



Australian Government

## Joint Agency Coordination Centre

### MH370 Operational Search Update

19 October 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 Equator* departed the search area on 15 October 2016. The vessel is travelling to AMC Henderson to commence re-mobilisation of the Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) for its deployment in the search.
- *Dong Hai Jiu 101* remains berthed at Fremantle undertaking resupply operations and re-mobilising the Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) for its deployment in the search. Further detail is provided below.

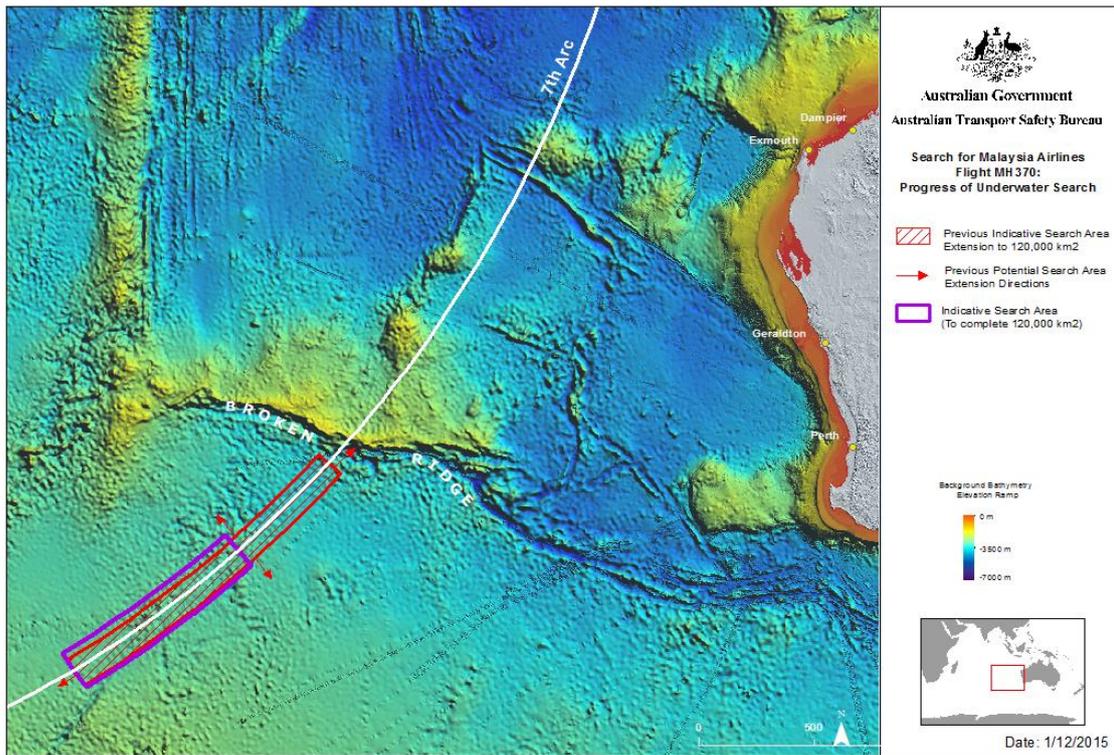
#### Underwater Search Operations

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.

Due to poor weather conditions over the Southern hemisphere winter, it is expected searching the entire 120,000 square kilometre search area will be completed by around January/February 2017.

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



## Weather

Weather conditions are predicted to be marginal changing to poor later in the week. However, these conditions will not impact the search operations as no vessels will be in the search area this week.

## Remotely Operated Vehicle Operations

*Dong Hai Jiu 101* is currently alongside in Fremantle where Phoenix International Holding's *Remora III* remotely operated vehicle (ROV) is being remobilized on the vessel. The ROV is equipped with a range of instruments including video cameras. The ROV will be tasked to reacquire and investigate, through video imaging, a range of sonar contacts which have been identified during previous deep tow operations.

None of the sonar contacts targeted for reacquisition exhibit the characteristics of a typical aircraft debris field and are therefore not classified as category 1 sonar contacts. However some exhibit man-made properties and therefore must be investigated further to be positively eliminated. Winter weather conditions have, until now, prevented the safe deployment of the ROV, but now sea states are improving. For further information on the classification of sonar contacts refer to this factsheet: <http://www.atsb.gov.au/publications/2015/mh370-sonar-contacts.aspx>

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