

Tensions surge over China's Spratly airstrip

China's first landing of a plane on an artificial reef in the disputed Spratly Islands could lead to a Beijing-controlled air defence zone, sparking tensions with other claimants in the South China Sea



Spratly Islands

Landing by civilian plane on **Fiery Cross Reef** on Jan 2 was first use of runway by China in disputed region

New construction



Chinese claim line

Cement plant

FIERY CROSS REEF

Runway: 3,110m long, can handle long-range bombers, fighter jets and transport planes

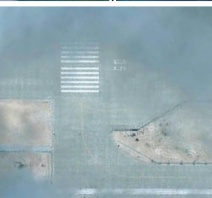
Antenna array

Military harbour

Large enough for tankers and naval vessels

Ongoing construction

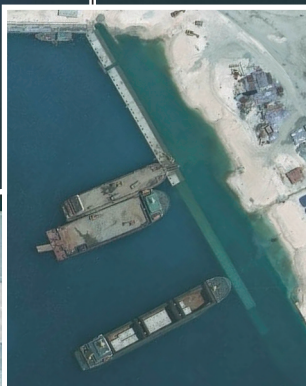
500m
0.3 miles



Runway markings



Helipad markings



Seawall construction