

MH370: Australia Sends Expert To France To Assist In Flaperon Investigation
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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 5 (Bernama) -- Australia has sent an expert from its Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) to Toulouse, France to assist in the examination of the B777 aircraft flaperon found on Reunion Island.

Its Deputy Prime Minister, Warren Truss said the ATSB investigator would join the French and Malaysian-led international investigation team Wednesday to examine the wreckage found on the island.

He said Malaysian authorities, responsible for investigating the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 in March last year had determined the aircraft component retrieved from the island was a flaperon from a B777 aircraft.

Truss, who is also infrastructure and regional development minister said this in a statement today.

He expected Malaysian and French authorities, who had been carrying out the investigation in the matter "may be in a position to make a formal statement on the origin of the flaperon later this week."

On Sunday, Malaysian Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai had confirmed the wreckage was part of a Boeing 777 aircraft.

However, he said, whether it was from the vanished Flight MH370 was yet to be ascertained.

Truss said he was advised by Australia's national science agency, CSIRO's drift modelling, commissioned by the ATSB that the material from the current search area could have been carried to Reunion Island, as well as other locations, as part of a progressive dispersal of floating debris through the action of ocean currents and wind.

For that reason, he added, thorough and methodical search efforts would continue to be focused on the defined underwater search area, covering 120,000 square kilometres, in the southern Indian Ocean.

Flight MH370 disappeared from the radar on March 8 last year as it flew from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 227 passengers and 12 crew on board.

On Jan 29, this year, the Malaysian Department of Civil Aviation announced that the disappearance of the aircraft was an accident based on international aviation rules and that all 239 people on board were deemed to have lost their lives.

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