

Malaysian team gets green light to search for debris on Reunion
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A Malaysian team in the La Reunion Island has been given clearance to comb the island's beaches to search for additional debris, after an aircraft flaperon was found last week, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said today.

He said the ministry had sent two teams to France to work with the French government on the verification process, one led by the Department of Civil Aviation director-general. Meanwhile the other team has been sent to the French island, located in the Indian Ocean, east of Madagascar.

"We got the support and clearance from the island's authorities for our team of four members to be on the ground, going around the beaches to collect additional debris if we can find any.

"As of today, we have found debris, but it is yet to be confirmed to be from MH370. We did collect some additional debris from the beach," he said after an event in Seri Kembangan today.

"Some wreckage, some sort of aluminium frame, some sort of broken pieces of material from a plane, but we are not sure what plane is that, we need to verify those," he said.

He said the debris found by the Malaysian team would be passed on to French authority for further verification.

"We have to handover the debris to authority of the island and they will hand over it to French centre for further verification."

Liow added that the team will be combing the area and has received full support from DCA of the respective states in the effort to identify debris in their areas.

On the verification process that will take place on Wednesday, he said that if the flaperon was confirmed as part of MH370, the result would be handed over to the international investigation team.

"The flaperon just arrived in France on Saturday, they need to go through legal process and put in all the protocol in place," he said, adding that the parties involved have to be very careful and cautious in verifying the part.

Malaysian representatives were expected to join other teams from the United States, China, France and aircraft manufacturer, Boeing, to participate in the verification of the flaperon.

Liow said to stop speculating on the matter, as it has yet to be verified.

Meanwhile, search efforts in the South Indian Ocean would still continue as the team embarked on the second phase and would not change the search area until authorities have confirmed the results of the flaperon.

Flight MH370 vanished without a trace in March 2014, with 239 passengers and crew onboard. – August 3, 2015.

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