

5 STAR 3B7C
DXers Association
St Brandon DXpedition

**September
2007**



www.fsdxa.com/3b7c or www.3b7c.com



Principal Sponsor of 3B7C St Brandon Dxpediton



The Five Star DXers Association (FSDXA) announces its intention to mount a large multi-operator, multi-station, DXpedition to St. Brandon, 3B7, in September 2007.

We have been allocated the callsign **3B7C**. The "C" in the callsign stands for "CDXC", the club from which the Five Star DXers Association was formed, and is also a reminder of the group's previous successful operations as 9M0C (Spratly Islands, 1998), D68C (Comoro Islands, 2001) and 3B9C (Rodrigues, 2004).

As with previous FSDXA expeditions, this will be a major effort, with a target of more than 100,000 QSOs. There will be up to twelve stations on the air, using amplifiers and monoband beams, 24 hours a day, for around 18 days, including three weekends, around the autumn equinox when DX propagation on all bands is typically at its best.

The Objective

To activate Saint Brandon 3B7 with a view to giving as many DXers as possible a first contact with this rare DXCC entity and, as a secondary objective, to give as many band-slots as possible. Because the sunspot cycle will be just past the minimum our emphasis will be on the LF bands. We expect to exceed 100,000 QSOs. We will be based on Ile du Sud, approximately 250 miles north-east of Mauritius. The DXpedition will take place in September 2007. We have already received agreement in principle from the radio licensing authorities in Mauritius and we are now finalising our permits.

Saint Brandon

Agalega 3B6 and Saint Brandon 3B7 count as a single entity for DXCC. 3B6/7 ranks high in most wanted listings, especially on LF and in the USA. 3B6/7 is much rarer than both the Comoros (D6) and Rodrigues (3B9) so demand should be huge. The last two expeditions to 3B6/7 were 3B7RF (53,533 QSOs) in 1998 and 3B6RF (64,239 QSOs) in 2001. Despite these DXpeditions 3B6/7 is already well up on the most wanted lists. In the 2006 DX Magazine survey, 3B7 ranked 45th worldwide and 18th on the US West Coast. Its "Rest of World" (S.America, Africa, Australia/New Zealand, etc.) ranking is 26th. It ranked 58th worldwide in the 2005 Most Wanted RTTY Countries survey, needed by 41.5% of respondents.

Ile du Sud, at the southerly tip of the Saint Brandon archipelago, is a long narrow island, 1050m by 220m wide on average. There are two bungalows, recently built, of a good size but with limited accommodation. Some of the team will sleep in tents. We will be taking marquees for some of the stations, equipment storage etc. This will be a very different FSDXA DXpedition. There is no hotel and we will be in accommodation of somewhat less than five stars, in fact probably zero star! The island is remote and is uninhabited apart from a few fishermen. But the radio take-off is outstanding.

St. Brandon (also known as the Cargados Carajos Shoals) is a group of about 16 small islands and islets on an extended reef in the Indian Ocean northeast of Mauritius. The islands have a total land area of 1.3km. The reef measures more than 50km from north to south, and is 5km wide, cut by three passes. The reef area is 190km. The islands have a small population, made up of natives as well as others, and are rich in flora and fauna. The islands are classified as a dependency of Mauritius, which is some 250 miles south-west, and are administered from Port Louis. The islands are part of the Mascarene Islands.



In the past, Cargados Carajos was a large, volcanic island (part of the Mascarenes, caused by the Réunion hotspot). Over time however, the island eroded until it became submerged and a coral atoll was left behind.

We are aware of the island's ecological significance, and will fully respect the environment on the island. Our team has direct experience of such sensitive environments. Our operation from the Spratly Islands was based on Malaysian island of Layang Layang. There is much protected flora and fauna on that island and we took all possible steps to ensure that this environment was not disturbed. We will take comprehensive steps on Ile du Sud to protect the environment.

Our Strategy

Our last two DXpeditions to the Comoros (2001) and Rodrigues (2004) have proved to us that there are huge numbers of DXers who would like to contact rare DXCC entities (probably in excess of 75,000) but who are unable to do so because they lack the necessary equipment, particularly large antennas. Many are unable to hear the rare DXCC stations because of their weak signals and interference. Many DXpeditions are active for a short period and do not even cover two weekends.

Our strategy is to run maximum power on as many bands as possible. We will have big monoband antennas on all bands 30m to 6m and verticals on the remaining bands. This way we will be heard everywhere in the world at some time of the day or night. We will also be active for around 18 days covering three weekends. By adopting this strategy we should be able to give at least one contact to anyone who wants one anywhere in the world.

The Equipment

We are planning to have 12 stations. There will be a station on every band from 160m to 6m with second stations on 80m and 20m so that we can operate on CW and SSB at the same time. Our propagation predictions show that we should have good propagation on all bands 15m and below but that there will be significant openings to Japan and perhaps elsewhere on 12m and 10m. 6m is unpredictable but could produce surprises. We expect about 160 man-hours per day of propagation.

The antennas planned are as follows:

160m:	85 foot Titanex
80m:	Two pairs of phased verticals
40m:	Four-square
30m:	2 element Yagi
20m:	Two 3 element Yagis
17m:	4 element Yagi
15m:	4 element Yagi
12m:	4 element Yagi
10m:	6 element Yagi
6m:	6 or 7 element Yagi

We will be using the StarLog computer system. Logs will be uploaded by satellite telephone or Pactor.

We will need to take generators and fuel as there is only limited generating capacity on the island.



Yaesu Quadra linear amplifier



Yaesu FT-2000 transceiver

Sponsors

We are delighted that Yaesu have already agreed to be Principal Sponsors of 3B7C, permitting the use of the new FT-2000 transceivers along with the well-proven Quadra linear amplifiers.

Leading UK amateur radio retailers Martin Lynch and Sons and Nevada Communications have also committed to supporting the expedition, for which we are extremely grateful. In addition, the team has already been granted an ARRL Colvin Award, while recent sponsors include the Northern California DX Foundation and CDXC (Chiltern DX Club, the UK DX Foundation)

However, with a project of this magnitude, there is much else that is required. This is where you come in. With the huge amount of equipment, antennas and other ancillary gear necessary for such a large-scale operation, the most economical method of shipping from Europe to St. Brandon is to fill a 20ft shipping container, which will go as far as Mauritius. All equipment will then be transported by chartered vessel to St. Brandon, to be unloaded on barges. Obviously this is very expensive and the Five Star DXers Association is seeking sponsorship from DX clubs, foundations, societies, associations and individuals.

Because St. Brandon is so remote, the cost of airfares from Europe, North America or Japan is considerable. All members of the DXpedition are paying their own travel expenses from their homes to Mauritius, for their accommodation and food on the island as well as a contribution to the substantial logistics costs.

The sponsorship will be used to fund the balance of the costs of equipment, antennas, coaxial cable, computers and ancillary equipment, together with the cost of shipping and insuring it from Europe to St. Brandon and back, plus customs and other legal paperwork.





All donations will be very gratefully received. No amount is too small - or too large! We recognise that many DXers will be more than happy to include a donation with their QSL cards, but the nature of the project means that many costs will be incurred before departure, so we do need funds early on. Only with your help will this be possible. If DXing gives you a thrill, please do support us.

Donations in sterling may be sent to the Five Star DXers Association Treasurer, John Linford, G3WGV, Pennine View, Sleagill, Cumbria CA10 3HD, England (e-mail: john@g3wgv.com): please make cheques payable to the "Five Star Expedition Fund".

Donations in other currencies may be made by various means, the relevant account details being as follows:

- IBAN Number: IBAN GB14 BARC 2068 7950 8302 16
- SWIFTBIC Number: BARCGB22
- Bank Name: Barclays Bank
- Bank Address: PO Box 44, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1YA
- Sort code: 20-68-79
- Account Name: The Five Star Expedition Fund
- Account Number: 50830216

Donations may also be made by PayPal via the Web page or to FSDXA@g3wgv.com (you will need to have a PayPal account of your own to be able to use this facility).

Donations in US dollars may be sent to: Wes Lambolely W3WL, 690 Hunterhill Way, Roswell, GA 30075, USA (e-mail: BLambolely@aol.com). Please make checks payable to "Wesley Lambolely". Donations in Japanese yen may be sent to Taizo Arakawa JA3AER, 6-2-12 Mikanodai, Kawachinagano, Osaka 586-0044, Japan e-mail: ja3aer@ares.eonet.ne.jp).

All donations will be acknowledged.

The logos of all DX clubs etc which have helped to sponsor the expedition will be shown on the QSL card, as will the names and callsigns of those who make an individual contribution in advance of the DXpedition (both subject to a minimum amount).

We are planning for there to be our usual large-scale publicity campaign after the DXpedition, with articles in most major general amateur radio publications and DX publications throughout the world and translated into many languages. All sponsors, whether corporate, amateur, DX club, or individual will be listed in all these articles.

After the D68C DXpedition over 60 articles consisting of over 200 pages of text and graphics were published on the DXpedition, and over 75 presentations were given throughout the world including the Dayton, Ohio Hamvention, the International DX Convention at Visalia, California, the Friedrichshafen, Germany HamRadio Convention, the RSGB HF Convention and the Japanese HamFair in Yokohama. Over 600 DXers from all over the world attended our breakfast presentation at Visalia. In each presentation we ran through the names of our sponsors. A similar situation prevailed after 3B9C.

The Team

We estimate that we need a team of 20 to do a really effective job. For a DXpedition to a remote island to be successful we needed to build a team of operators who are both excellent team players and outstanding operators. We believe we have achieved this. So far 18 have committed to join the team. They are:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Steve 9M6DXX | Falk DK7YY |
| Jens DL7AKC | Paul EI5DI |
| Tony G0OPB | Don G3BJ (Joint Leader) |
| Ivan G3IZD | Chris G3NHL |
| Neville G3NUG (Joint Leader) | Chris G3SVL |
| Don G3XTT | Justin G4TSH |
| Eric K3NA | Bob MD0CCE |
| Arnie N6HC | Pete SM5GMZ |
| Wes W3WL | Paul WF5T |

FSDXA

FSDXA was formed out of the team members who organised the 9M0C expedition in 1998. The seven founder members also organised the record-breaking D68C Comoros DXpedition in 2001 (over 168,000 contacts, a staggering 70% increase over the previous DXpedition record). This team subsequently organised the 3B9C DXpedition in 2004. The organising team for 3B7C is drawn from the same team, bringing in additional expertise as required. The nature of the 3B7C operation, for example, necessitates medical expertise on hand at all times as evacuation to Mauritius by sea would take the best part of a day. The lack of mains power will require the use of generators and the need for a specialist who can ensure that they remain in good working order.

We look forward to giving as many of you as possible a new DXCC country as well as many new band-slots.

Useful Web sites:

3B7C: www.3b7c.com

CDXC: www.cdxc.org.uk

FSDXA, February 2007

