UK AIRPORT INSPIRED BY "STAR WARS" TO FIGHT OFF BIRD STRIKE

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A UK airport has come up with a futuristic way to fight bird strike - and its all thanks to Star Wars.

Scotland's Dundee Airport is using a space-age "lightsaber" to scare off birds that can often threaten the safety of the aircrafts departing and landing at the airport.

The 8000 pounds (NZ$18367) hand-held gadget fires off a bright green light - that can emit for around 1.6 kilometres.

The airport has opted to use the Aerolaser to scare away the pesky birds, rather than use a loud system that can be a hazard for pilots.

Andrew Lindsay, fire manager at Dundee Airport told the Daily Mail:

"Lasers have been found to be a very effective way of dispersing birds as they see the beam as a perceived threat and will fly away from it in the opposite direction."

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"Conventional methods of scaring birds, such as pyrotechnic bangers, are also effective but cause noise problems."

"We are mindful that this can cause inconvenience for the local community, especially in the early morning and at night. This system is entirely silent."

"Because lasers can present a risk to aircraft the process is subject to stringent risk assessments and our staff are fully trained in their use."

"The laser we are trialling can project a beam for about 2km (1.25 miles) in distance so it has a very long range and is so far proving very effective at deterring birds in a safe and humane manner."

"It does have something of the look of Star Wars about it, but it obviously has a serious purpose - to keep the airfield clear of birds and thus ensure the safety of aircraft."

The Aerolaser was developed by a Dutch company, and was first used by Southampton Airport.

Jon Cook, of the Angus and Dundee Bird Club, told the Daily Mail, the lasers are a good method for scaring birds at the Riverside airport.

Bird strike is a serious issue, and was the contributing factor to the US Airways plane that crash-landed on the Hudson River in 2009.

The plane crashed after hitting a flock of birds mid-air.

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