

MH370: France to step up air, sea search for wreckage

France will launch new searches by air, land and sea from Reunion in the hopes of finding more wreckage from MH370, after Malaysia said a wing part washed up on the Indian Ocean island came from the ill-fated flight.

A Casa military aircraft will begin surveying the area from Friday morning, the French government said in a statement.

The search will also be stepped up with foot patrols, helicopters and maritime units, it added. Separately, local authorities for the island district where the first piece of debris was found said they would organise a thorough search for other parts from the plane starting Monday.

The renewed efforts to hunt for MH370 wreckage came after Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak announced that a 2m-long wing part that was discovered on French Reunion island last week was confirmed as coming from the missing aircraft, the first physical proof it met a tragic end in the Indian Ocean 17 months ago.

Australian authorities, who have led a multinational search for the aircraft, expressed confidence that they were searching in the right area and that the body of the plane would eventually be found. Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said on Thursday that more possible MH370 objects – aircraft seat cushions and windows – had been discovered on Reunion, but “it has to be verified by the French authorities”.

A French judicial source, however, said French investigators had not received any new items.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2015/08/07/MH370-France-to-step-up-search/>

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