

Press Statement by YB Dato' Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein

MH370 Refined Search Area

(Friday, 27 June 2014)

Yesterday, Australia, Malaysia and China announced the refined search area in the southern Indian Ocean for the missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370.

An expert satellite working group has been working for nearly 8 weeks now and they have reviewed and refined all the existing information to define the search zone along the arc in the southern Indian Ocean. As Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss said today, this refinement of the search area involves the efforts and expertise of Australia's ATSB, China's AAID, the UK's AAIB, the US' NTSB, Malaysia's DCA and many more specialists from around the world.

The priority area is now focused in an area up to 60,000 square kilometres on the seventh arc, where the aircraft last communicated with the satellite. This area is further south along the arc based on the calculations carried out by the expert satellite working group.

Reiterating DPM Truss, due to the unprecedented scale and complexity of the search operation, extremely difficult calculations had to be performed on the specialised satellite communications information in order to refine the search area.

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) will today release the report outlining the basis on which this search area has been defined.

The search for MH370 still continues. The bathymetric survey is ongoing in the areas provided by the ATSB with the Chinese Zhu Kezhen and the Australian-contracted vessel Fugro Equator. A search of the sea floor will then be conducted based on analysis from the bathymetric survey.

The underwater search is vital as any evidence found will assist in the search for MH370.

The details of the contracted assets that will be deployed as Malaysian Government Furnished Equipment for the various stages of both the bathymetric survey and the search of the sea floor will be announced soon. These will include assets with specific capabilities such as the Multi-Beam Echo Sounder and the Prosas Towed Side Scan Sonar to join the search efforts in the coming months.

On that note, Rahim Bakri, Chair of the Asset Deployment Committee recently led a delegation to Canberra, Australia on the 10th of June 2014. The delegation met with their Australian counterparts to discuss and coordinate the arrangements for Malaysia's participation in this phase of the search operation.

Hamzah Zainudin, Chair of the Next of Kin Committee will be leading a delegation of all four Chairs of the Ministerial Sub-Committees and other senior officials to the People's Republic of China tomorrow. This meeting is primarily aimed at updating our Chinese counterparts on the latest efforts at the Tripartite level and Malaysia's contribution.

I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm Malaysia's commitment to continue the search for MH370. Malaysia, Australia and China are doing our utmost in the search and our top priority remains to look for the missing MH370.