of working in them.

6.4 The Consultant will have a proven track record in the management and technical implementation of environmental assessment and regulation of major infrastructure projects on small islands or in comparable environmentally sensitive and challenging physical locations.

## **7 Conduct of the Work**

To be confirmed.

## **8 Reporting Requirements**

To be confirmed.

## **9. Additional information**

To be confirmed.

DFID/SHG  
13 May 2005