

**MAS blames software for 'MH370 in Cambodia' gaffe**  
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MH370 Malaysia Airlines (MAS) has blamed the software that it used to track its aircraft for its erroneous report to air traffic controllers that MH370 was flying over Cambodian airspace about an hour after it went missing.

MAS explained that it made the deduction based on its 'flight-following system' which displayed the aircraft's predicted position and not its actual location.

The system also does not alert MAS if there were anything abnormal, the airline said in a statement sent late last night, and will continue displaying the aircraft's predicted flight path and location until told otherwise by pilots.

In addition, although the system's map showed that MH370 was supposed to be in Vietnamese airspace at the time, the map label for Vietnam was missing when zoomed in.

"The word 'Cambodia' was displayed by the flight-following system on the screen when zoomed-in, leading Malaysia Airlines to deduce that the aircraft was flying in Cambodian airspace."

In actual fact, at the time, about 2.15am on March 8, the aircraft was flying over the Straits of Malacca, but that fact was not identified until days later because its transponder was either switched off or malfunctioning.

"To make the flight-following systems work successfully and effectively, it is important to have visual depiction of the aircraft's position, coupled with confirmation by air-to-ground communications, such as through aircraft communications addressing and reporting system (Acars), satellite communications or very high frequency or high frequency radios.

"In the case of tracking MH370, Malaysia Airlines' flight-following system indicated that the aircraft was flying, however, there was no communication from or with the pilot," the statement read.

The airline stressed, however, that it is the responsibility of air traffic controllers to track aircraft, and airlines only use flight-following systems to help pilots cope with weather conditions or route diversions.

Attempts at contact unsuccessful

On Thursday, the Ministry of Transport released its preliminary report on the MH370 incident, alongside a timeline of what air traffic controllers did after the aircraft went

missing at 1.21am up to the point search and rescue teams were alerted at 5.30am.

It revealed that when Kuala Lumpur air traffic controllers asked MAS operations centre on MH370's status, it replied "MH370 was able to exchange signals with the flight and flying in Cambodian airspace".

MAS clarified that the 'signals' reported in the timeline actually referred to MH370's expected location based on the flight-following system.

It added that since air traffic controllers had alerted MAS that it could not contact MH370, it had made its own attempts to contact the aircraft as well but was unsuccessful.

According to the timeline released on Thursday, it took MAS 95 minutes to inform air traffic controllers that its position report was based on a projected flight path and may not be reliable.

In the interim period, Kuala Lumpur air traffic controllers had contacted their counterparts in Cambodia and Ho Chi Minh City asking for information on MH370, as well as seeking further information from MAS.

Ho Chi Minh City controllers replied that it has no contact with MH370 and confirmed that the aircraft's flight plan only took it through Vietnamese airspace, while Cambodian controllers said they have no information on the flight.