
Russia Suspends TU-154 Flights, Recovers Black Box in Black Sea

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Search and rescue team have found the flight recorder which will help to determine the cause of the crash.

The main black box from the Russian military plane which [crashed into the Black sea](#) on Christmas day, killing all 92 people on board was found Tuesday, as reports emerge that all TU-154 models have been grounded.

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Russia's defense ministry said that the black box was recovered by an underwater remote control vehicle around 55 feet below the surface, one mile from the Black Sea resort of Sochi. In a statement, the ministry said that the black box was in a satisfactory condition and would be sent to Moscow to be analyzed after it is cleaned.

The ministry also confirmed that 12 bodies and 156 body fragments, along with debris from the plane including the engine and landing gear have been recovered so far by search and rescue teams.

The black box, one of a number of flight recorders on board the craft will help to identify the cause of the crash which so far has been attributed to a technical failure or pilot error. The federal security service said that there were "no signs or facts pointing to a possible act of terror (that) have been received at this time."

While there was no official confirmation, Russian media outlet Interfax, reported that a second black box has been found but has not been raised to the surface. Interfax also reported that all soviet-era Tupolev TU-154 models have been grounded until the causes for the crash are established.

The TU-154 that crashed was built in 1983, was last serviced in September after receiving major repairs two years previous. In 2010, a Polish TU-154 craft also crashed, killing all 96 people on board, including Polish President Lech Kaczynski.

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While the Russian state uses the majority of TU-154s, only two are believed to be registered with Russian passenger airlines.

Sunday's flight was on its way to Russia's Heimin air base in Syria and was said to have disappeared from radar shortly after taking off from Sochi. All 92 people on board were killed including, nine Russian journalists, Russian military servicemen and 64 members of the famous [Red Army Choir](#), also known as the Alexandrov Ensemble.

Russia has launched a criminal case into the incident, led by Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev.
