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“Virtual’ Radar available in Europe”

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There is no question that ATC radar is expensive. Indeed, many smaller airports can't afford to pay a radar-qualified controller, let alone buy the hardware, But help may be at hand. With many years' experience in the avionics field, particularly in the development of DME equipment, London-based electronics company Kinetic Avionic Products has devised a “virtual radar” that is small, lightweight and inexpensive.

Contained in a box approximately the size and weight of a videocassette, it can be coupled to a computer through a USB 1.1 or 2.0, and it displays all mode-S/ADS-B transponder transmission up to a range of 250 miles. It can also be connected through an Ethernet/802.11b with USB.

The Window-based operating system requires USB Support, a CD-ROM drive, Super VGA or higher-resolution monitor.

Because the virtual radar is portable, the user must enter the latitude and longitude of the receiver, but when the set-up is complete the display will show all waypoints and airports within the operational area. The map display has a default setting with true north at the top, but this can be rotated as required, and all aircraft trails are colour-coded to indicate climb, descent or level flight.

The system has the usual array of functions, including a zoom that allows the range and display scale to be varied as required. The screen is split, with the map display occupying the left three-quarters of the screen and the right side displaying a table of aircraft information based on the mode-s transmissions. The transmissions operator can adjust the width of each display for a full representation of all the columns to show the status of all, or individual, air craft in terms of continuity of transmission; ADS-B information; climb descent or level flight; squawk code; nationality and all flight parameters.

The company is promoting the radar for small airfields and flight schools, but it could also be valuable for FBOs and corporate operators. The \$620 system is on sale in Europe, and the company is preparing a distribution network in the U.S. Further information is now available at www.kinetic-avionics.co.uk. –Malcolm Payne