

Honduras has a New Airport

OPSGROUP Team
3 January, 2022



Here is the lowdown on the new international airport in Honduras, for anyone who might be thinking of heading there.

Where is it?

MHPR/Palmerola, also known as **Comayagua International**, has been built on what was the Soto Cano Air base. Inaugurated in October 2021, it is now the new civil and commercial international airport for Honduras.



The new airport is approximately 80km from the old one which lies in the Capital, Tegucigalpa.

What has it got?

The new airport boasts a **2441m / 8009' runway** with an RNP approach to both runway 17 and 35, and backup VOR approaches. **There is no ILS** and there are currently no approach lighting for night or IMC ops.

It is planned for **24/7 operations**, but for now it is only open during **daylight hours (06-18L)**. After hours permission may be available by contacting the airport manager on [+504 3140 3317](tel:+50431403317) in advance.

A report from someone who has headed in recently suggested that *"All traffic is routed mostly via TGU and in contact with TGU approach as far as I know for traffic landing north."*

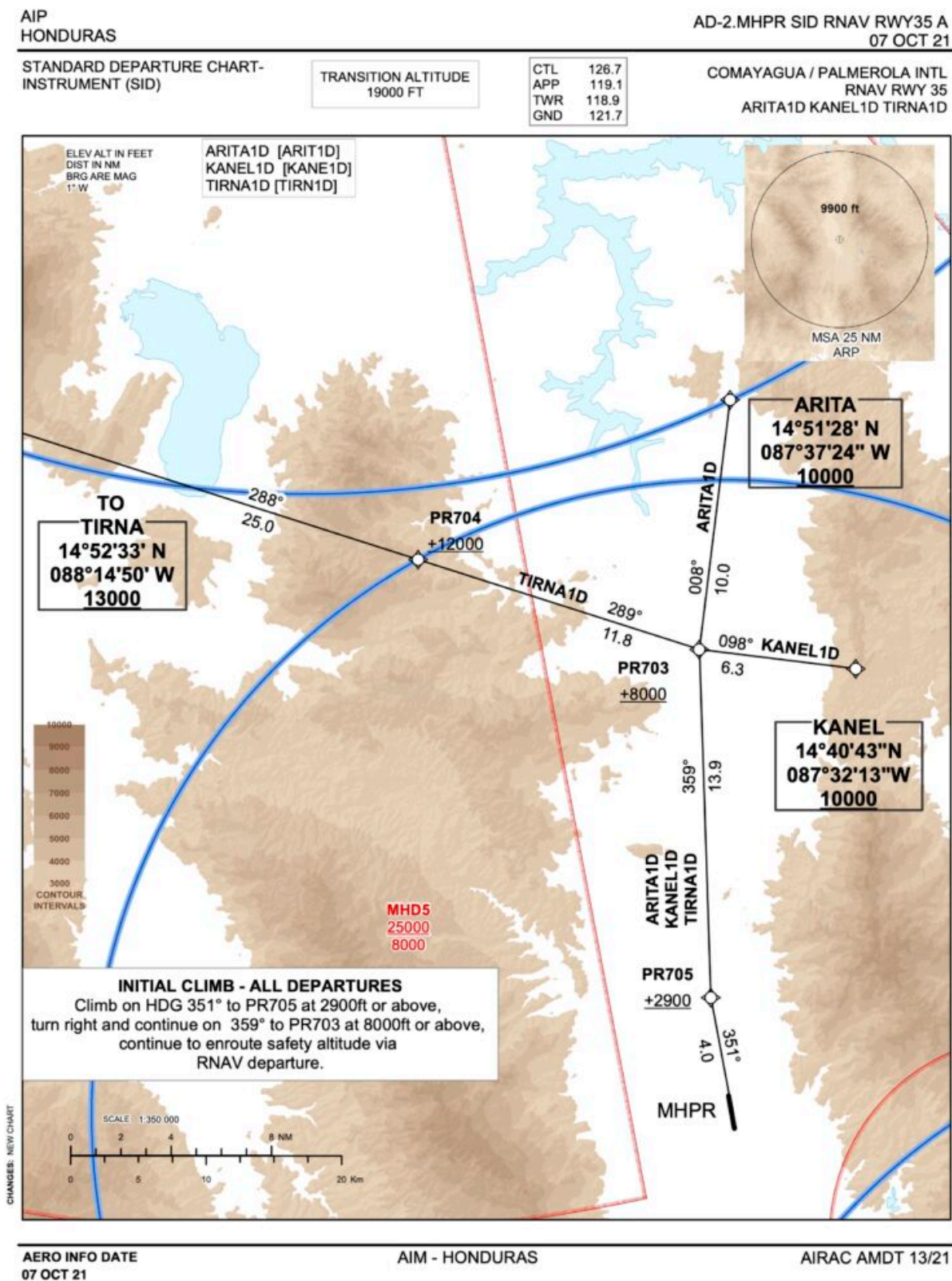
The old airport, MHTG/Toncontin, has a 2021m / 6631' runway with an RNP (AR) approach to runway 20, and a VOR to runway 02.

Here's a quick look at the new airport:

Things to look out for at MHPR/Palmerola

- The airport **elevation is 2064 feet**, and there is some tricky terrain all round with the airport sitting in a valley, giving it an **MSA of 9900'**. The terrain also means departures (unless you're in a super climb-achieving military jet) are **limited to runway 17**.
- RNP Rwy 17 brings you in from point PR702, at 5600'. There is a chunky **hill right under it**

with a mast on top sitting at 3675', so after you pass here you need to descend to 4300' by PT701, which is only 4 nm away. The vertical approach path is a nice standard 3 degree, but you're going to want to **look out for the climb gradient** for the missed approach because it requires a minimum of 300'/nm.



- The **missed approach** is also quite complicated with a bunch of “head here once you’ve reached xxxx altitude” instructions. The approach and missed approach for runway 35 is a little less complicated since (once you’re over the terrain to the south of the airport) it is less

challenging.

- Not that you would be there anyway (because of the terrain) but to the east, south and west lie various **Danger or Restricted areas** to look out for.
- The airport lies in a **valley**. With terrain either side. That means there is a chance of some mean **topographic turbulence** if the wind is blowing the right way. The old Toncontin airport overview suggests wind shear and downdrafts on short finals. The new airport will probably have similar threats.
- The old MHTG/Toncontin airport requires a specific 'Mountainous Terrain' Airport Qualification. While the new airport does not, the **terrain is a challenge** so look out!
- The region sees fairly nice temperatures through the year with **highs of 29°C (85°F) and lows of 16°C (60°F)**. Rainfall peaks in September to November with an average of 119mm (4.7"). Watch out for **thunderstorms** though which occur throughout the year, particularly between June and August.

What happened to MHTG/Toncontin?

All scheduled international services have been transferred from MHTG/Toncontin to MHPR/Palmerola, but the old airport is still available for international bizav flights.



MHTG/Toncontin is still available for international bizav flights (and still features some challenging terrain

all around).

Any contacts?

If you want to head to either **MHPR/Palmerola** or **MHTG/Toncontin** then try talking to one of the following:

- **ASMCorp.** Email at ops@asmcorp.com.mx or by phone +52 81 8122 5100.
- **Consortio Aviation.** Email at fltops@consorcioaviation.com / occ@consorcioaviation.com or by phone +5955 981 193063.

Any other info to know?

- The official website for MHPR/Palmerola Airport is [here](#).
- To check airport charts and other info, the Honduras AIP can be found online [here](#).

Guatemala's Fuego volcano disrupts ops

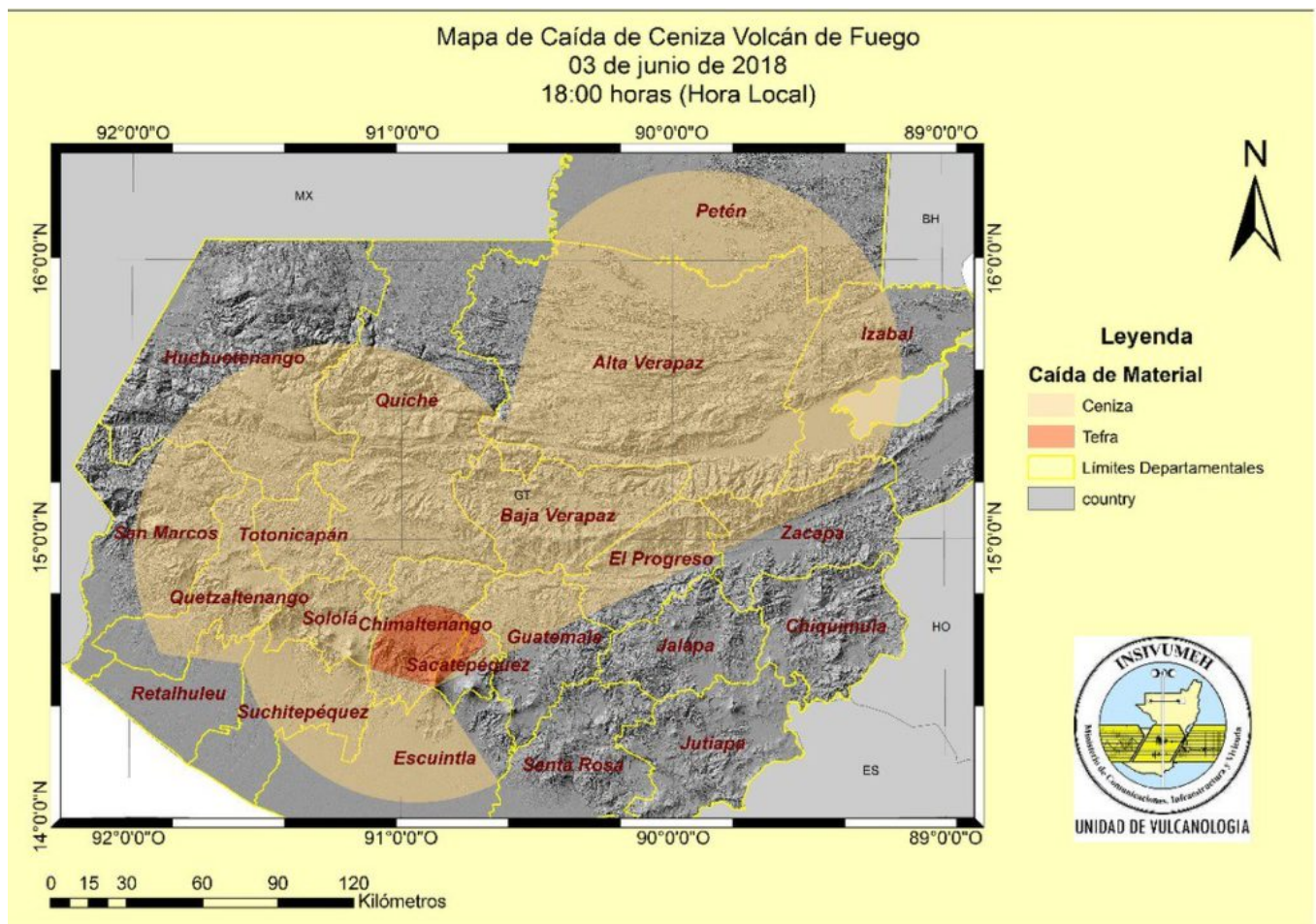
David Mumford
3 January, 2022



An eruption at Guatemala's Fuego volcano on 3rd June resulted in the deaths of 25 people, and forced the temporary closure of MGGT/Guatemala City Airport. After the military cleared ash from the runway, the airport re-opened on 4th June, with the warning of delays due to ongoing runway inspections.



On June 3, Guatemala's Institute for Vulcanology (INSIVUMEH) published a map showing the volcanic ash distribution (shown on the map as the area in orange, labelled 'Ceniza'):



Further reading:

- Guatemala's Fuego volcano erupts, killing 25 and injuring hundreds
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No more MHTG

Mark Zee

3 January, 2022



You've seen the video; which gives some background to why MHTG/Tegucigalpa is sometimes referred to as "the most dangerous airport in the world". News over the weekend from Honduras confirmed a new \$163 million airport is being developed. There have been **multiple incidents** at the airport over the years, mostly due to the surrounding terrain and approach.

The new airport, with a longer, 2440m/8005 ft runway, will be about 25nm from the capital near the Palmerola military air base, and the president said "The new airport is meant as an alternative "so that passengers can land in an airport that does not put their lives at risk,".

If you're operating to Honduras, Landing permits are required for all private non-revenue and charter (non-scheduled commercial) operations to Honduras, along with notification to "CENAMER," a joint air traffic control service covering Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.