

PRESS CONFERENCE: MH370

10 MARCH 2014 (MONDAY), 12.00 PM

SPOKESPERSON

DATO' AZHARUDDIN ABRUL RAHMAN (DIRECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION)

Search and Rescue

As you know, the aircraft went missing at 1:20 Saturday morning, the 7th of March 2014. And to date as we speak, 12:00 noon Monday, 10th March 2014, it has gone for 60 hours. Our heart goes to the next of kin of the passengers and all of us would like to know what actually happened on the ill-fated flight MAS Boeing 777 flight number MH370 registration 9MMRO. The DCA with all the assisting agencies have conducted a thorough rescue and search operation over a very wide area – South China Sea that cover the 50 radius nautical mile. On the point of where the last aircraft was reported in the morning of Saturday, 8th March 2014. We also conducted search in the areas of north of Straits of Malacca as we do not want to discount possibilities of the aircraft air turn-back to the Straits of Malacca. And we also receive cooperation, a very good cooperation from various neighbouring countries to assist DCA in our effort to locate the missing aircraft. And so to date we use a large number of assets comprising of 34 aircrafts, 40 ships, hundred over men, thousand over man-hours, as we deployed. And countries that assisted us include Vietnam, China, Singapore, Indonesia, USA, Thailand, Australia and Philipines. The air search was conducted daily from 7 am to 7 pm. And the search by the ships continue throughout the night and unfortunately ladies and gentlemen, we have not found anything that appears to be objects from the aircraft, let alone the aircraft.

Debris, oil leaks

We will be intensify our effort to locate the missing aircraft. There are various reports on the sighting of objects that various agencies have reported in the various media. The Vietnamese authorities have reported to spot, to locate items and yes, last night there was a report about the Vietnamese located identify a piece of the aircraft as it was reported. A door of the aircraft, the inner part of the door of the aircraft but to inform

all of you that the report was not verified officially by the Vietnamese authorities to date. We immediately called the Vietnamese authorities last night and they confirmed that they have not spotted any such object. Therefore, we are unable to inform to all of you that any object was rected. Yes, yesterday also from the search and rescue work a number of aircraft has spotted the thing is from the aircraft part. There are two areas and two aircrafts spotted an object looks like a tail of an aircraft but when we but we despatched immediately the ship to the areas that it is made known to us it was logs, and also logs thight together that looks like a pontoon to us. So there are numbers of reports, number of sightings that been made. The Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency also spotted oils leaked in the South China Sea. And they have took sample of it and that sample was sent to the labs. Hopefully when we receive the reports from the lab we will inform you that particular oils leak or fuel that we took from the sea come from the missing aircraft. So, there are various objects that our team have seen but none of them at this moment confirm any of them come from the aircraft. And for the aircraft to just go missing just like that from the radar blade there are many theories that have been said in the media. There are many experts around the world that contributed their know-how and knowledge about what could happen, what has happened, and as far as we are concern we are equally puzzled as well. The honourable Prime Minister used the word – perplexing. We are equally puzzled as well. And to be confirmed, what really happened on that particular day on these ill-fated aircraft we need hard evidence, we need concrete evidence, we need parts of the aircraft for us to analyze, for us to do forensic studies, for us to determine what really happened to the aircraft. Unfortunately again, we are unable to secure any part of the aircraft to date, to confirm that any parts of the aircraft able to be located. We have intensify also as mentioned in the Straits of Malacca of the air turn-back. Again, these are theories. Again, these are not speculations but these are something that we cannot discount any other possibilities. These are things that we have to do. A lot of works to be done. It is unprecedented missing aircraft – mystery as you can put it. We are increasing our effort to do what we have to do. MAS is helping us. All the central agencies are helping us. All the experts around the world are helping us. As far as we are concern we have to find the aircraft. We have to find the bits of the aircraft, if possible.

Passangers with stolen passports

There are reports of two passengers on the aircraft with stolen passport. The authorities concern is investigating the case. The investigating team is now as we speak is going through all the records and the video footages and once we get any reports from them we will inform to all of you. We will definitely inform what has been gathered by the team of experts of investigators pertaining to the two passangers. Yes, there are issues about the passangers that did not fly on the aircraft – there are five of them. Yes, we have to comply to the IQ Annexe 17 that any passangers that have been checked-in but did not fly on the aircraft, we have to remove the baggage that they checked-in on of the aircraft. We have done so. Every passangers that checked-in with checked-in baggage are being recorded, are being given unique serial number of baggages. And they been given the slip of tag with their boarding pass. And this was done to make sure that the correct bag are being removed from the aircraft and and this was done by MAS team to remove the affected baggage so that the aircraft will not fly as we put the term 'unaccompanied baggage'. All baggage of that passangers not flown on that particular morning was removed from the aircraft.

Possibilities of Hijack

Also there are talks about possible hijack and this is not discounted as we are looking at every aspect of what could happen on this ill-fated aricraft on the morning 7th of March. Again, we have to have concrete evidence, we have to get the aircraft, we have to find the aircraft and we intensify to locate the aircraft. So these are the effort and we understand you want answers, details and data from us. We are equally eager as you are to find details and part of the aircraft. I hope you will all be patient and our voice in the rescue control centre on the aircraft, on the ship is now trying their best. Whatever we could find in the areas that we have identify and may go beyond that. We are every hour, every minute, every second looking at every inch of the sea, the area that we have identify.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Question 1 by The Star

- Q: Is DCA narrowing down the investigation as possible mid-air explosion or mid-disintegration?
- A: At this stage we did not narrow possibilities. We are looking at all angles of what could possibly happened on that ill-fated flight.

Question 2 by Asahi Shimbun

- Q: Usually when a plane disappear or goes down, there will be a transmitting signal from the blackbox and we should continue to pump out the signal. Did you get any signal right now from under the sea?
- A: From the day the aircraft lost contact from radar there is no signals been able to be detected by any of our ships or aircrafts in the region.
- Q: Any reason why there is no signal?
- A: If we know the reason we would tell you.

Question 3 by New Straits Times

- Q: The beacon is it a pilot-automated or does it goes off on its own?
- A: It goes off on its own, on impact and when they touch water.
- Q: On the rescue operation, will you double check the areas that have already been covered? Now its 50 nautical miles.
- A: Yes, we will double check, we will direct our aircraft in such a way that they fly so that they do not miss anything. So as for the ship.

Question 4

- Q: Did the stolen passport holder has Asian features? Who has jurisdiction over the disappearance of the missing aircraft?
- A: I would not reveal too much on the two passengers because they are under investigation because any information that I give you might jeopardize investigation that is going on but on the areas of us searching covers both Malaysian waters and Vietnamese waters.

Question 5 by CNBC

Q: Have the technical assistance team from the NTSB, Boeing, the FAA and the French accident investigators which i believe have offered their assistance – have they arrived and have they started to do their work?

A: The offer that we got are from FAA, NTSB USA, AAIB UK, and also the Australian, we have not got anything from French yet. The FAA and NTSB USA, I was informed this morning they are here and we are going to meet them as soon as possible to discuss with them how could they offer their assistance to our investigations of this incident.

Question 6 by The Malay Mail

Q: Are we investigating a group from China whose currently claiming responsibilities?

A: Can you please give more information because we have not receive anything. What has been reported is something that we need to verify officially. That is more on security matters.



JABATAN
PENERANGAN
MALAYSIA