



Australian Government

Joint Agency Coordination Centre

MH370 Operational Search Update

20 July 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 operations in the search area.
- *Fugro Equator* is conducting underwater search operations and bathymetry as weather and sea conditions allow and is expected to depart the search area late tonight.
- *Dong Hai Jiu 101* is currently on weather stand by and will conduct underwater search operations as weather and sea conditions allow.
- A piece of aircraft debris found on Pemba Island, just off the coast of Tanzania, in late June has been transported to Australia for examination. Malaysia and Australia have worked with Tanzanian officials to assume responsibility for the item, believed to be an outboard wing flap. The Australian Transport Safety Bureau is working with Malaysian investigators to ascertain whether it is from a Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777.





Malaysian and Australian investigators examine the piece of aircraft debris found on Pemba Island off the coast of Tanzania. Source: ATSB

Underwater search operations

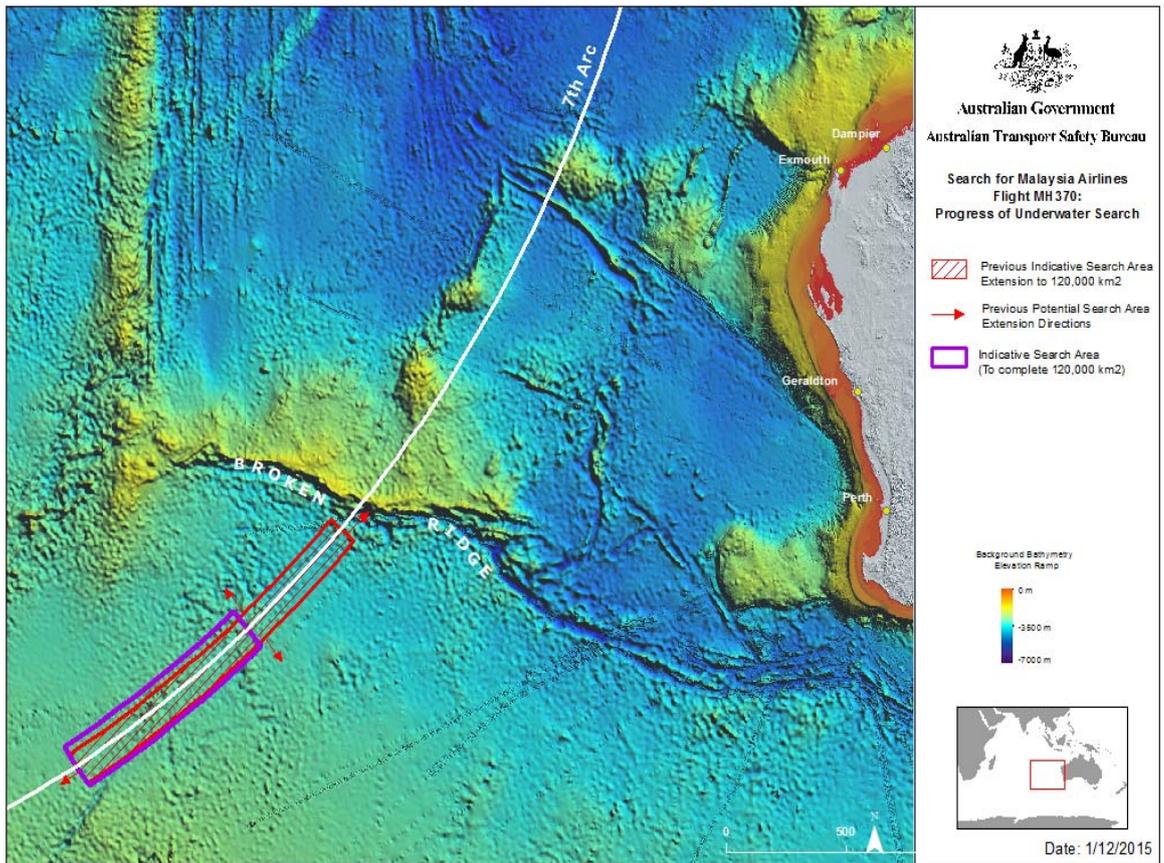
Ongoing poor weather conditions have severely impacted search operations and resulted in delays to search operations of around 6-8 weeks. Since the onset of poor conditions associated with winter weather, progress has slowed with only a minimal area searched during this time. Marginal weather conditions still allow the use of deep tow equipment provided conditions are such that the equipment can be safely deployed and recovered, however, the autonomous underwater vehicle, which is used to survey some of the most difficult underwater terrain in the search area that cannot

be searched effectively using the deep tow sonar, can only be launched in the calmer conditions of spring and summer.

In the event of further poor weather, or delays as a result of unforeseeable problems such as equipment failure or crew incapacity, searching the entire 120,000 square kilometre search area may continue well beyond the winter months.

More than 110,000 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. 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

Weather conditions are forecast to improve over the coming days, which should allow search activities to recommence.

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