

MH370: ICAO Extends Continued Sympathies To Families, Crew Of Vanished Mas Aircraft

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SINGAPORE, March 7 (Bernama) -- Marking the anniversary of the tragic loss of Malaysia Airlines (MAS) Flight MH370 which mysteriously vanished on March 8, last year, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) extends its continued sympathies to the families of the passengers and crew of the doomed aircraft, and ongoing support to all States and agencies still involved in related search efforts.

In a statement here today, ICAO said 2014 represented one of aviation's safest years in terms of how few accidents were recorded, but events relating to Flight MH370 and the subsequent downing of MAS Flight MH17 identified some important gaps which can arise under rare operational circumstances.

It said the aviation community was addressing those gaps and would continue to make the safety of passengers and aircraft its highest priority.

Responding to the loss of MH370, Chicago Convention signatory States recently set forth important new recommendations at ICAO's second High-Level Safety Conference (HLSC), held at its Headquarters in Montreal, Canada last month.

At that conference, participants recommended the adoption of ICAO's Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System (GADSS), including its near-term 15-minute tracking objective for normal flight operations and its one-minute distress and abnormal flight tracking requirement.

The GADSS concept of operations was developed over 2014 by the Working Group ICAO established immediately after MH370's disappearance.

Its 15-minute and one-minute tracking provisions are currently projected to become applicable in 2016 and 2021, respectively.

ICAO said these new tracking requirements, as well as the first assistance and implementation exercises relating to them which ICAO expected to complete by August this year, will provide both States and operators with a clearer path forward and greatly improve the ability of search and rescue professionals to locate downed aircraft in remote areas.

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