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MH370 Search Will Not be Extended if Present Operation Fails

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The operation, which is led by Australia, and in which Malaysia and China are also participating, is trying to locate the remains of the Malaysia Airlines flight - which disappeared on March 8, 2014, with 239 people on board - over an area of 120,000 sq km (46332 sqm) in the Indian Ocean.

Till now, rescue teams have scanned an area of 85,000 sq km (32820 sqm), the Australian Transport Safety Bureau, or ATSB, said in a statement, adding the search will be completed by the middle of the year.

"In the absence of credible new information that leads to the identification of a specific location of the aircraft, Governments have agreed there will be no further expansion of the search area," the note read.

Four ships are scanning this remote maritime area, located around 1,700 km (1056 mile) from the Western Australian coast.

Two of the ships, Fugro Equator and Havila Harmony, are in the area waiting to resume search operations in the next 24 hours, which have been suspended due to bad weather, ATSB said.

Another ship, Fugro Discovery, arrived at the port of Fremantle, in Perth Tuesday, to repair the cable and the hydrodynamic sensor it lost last month after colliding with a submerged volcano.

Chinese vessel Dong Hai Jiu 101 is also in Fremantle and is expected to set sail towards the search area Thursday.

In July, the teams found a fragment of the missing flight's flaperon wing on Reunion Island, east of Madagascar, the first and only tangible evidence the plane had crashed in the Indian Ocean.

The aircraft, headed towards Beijing, disappeared after altering its route "deliberately," according to experts, 40

minutes after taking off from Kuala Lumpur.

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