

China Demands Satellite Data On Missing Plane

BY SCOTT McDONALD AND EILEEN NG
Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — China demanded Tuesday that Malaysia turn over the satellite data used to conclude that a Malaysia Airlines jetliner had crashed in the southern Indian Ocean, killing all 239 on board. Officials sharply narrowed the search area as a result of that assessment, but the zone remains as large as Texas and Oklahoma combined.

Australia said improved weather would allow the hunt for the plane to resume Wednesday after gale-force winds and heavy rain forced a daylong delay. Searchers face a daunting task of combing a vast expanse of choppy seas for suspected remnants of the aircraft sighted earlier.

"We're not searching for a needle in a haystack — we're still trying to define where the haystack is," Australia's deputy defense chief, Air Marshal Mark Binskin, told re-

porters at a military base in Perth as idled planes stood behind him.

Late Monday, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak announced that a new analysis of satellite data confirmed the plane had crashed in a remote part of the southern Indian Ocean.

That announcement unleashed a storm of sorrow and anger among the families of the plane's passengers and crew — two-thirds of them Chinese. Family members of the passengers have complained bitterly about a lack of reliable information and some say they are not being told the whole truth.

Nearly 100 relatives and their supporters marched Tuesday to the Malaysian Embassy in Beijing, where they threw plastic water bottles, tried to rush the gate and chanted, "Liars!"

Many wore white T-shirts that read "Let's pray for MH370" as they held banners and shouted, "Tell the truth! Return our relatives!"



SHEN BOHAN/XINHUA/ZUMA PRESS/MCT
A relative of the Chinese passengers aboard the missing Malaysia Airlines MH370 flight reacts Tuesday in Beijing, China, after Malaysian Prime Minister Razak said a new analysis of satellite data showed the plane had ended its journey in remote seas southwest of Australia.

There was a heavy police presence at the embassy. Police briefly scuffled with a group of relatives who tried to approach journalists.

In a clear statement of support for the families, Chinese President Xi Jinping ordered a special envoy, Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui, to Kuala Lumpur to deal with the case.

Deputy Foreign Minister Xie Hangsheng told Malaysia's ambassador that China wanted to know exactly what led Najib to announce that the plane had been lost, a statement on the ministry's website said.

Investigators and the Malaysian government have been able to say little with cer-

tainty about Flight 370's fate since it disappeared on March 8 shortly after taking off from Kuala Lumpur for Beijing.

Left unanswered are many troubling questions about why it was so far off course. Experts piecing together radar and satellite data believe the plane back-tracked over Malaysia and then traveled in the opposite direction to the Indian Ocean.

Investigators will be looking at various possibilities including mechanical or electrical failure, hijacking, sabotage, terrorism or issues related to the mental health of the pilots or someone else on board.

"We do not know why. We do not know how. We do not know how the terrible tragedy happened," Malaysia Airlines' chief executive, Ahmad Jauhari Yahya, told reporters.

The airline's chairman, Mohammed Nor Mohammed Yusof, said Tuesday it may take time for further answers to become clear.

"This has been an unpre-

cedented event requiring an unprecedented response," he said. "The investigation still underway may yet prove to be even longer and more complex than it has been since March 8th."

He added that even though no wreckage has been found, there was no doubt the plane had crashed.

"This by the evidence given to us, and by rational deduction, we could only arrive at that conclusion: That is, for Malaysia Airlines to declare that it has lost its plane, and by extension, the people in the plane," he said.

The conclusions were based on an analysis of the brief signals the plane sent every hour to a satellite belonging to Inmarsat, a British company, even after other communication systems on the jetliner shut down for unknown reasons.

The latest satellite information does not provide an exact location but just a rough estimate of where the jet crashed into the sea.

Corps

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staff in locations such as New Orleans, which conduct more extensive dredging operations and can provide basic cost estimates, he said.

The dredging study is part of the Corps' efforts to collect data for fighting sedimentation in Lewis and Clark Lake, along with other locations, Boyd said.

The Corps has also looked at flushing and other options but has made no definite decisions at this point, Boyd said.

"We are looking at more of a long-term management study than a quick fix. We are looking at the little tweaks needed to make the reservoirs last longer," he said.

"The reservoirs have a finite life. We can't increase their lives indefinitely, but we can get more generations of usefulness of those dams."

Sediment has remained a problem for decades, said MSAC executive director

Sandy Stockholm of Springfield. The sediment has grown increasingly worse in recent years and is rapidly taking its toll, she said.

Lewis and Clark Lake is nearly 30 percent full of silt and is estimated to become half-full by 2045 if nothing changes, she said.

The worsening sediment problem could be seen just blocks from Tuesday's meeting, as Lewis and Clark Lake has nearly filled with sediment and other items between Springfield and Niobrara, Neb.

And the sight, while striking, represents just a small part of the larger problem, Boyd said.

"Lewis and Clark Lake represents 5 to 10 percent of the sediment deposited in the reservoirs of the Missouri River system," he said. "But this is a very visual place (below Springfield). The headwaters are shallow, and it's a good reference point. Oahe and Garrison have 10 times the sediment of Gavins Point, but they are also 50 times as big."

"Any sediment we remove (from Lewis and Clark

Lake) is a benefit, but we are still talking a small piece of it overall," Boyd added.

During Tuesday's meeting, Boyd was asked about the Niobrara River, the source of a huge portion of the sediment entering Lewis and Clark Lake.

"In an ideal world, we would find a way to shut off the sand delivery to the lake," he said. "But where do we shut it off, and how do we shut it off?"

An audience member asked if potential flooding this year would affect the Corps' sediment study.

"This (sediment study) has nothing to do with water management," he said. "Those are two completely different activities."

When it comes to the Corps' mission, the sediment study doesn't operate in a vacuum, Boyd told the Press & Dakotan. The study also dovetails with the Corps' work with endangered species habitat, he said.

Moving sand from Lewis and Clark Lake to below Gavins Point Dam would reduce the need to create sandbars for the least tern

and piping plover, Boyd said. However, any action would need to rebalance the habitat in accordance with the Biological Opinion (or BiOp) of the Endangered Species Act.

"And there is also the angle of the magnitude of dollars that it would take," he said. "Is it practical? What are the benefits?"

The sediment study is looking at all options, Boyd said. "There has been talk of drawing down (Lewis and Clark) lake temporarily to re-establish the river and let the river move the sand," he said.

In any scenario, the Corps would seek to maintain a flow similar to the current water management practice, Boyd said. The Corps would take into account the impact on stakeholders, such as Yankton's water supply, he added.

In making any decision, the Corps must deal with certain realities, Boyd said.

"We have the political climate where we don't have endless resources," he said. "When we look at something, we need to ask: Is it practi-

cal? Is it cost effective? And is it something that everyone can get behind?"

Tuesday's meeting included a presentation on the Springfield Basin dredging project. Shane Bertsch with South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks and Tim Peterson, president of the Springfield Bass Club, reported that local sportsmen — including the Bon Homme Bass League — raised an additional \$103,000, allowing the dredging of 27,500 cubic feet of silt from the boat basin.

Peterson asked MSAC members whether the organization could provide financial assistance in keeping sediment out of the basin.

"We would like to prevent sediment from coming back in, and we have some ideas," he said. "We have used up all of our funding, and we would like to know if there is something (MSAC) can help with."

In conclusion, MSAC board member Larry Weiss of Pierre said he was glad to see the cooperation between MSAC and the Corps.

"In the past, the relationship between MSAC and the Corps of Engineers has been

anything but cordial. I am probably as guilty as some others in that issue," he said. "I see that relationship has improved significantly over the years."

MSAC has focused on the needs of Lewis and Clark Lake, offering to assist the Corps wherever possible.

"We are trying to focus on what is realistic economically and physically," he said. "No one is going to solve this issue alone. It will take all of us."

Weiss left the Springfield audience with a stark question.

"Every presentation I make, I ask if anybody has been to Yankton for Riverboat Days or the Fourth of July," he said. "What do you think that would look like if we had no nice reservoir? Imagine that."

For information on MSAC, visit online at www.msac-online.com.

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