



Australian Government

Joint Agency Coordination Centre

MH370 Operational Search Update

17 December 2014

The Australian Government remains committed to the MH370 search. While search operations will continue uninterrupted over the Christmas period, there will be no MH370 operational search update on Wednesday, 31 December 2014.

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

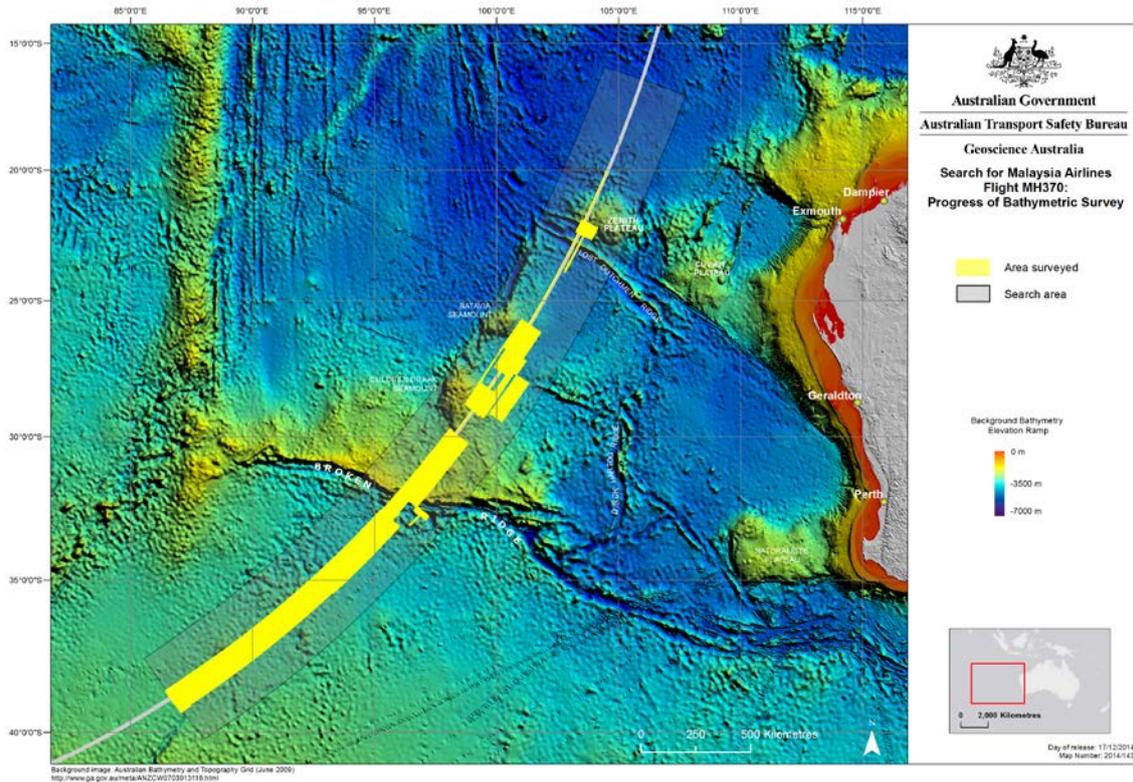
- *Fugro Equator* is scheduled to depart the search area for Fremantle today following completion of the current phase of survey.
- On Saturday 13 December, *Fugro Discovery* experienced a system issue with a component of the search equipment. Search activities have been suspended while the issue is remedied.
- *GO Phoenix* continues to conduct underwater search operations.

Bathymetric Survey

Before the underwater search for MH370 could begin, it was necessary to accurately map the seafloor to ensure that the search is undertaken safely and effectively. Bathymetry survey vessels spent months at sea, scanning the seafloor with multibeam sonar to gather detailed, high-resolution data. The data has revealed many seabed features for the first time.

A video, titled *Bathymetry of the MH370 Search Area*, has been produced using data from the survey and provides a computer-animated 'flythrough' showing a visualisation of the seafloor terrain in the search area. The video can be found on the JACC website: <http://jacc.gov.au/media/video/index.aspx>.

Fugro Equator is expected to complete bathymetric survey work in the search area today. To date, over 200,000 square kilometres of the search area have been surveyed.

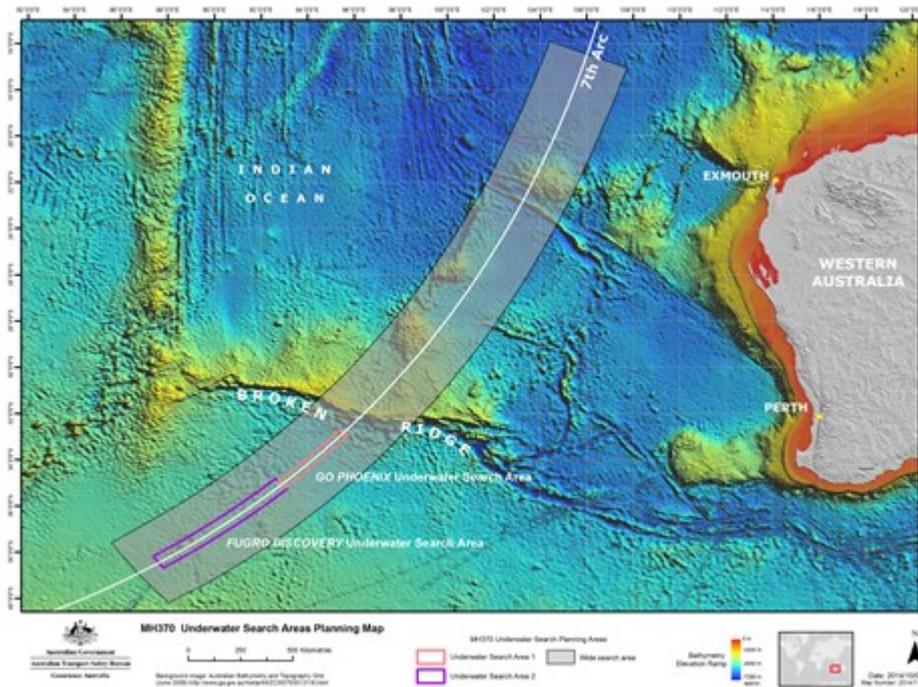


Underwater search

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 11,000 square kilometres of the seafloor have been searched.

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



Ship movements

Fugro Equator is scheduled to depart the search area for Fremantle today following completion of the current phase of survey.

On Saturday 13 December, *Fugro Discovery* experienced a system issue with a component of the search equipment. Search activities have been suspended while the issue is remedied.

GO Phoenix continued to conduct underwater search operations.

Weather

Sea states in the area assigned to *GO Phoenix* are anticipated to range from 1 to 3 over the next four days. In the area assigned to *Fugro Discovery*, sea states will range from 2 to 4. Overall conditions are expected to continue to be generally favourable during the summer months.

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www.jacc.gov.au