

Tutorial - Getting a Searchlight to Work

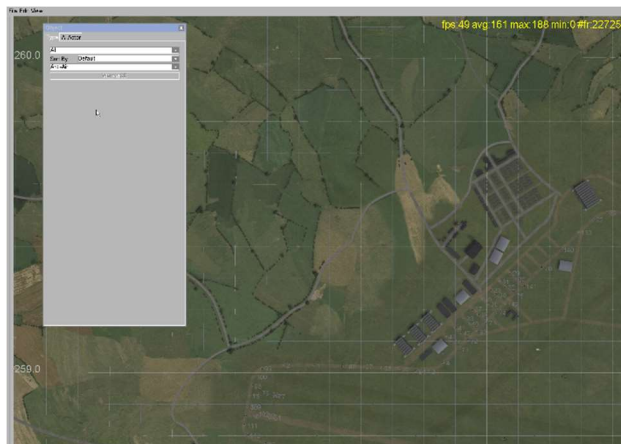
Ingredients:

- 1 AI Actor
- 1 Generator
- 1 Searchlight
- 1 Mission Parameter – Darkness
- 1 Enemy Aircraft (more are fine)

Step #1

Load a new map. In this example it will be an English Channel – 1940 Summer map.

Navigate to Manston airfield at coordinates 248200, 259000 or thereabouts. I recommend you start this tutorial during normal daytime as it makes the job of adding stuff much easier than doing it in the dark. Later we will make it dark.

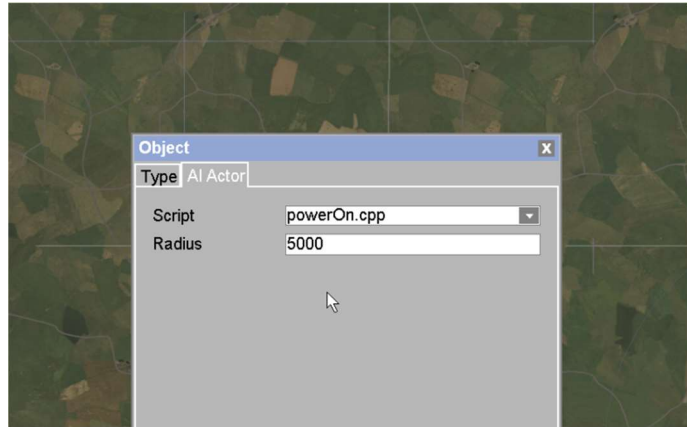


Step #2

Click on View... Object Browser. It will open with the default Aircraft category but scroll up to AI and the Anti-Air first default choice will be available. Now Alt-Left-Click in the middle of the airfield. If you have done it right, a really tiny flashing cargo truck will appear in the middle of the airfield.

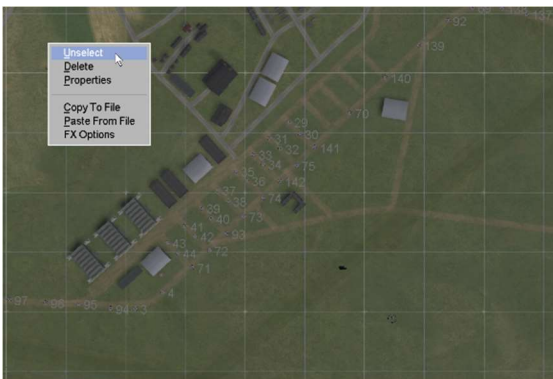
Step #3

Click on the AI Actor tab and set the Radius for 5000 (metres). Now click on the Script dropdown list and choose the powerOn.cpp. If you zoom out enough you should see a faint white circle with the AI Actor at its centre. The powerOn.cpp function is necessary to give the searchlight the power it needs to light up the night sky.



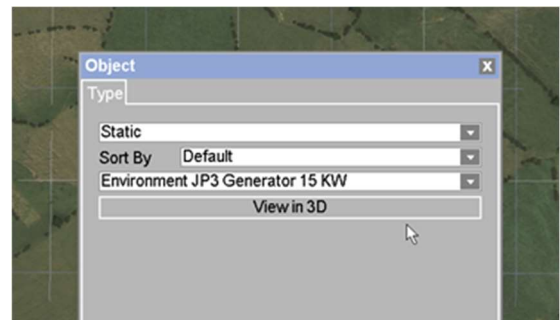
Step #4

So now the AI Actor needs a power source. This is supplied by generators available in the Static Objects section of the Object Browser. But first right-click on the AI Actor to bring up the interactive menu and then left-click to Unselect it as we are moving on to selecting a new object, in this case a Static Object.



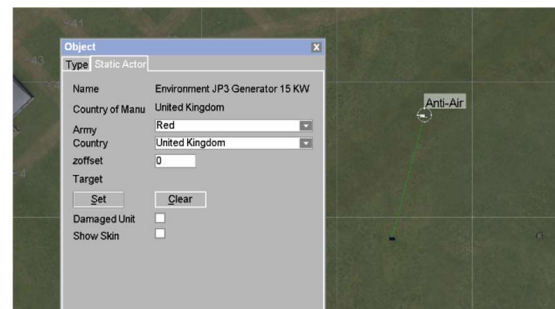
Step #5

Place a generator near the AI Actor on Manston airfield. It doesn't need to be right next to the AI Actor. It can be anywhere generally within reasonable proximity of the AI Actor. The British generator can be found in the Object Browser under Static...Environment...JP3 Generator 15 KW. The German generator can be found in the Object Browser under Static...Environment...Machinensatz 15KW. There is also an 8KW version but go with the extra power. Once you've selected the correct generator, left-click and place it on the airfield.

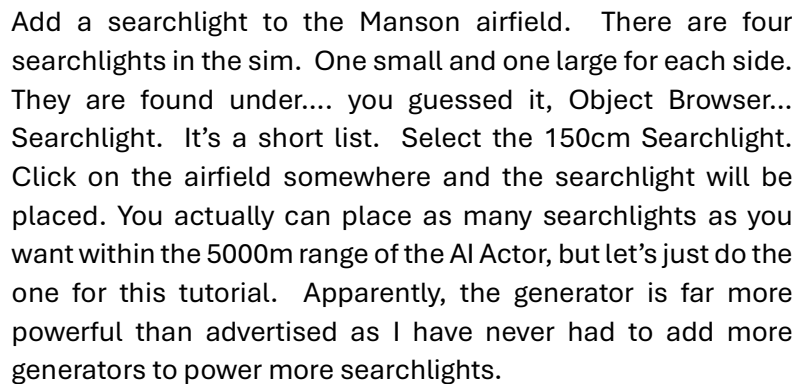


Step #6

Now we must connect the power source to the AI Actor so that the AI Actor can send the power to the searchlights. And you thought this was going to be straightforward. You have another thing coming. This is step #6 of 10. Click on the Static Actor tab for the generator. You will see a button called Set below the Target option. Click on the Set button. Now move your cursor toward the AI Actor icon and you will see a



Step #7



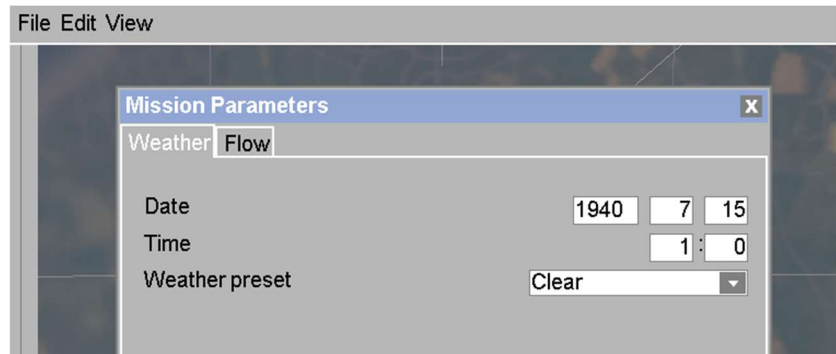
Like with the generator, you will have to connect the searchlight to the AI Actor in order for the searchlight to be controlled by the Anti-Air function. So once again click on the Static Actor tab for the searchlight. You will see a similar, although not identical, set of options, including our new friend the Target Set button. Click on that and repeat the same exercise you did with the generator, t



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Step #10

Make it dark. The searchlight operators are very fastidious about the hours they work. They will not start until about an hour after sunset and quit punctually about 1 hour before sunrise. So, to change the mission time, to 1am to be sure the operators are on the job.

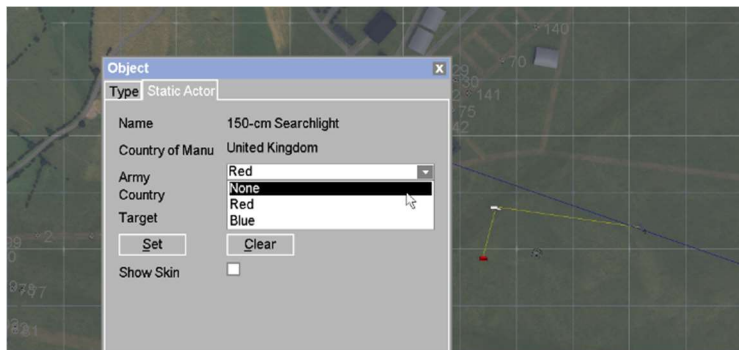


Under View... Mission Parameters will be a menu, the top of which will look something liked this (it may appear slightly different depending on the most recent version of the sim).

All-in-all, 10 steps to get searchlights to work, when it really should only have been one... place searchlight on map. Okay, maybe two... make it dark.

Fly the mission. It's cool if you move to an external view, you should be able to watch the searchlight switch between your three He-111's as you circle the airfield. Have some fun, add a few more searchlights wherever (don't forget to connect them to the AI and make sure they are inside the 5000m range circle of the AI). Then add some AAA, or add a British fighter and try and shoot them down while trapped in the lights. Sitting ducks.

Tip & Trick



If you want to use searchlights as say a marker beacon for your own aircraft coming home after dark, you can do something like the following. Red searchlights turn on in the presence of Blue aircraft and vis-a-versa. But if you make a searchlight at a friendly airfield the opposite colour, any gun in the area will target it and kill it. But the Neutral (None) attribute is different. It thinks

everyone is not a friend, but an enemy... And Red or Blue just look at it and think... neutral. Don't shoot. So, if you make the searchlight at say a Red airfield Neutral, then when your Red bomber comes home, the searchlight will light up... but the AAA obviously won't. I use the German 60cm Flakscheinwerfer searchlight as for whatever reason it is dumb as a box of hammers and refused to lock on to you. This is handy because it isn't too bright, casts about like a beacon, and doesn't blind you.