ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR SCOTFLIGHT SCENERY A&FD FILES scflAFD1.zip
by John Hinson

These notes will explain how to fix the problem of the floating AI aircraft at Dundee (and, to a lesser extent, other Scotflight airports) in FS2004.

In actual fact, this solution can be applied at any airport in FS2004 where this problem is experienced. This document may be found included with other files I have produced - there is little point in re-editing it for each situation.

I have to thank Stuart Gilmour for drawing my attention to this method, which appears to have been originally conceived through discussion between Gary Summons (of UK2000 Scenery) and Lee Swordy (the writer of the AFCAD software). I'm not looking for a pat on the back - the credit goes to these people. This document simply sets out the background to the problem and how to fix it.

THE PROBLEM

The problem of hovering or sunken AI traffic specifically occurs where add-on airport scenery is configured at a different height above sea level to the airport. Whilst it is possible to alter taxiway, runway and parking positions for the add-on scenery, the AI aircraft still fly at the height of the default scenery.

Airport information is dealt with differently in FS2004 to earlier versions. Details for the default FS airports is contained in files in folders such as:
...\FS9\scenery\Afri\scenery
...\FS9\scenery\Asia\scenery
etc etc.

Modified information is contained in files usually named like AF2_EGLL.bgl although they will also work under other names. These files are placed at a "higher" level in the Scenery library and over-ride the default settings. It is possible to have several .bgl files installed, but only the "top" one will be effective.

Unfortunately, this idea doesn't work perfectly as the airport elevation is not over-ridden and therefore the figure quoted in the "lowest" file is effective, regardless. Hence this problem.

THE SOLUTION

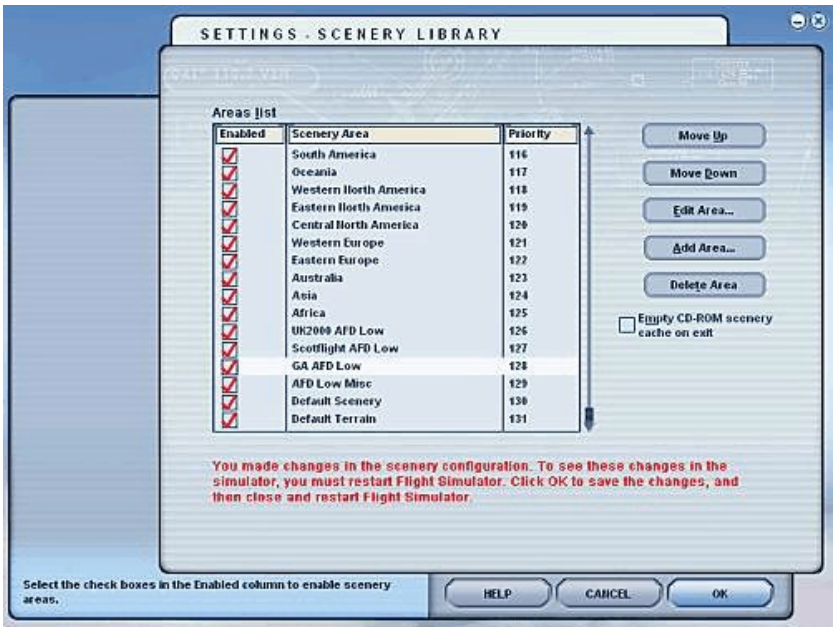
It is quite simple really. You need to place an AFD file with the correct elevation at a "lower" level than the default MS files. In most cases, a duplicate copy of the "highest" file will do, but the rest of the content (taxiways etc) is not critical as this will be over-ridden by the information in the "highest" file.

Before you jump in and try this, take a moment or so to consider what is meant by "high" and "low".

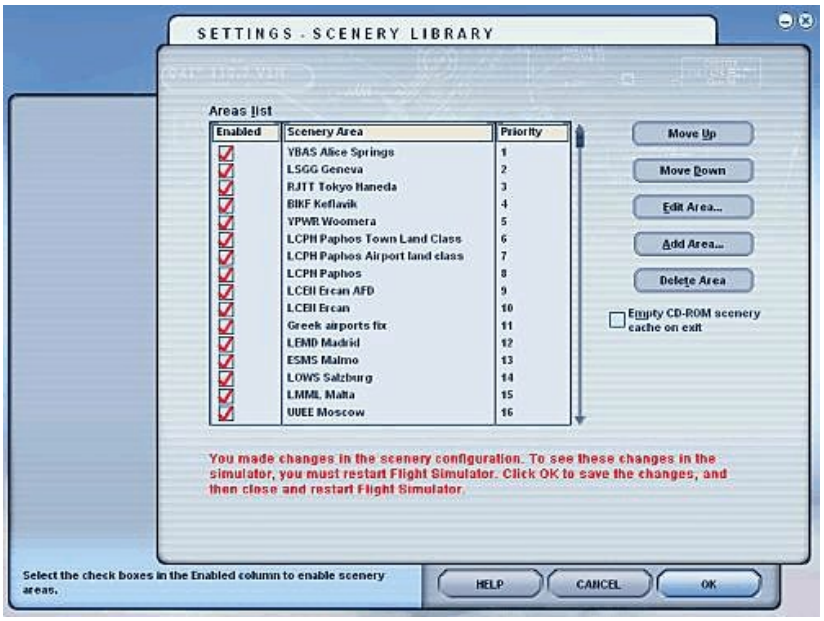
1. In the Scenery Library

   In the Scenery Library, the terms relate to their position on the scenery listing, hence

the Default Terrain will be your lowest. For example:



Example showing “low” entries in Scenery Library



Example showing “high” entries in the Scenery Library

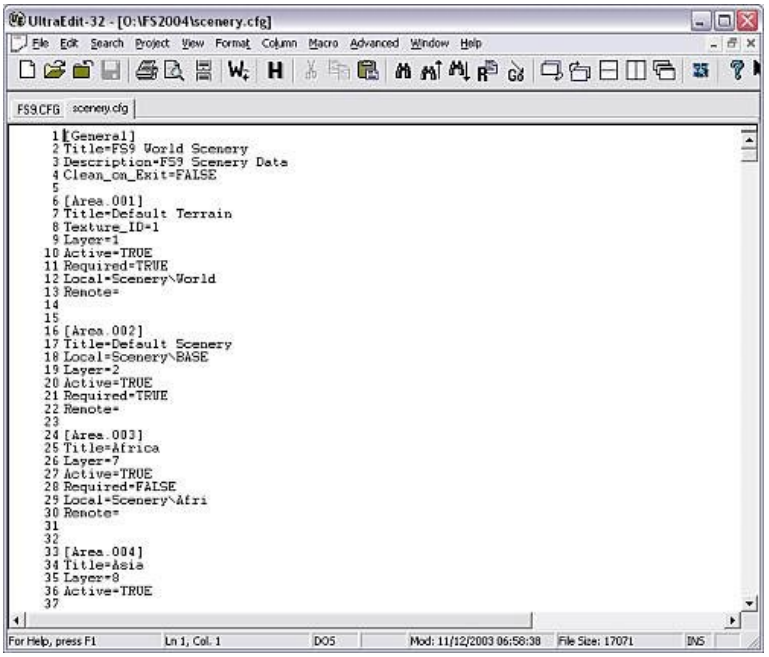
2. In the scenery.cfg file

Just to confuse you, the scenery.cfg file (which contains the data for the Scenery library) lists and numbers files the opposite way round. Normally, you won’t need to edit this file, but it resides in the main FS9 folder.

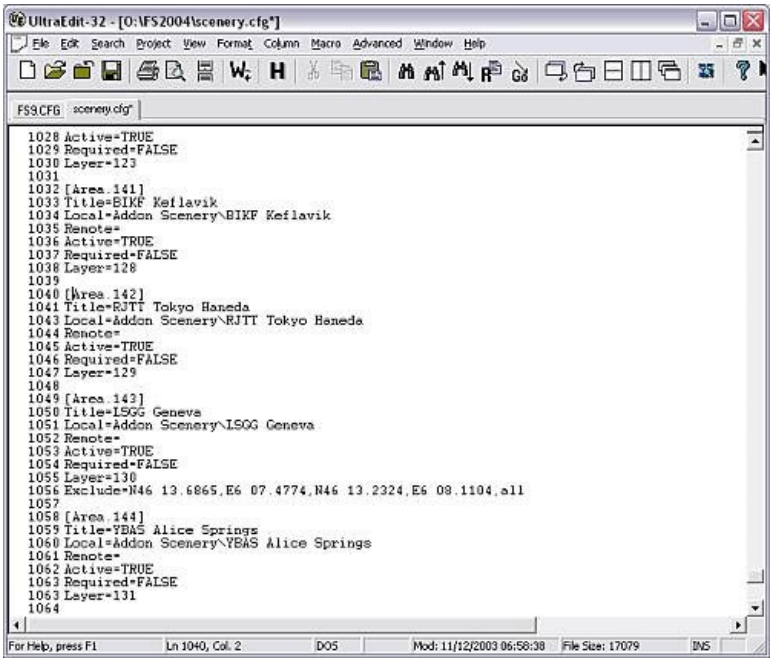
Here, the “lowest” scenery appears at the top, and is numbered 1. The highest scenery

is at the bottom of the list, with the highest number!

Here are some examples:



"Low" entries at the top of the scenery.cfg file.



"High" entries at the bottom of the scenery.cfg file.

The best way to install the files at a low level is to put them just above the Default Terrain and Default Scenery entries, so that they load before the country-by-country scenery. In the topmost illustration, you can just make out that I have four separate ones, for different sets of scenery, done for convenience but not compulsory.

Create one or more folders, as required, in the Add-On Scenery section (or elsewhere, if you prefer. Name it something like "AFD Low". Now create a sub-folder of that directory named (this is very important) "scenery". Copy the AFD files for the offending location (e.g AFD_EGPN.bgl) into the new scenery folder.

Now go to the Scenery Library in FS2004 and click Add Area. Navigate to your new folder by double-clicking Add-On Scenery. Now single-click the your new AFD Low folder then click on Add Area. The folder appears in the "highest" position on the list.

Now click on Move Down, and again, and again, and again . . . until you have repositioned it to be just above the bottom two entries for Default Terrain and Default scenery.

Click OK. You will need to close and restart Flight Simulator for these new settings to become effective. Now go and have a look at Dundee and it should no longer look like this:



but like this:



John Hinson, Harrow UK, December 2003. aviator@sftt.co.uk