



Australian Government

## Joint Agency Coordination Centre

### MH370 Operational Search Update

25 February 2015

This operational report has been developed to provide regular updates on the progress of the search effort for MH370. Our work will continue to be thorough and methodical, so sometimes weekly progress may seem slow. Please be assured that work is continuing and is aimed at finding MH370 as quickly as possible.

#### Key developments this week

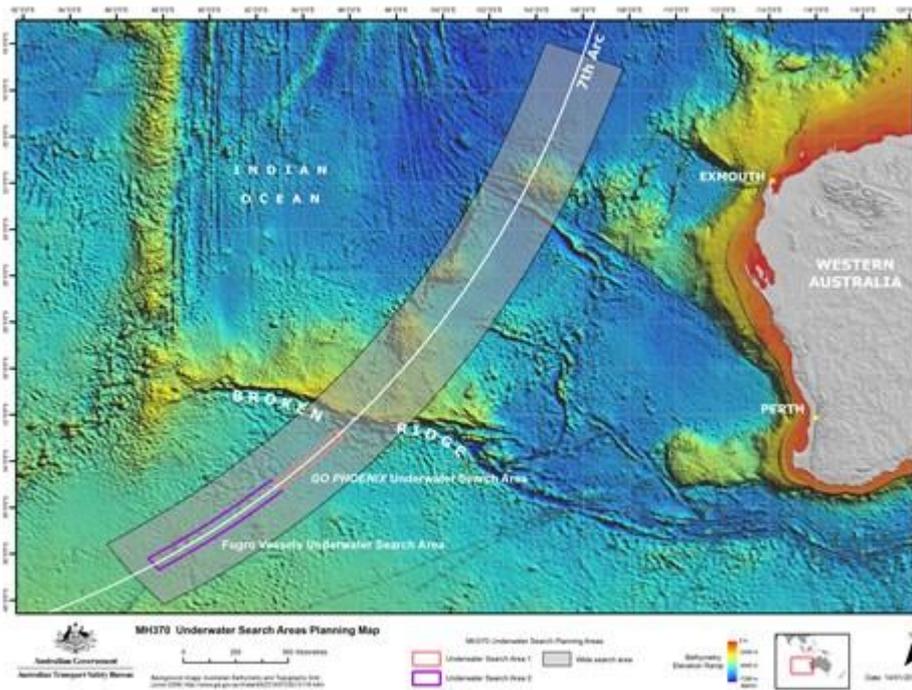
- *GO Phoenix* is currently in the search area conducting underwater search operations.
- *Fugro Equator* departed Fremantle for the search area on 20 February and is expected to arrive in the search area tomorrow, 26 February.
- *Fugro Discovery* departed Fremantle for the search area on 20 February and has arrived in the search area and commenced underwater search operations this morning.
- *Fugro Supporter* departed Fremantle on 21 February after completing calibration testing of its equipment and departed for the search area on 23 February. It is expected to arrive in the search area on 1 March (Sunday).
- Over 24,000 square kilometres (40 per cent) of the priority zone have now been searched.

#### Underwater search

In addition to locating the aircraft, the underwater search aims to map the MH370 debris field in order to identify and prioritise the recovery of specific aircraft components, including flight recorders, which will assist with the Malaysian investigation. The ATSB has utilised the data from the bathymetric survey work to prepare the initial plan for the underwater search, to be followed and referred to by all parties involved. The plan includes search timings, methods, procedures, safety precautions and the initial search areas for the various vessels.

Over 24,000 square kilometres of the seafloor have been searched, which is around 40 per cent of the priority search area.

Assuming no other significant delays with vessels, equipment or from the weather, the current underwater search area may be largely completed around May 2015.



## Ship movements

*GO Phoenix* continues to conduct underwater search operations in the search area.

*Fugro Equator* departed Fremantle on 20 February after conducting scheduled resupply. The vessel is anticipated to arrive back in the search area around 26 February.

*Fugro Discovery* departed Fremantle on 20 February after conducting scheduled resupply. The vessel arrived back in the search area and resumed search operations on 25 February.

*Fugro Supporter* departed Fremantle on 21 February after conducting scheduled resupply. The vessel proceeded to a testing site to calibrate equipment before departing for the search area on 23 February. It is anticipated to arrive back in the search area around 1 March.

## Weather

Weather conditions in the search area are expected to be favourable this week, with sea states anticipated to rise no higher than 3. A tropical low currently in the vicinity of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands is predicted to deepen and move to the south or south-west over the coming week. The low pressure system could potentially become a tropical cyclone and may bring strong winds and heavy seas to the search area from as early as next weekend.

Overall conditions are expected to continue to be generally favourable during the warmer months.

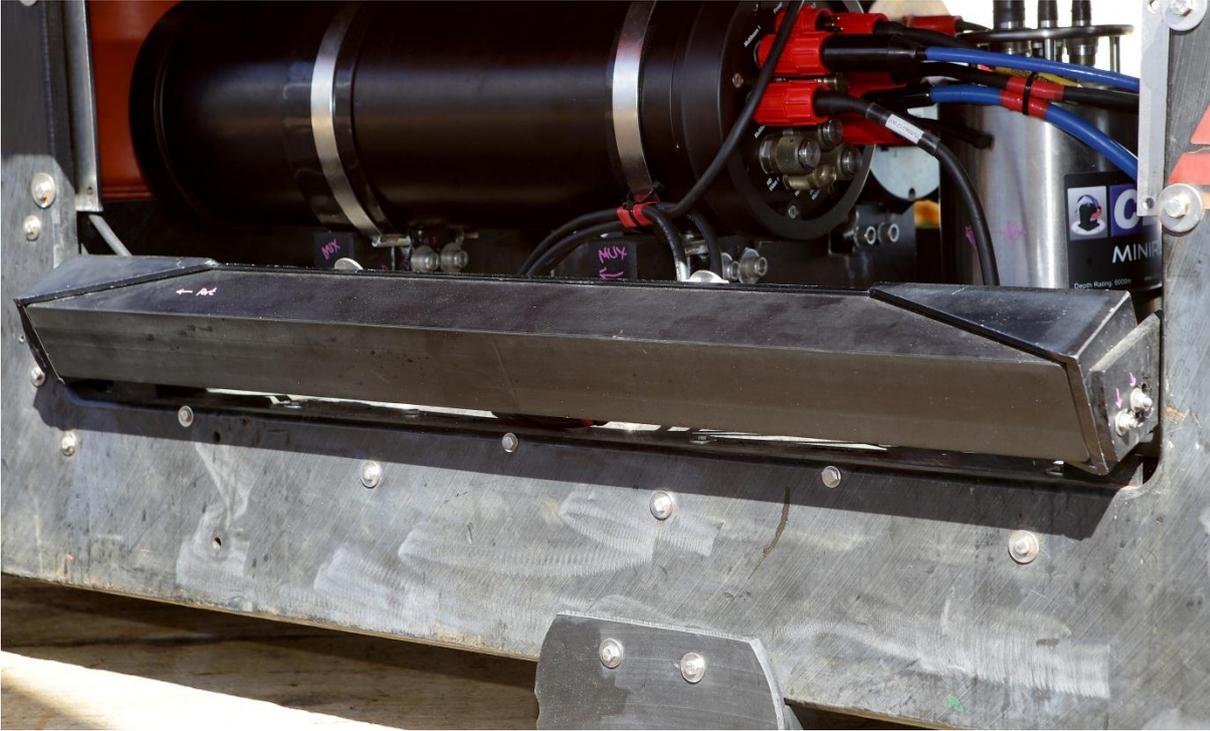
## Mapping the deep ocean

Geoscience Australia has produced a short video, 'Mapping the deep ocean: Geoscience Australia and the search for MH370'. The video describes the key processes of bathymetric mapping and side scan sonar, which are used to gather data within the search area.

[http://www.ga.gov.au/news-events/news/latest-news/mapping-the-deep-ocean-geoscience-australia-and-the-search-for-mh370?utm\\_source=promotion&utm\\_medium=slider-banner&utm\\_content=news-button&utm\\_campaign=MH370](http://www.ga.gov.au/news-events/news/latest-news/mapping-the-deep-ocean-geoscience-australia-and-the-search-for-mh370?utm_source=promotion&utm_medium=slider-banner&utm_content=news-button&utm_campaign=MH370)

## Search data collection

In its search for the aircraft, *Fugro Discovery* uses a towfish equipped with side scan sonar, synthetic aperture sonar and multibeam echo sounders.



The Dragon Prince deep tow fish side scan sonar transducer. Source: ATSB, photo by ABIS Chris Beerens, RAN.



Dragon Prince deep tow EM2040 multibeam transducers. Source: ATSB, photo by ABIS Chris Beerens, RAN.

More information about how this equipment is used in the search for MH370 is contained in the following interview with Mr Dylan Lynch, a sonar specialist on board *Fugro Discovery*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAAROWk3vHc>

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