



Australian Government

Joint Agency Coordination Centre

MH370 Operational Search Update

20 April 2016

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 Discovery* continues to conduct underwater search operations.
- *Fugro Equator* continues to conduct underwater search operations.
- On 16 April, *Dong Hai Jiu 101* deployed Phoenix International's Remora III remotely-operated vehicle (ROV) and located the lost SLH-ProSAS-60 deep tow system. Recovery operations were successful and the towfish and depressor were recovered on 18 April.



The recovered SL Hydrospheric SLH-ProSAS-60 tow system on board *Dong Hai Jiu 101*.

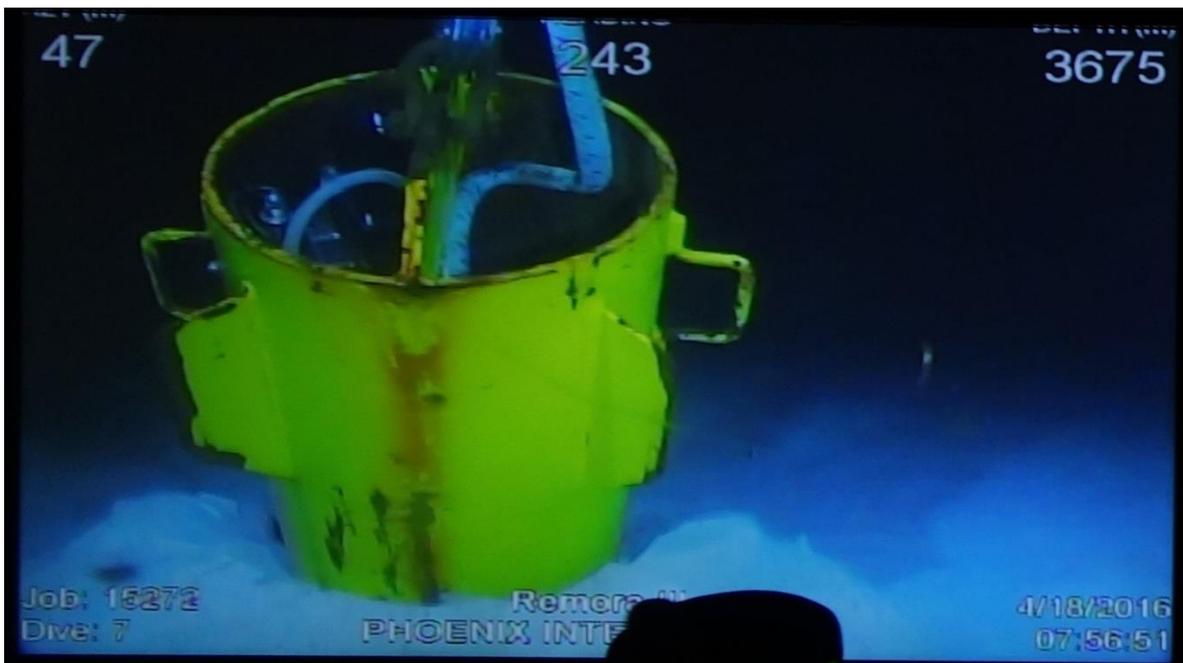
Source: ATSB, photo by Mel Proudlock

Search and recovery of the lost towfish

On 16 April, *Dong Hai Jiu 101* arrived at the last position of the lost SLH-ProSAS-60 deep tow system (towfish) and successfully launched the Remora III remotely-operated vehicle (ROV). When the ROV arrived on the seafloor, the lost towfish was almost immediately located using the ROV's sonar and video systems. The towfish was found to be in good condition and floating above the seafloor, still tethered to the depressor weight at a depth of around 3,700 metres. The depressor weight was found to be nose-down and partly buried in sediment.



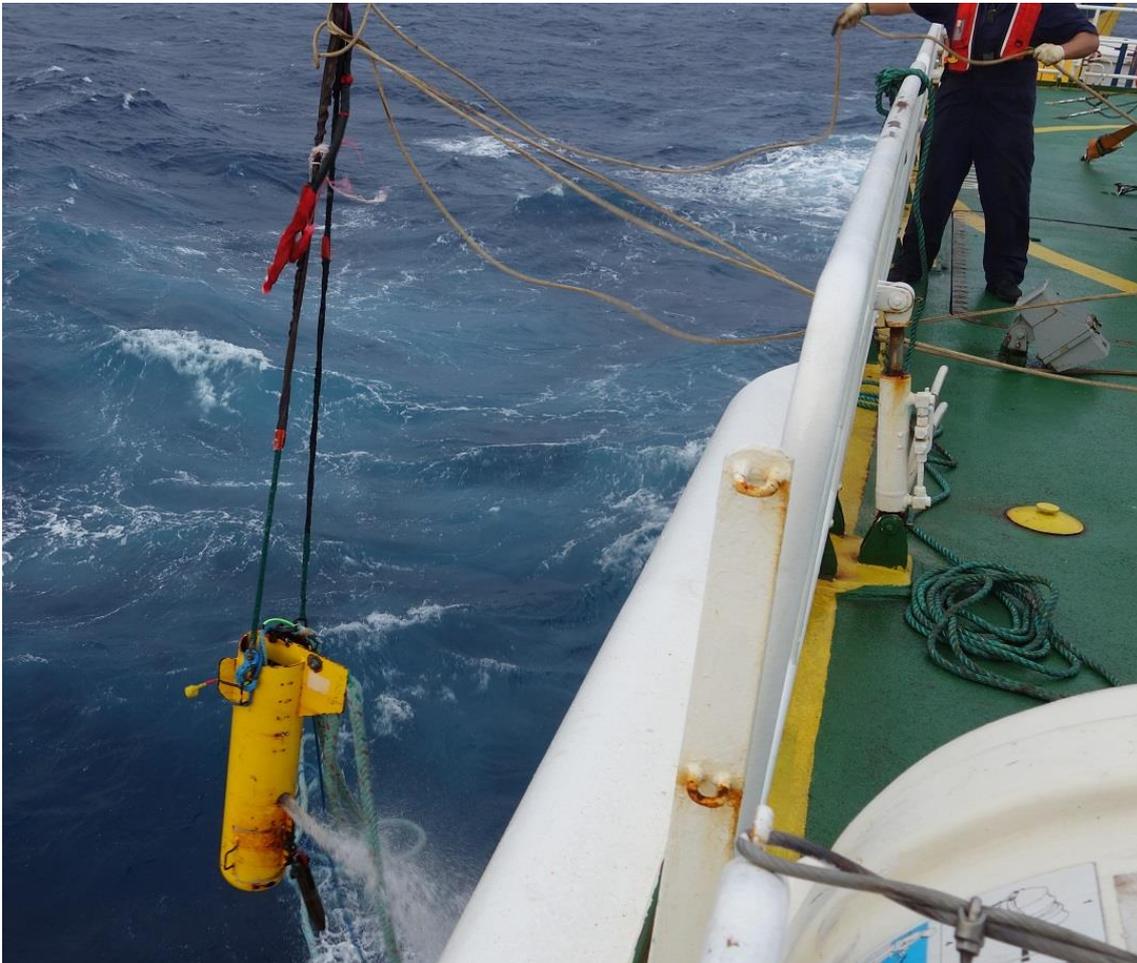
ROV video image of the SL HydroSpheric SLH-ProSAS-60 deep tow system being prepared for lifting to the surface. Source: ATSB, photo by Mel Proudlock



ROV video image of the partially buried depressor weight. Source: ATSB, photo by Mel Proudlock

Two further ROV dives were made to attach ballast to the towfish to make it negatively buoyant. The synthetic tow rope attaching the vehicle to the depressor weight was then cut and the system was brought to the surface using a recovery line attached to the ROV frame.

Once the towfish was safely secured on the deck of *Dong Hai Jiu 101*, the ROV was relaunched to recover the depressor weight.



The depressor weight being brought aboard Dong Hai Jiu 101. Source: ATSB, photo by Mel Proudlock

Examination of debris from South Africa and Rodrigues Island

Two items of possible MH370 debris (the piece found in South Africa with the Rolls Royce logo and the piece found at Rodrigues Island) were brought to the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) laboratories on Wednesday 13 April. These pieces of debris are being examined in a similar manner to the items that were found in Mozambique.

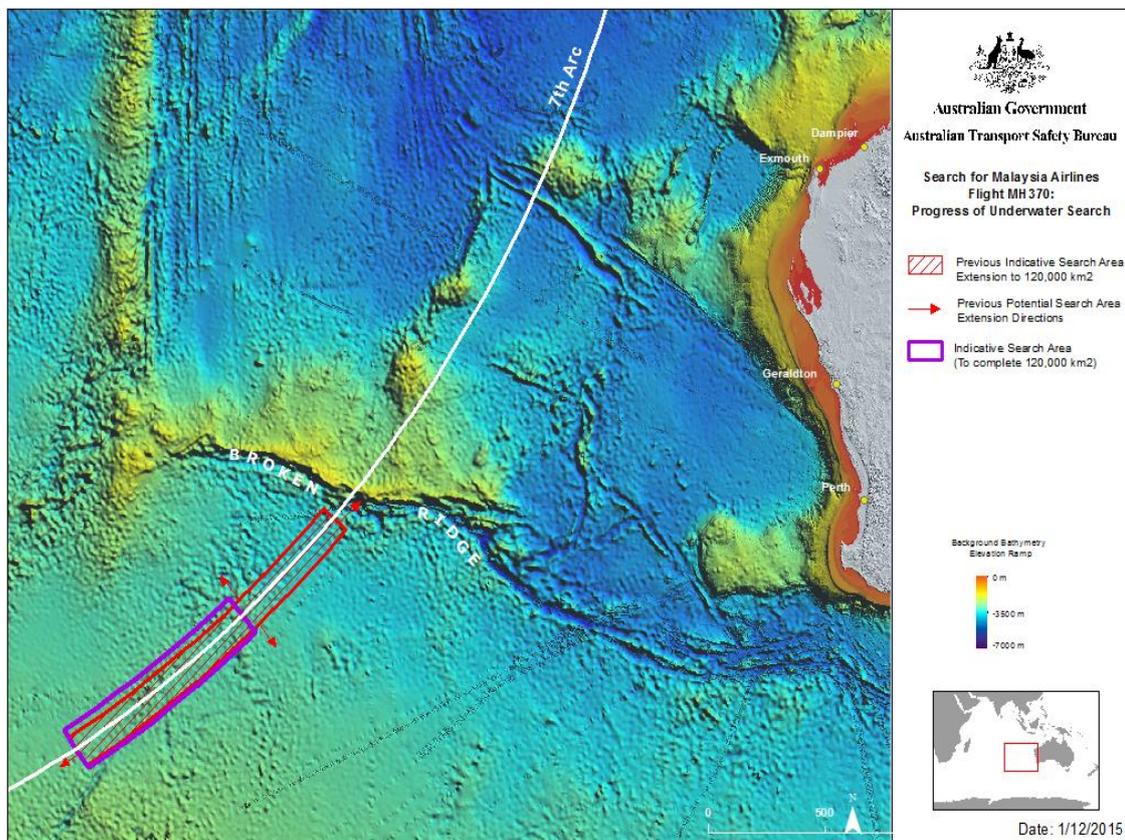
Investigators from the ATSB and the Malaysian Annex 13 investigation team are examining the pieces to determine if they originated from a Boeing 777, and in particular for any details which might link the debris with MH370.

A summary of findings will be released once the examinations are completed.

Underwater search operations

More than 100,000 square kilometres of the seafloor have been searched so far. In the event the aircraft is found and accessible, Australia, Malaysia and the People's Republic of China have agreed to plans for recovery activities, including securing all the evidence necessary for the accident investigation.

Consistent with the undertaking given by the Governments of Australia, Malaysia and the People's Republic of China in April last year, 120,000 square kilometres will be thoroughly searched. It is anticipated this will be completed around the middle of the year. In the absence of credible new information that leads to the identification of a specific location of the aircraft, Governments have agreed that there will be no further expansion of the search area.



Weather

Strong winds are expected in the coming days which may cause delays in search operations.

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