



Australian Government

Joint Agency Coordination Centre

MH370 Operational Search Update

3 August 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

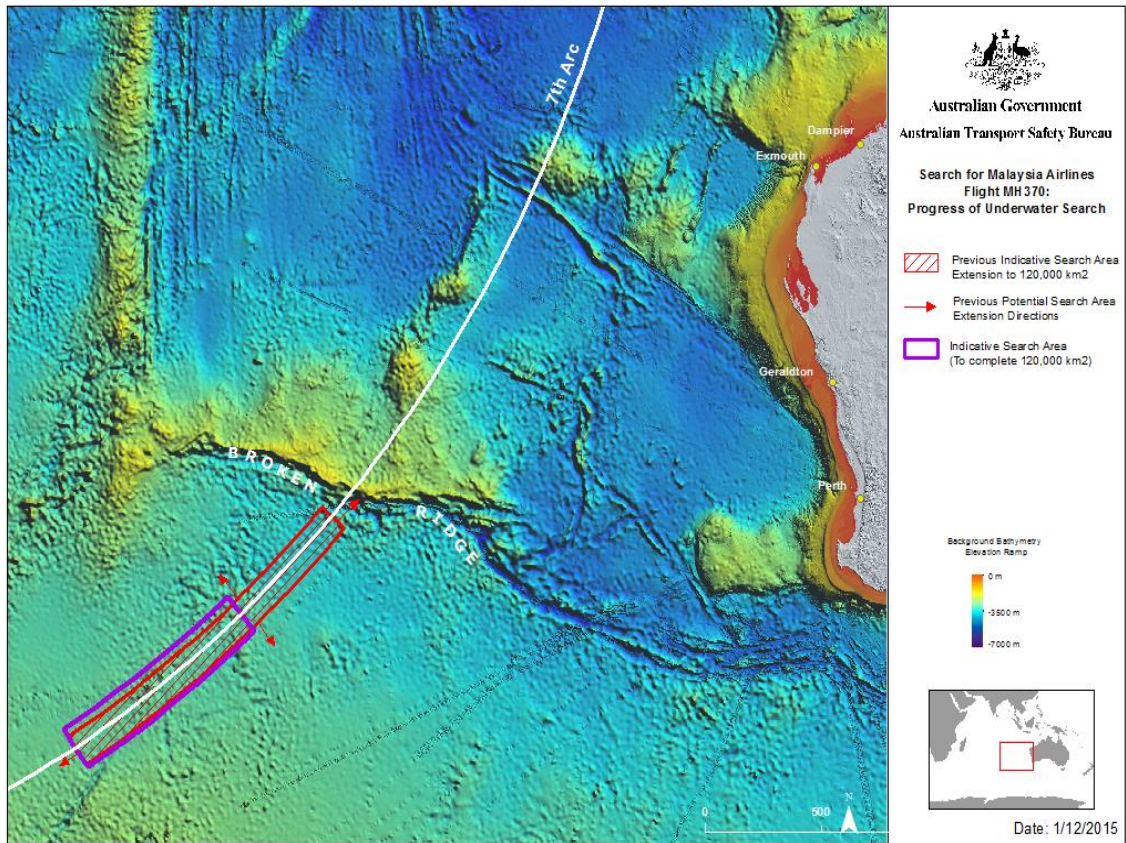
- Poor weather conditions have severely impacted search operations in the past week.
- *Fugro Discovery* is on weather standby in the search area.
- *Fugro Equator* is en route to the search area.
- *Dong Hai Jiu 101* is en route to Fremantle for resupply.

Underwater Search Operations

More than 110,000 square kilometres of the seafloor have been searched so far.

At a meeting of Ministers from Malaysia, Australia and the People's Republic of China held on 22 July 2016, it was agreed that should the aircraft not be located in the current search area, and in the absence of credible new evidence leading to the identification of a specific location of the aircraft, the search would be suspended upon completion of the 120,000 square kilometre search area.

Ministers went to great lengths to explain that this does not mean the termination of the search; should credible new information emerge which can be used to identify the specific location of the aircraft, consideration will be given to determining next steps.



Examination of Debris

Since the disappearance of MH370, many items of suspected debris have been handed in by members of the public. These items are potentially very important and people are encouraged to report any suspected debris to local authorities.

In response to enquiries received by the JACC, the following information about the examination process of debris is provided.

When debris is reported, photographs of the item are reviewed by Malaysian authorities, in consultation with relevant experts including the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) and Boeing. This preliminary examination can often quickly discount items as not being from an aircraft.

Should the item be identified as coming from an aircraft, Malaysia negotiates with the government of the country in which the debris is found to secure custody of the item so that a detailed examination can be undertaken. In some instances, the construction, composition and presence of unique details and markings have been able to definitively link items to a Boeing 777 and in some cases a Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777. This in turn allows for the conclusion to be drawn that the item is almost certainly from MH370. This kind of analysis can be conducted in Malaysia, with assistance from the aircraft manufacturer but at Malaysia's request, is sometimes conducted in Australia.

Some items that have shown evidence of marine life have had further analysis undertaken by Australian experts from Geoscience Australia the Australian National University and other institutions in the hope that additional information relevant to the search can be gleaned.

In addition, drift analysis is being conducted by the Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation in an attempt to determine if debris could have originated from the search area.

Whether items come to Australia to be examined is determined by the Malaysian Investigation Team in consultation with the ATSB on a case by case basis.

Weather

Weather conditions are forecast to be poor over the coming days with gale force winds expected which are likely to impact on search operations.

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