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HD **Mystery of Flight 370**

BY Brianna Keilar, Matthew Chance, David McKenzie, Rene Marsh, Miles O'Brien, Richard Quest, Martin Savidge, Joe Johns, Rosa Flores, Les Abend, Don Lemon

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BRIANNA KEILAR, CNN ANCHOR: You are in the CNN NEWSROOM, I'm Brianna Keilar in for Don Lemon.

And a pair of potentially major developments today in the search for Malaysia Airlines Flight 370. Search planes should be taking off soon to pursue the latest leads and here's what we know right now.

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A **Chinese** search crew earlier today says their equipment caught some pings from the ocean on a frequently mainly used by flight data recorders. There are lots of questions about that information, though, we'll get to that in just a moment. And about the same time those pings were detected, a **Chinese** search crew from the air flew over a number of white objects floating in the water.

The debris field is a little under 60 miles from where the pulses were heard. The reported pings and this new found debris are adding some new cautious new energy to a frustrating search that has lasted four weeks.

Military and civilian airplanes, 13 of them in all, crisscrossed the search area today, while 11 ships, some with high-tech scanners worked the ocean surface.

In Perth, Australia, right now our senior CNN international correspondent Matthew Chance is there in Beijing and CNN's David McKenzie.

Matthew, you are at the headquarters of the search. How much weight are commanders putting on these new, but still unconfirmed pings and debris from the **Chinese**?

MATTHEW CHANCE, CNN SENIOR INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Yes, it's a good question. And you get the impression that they're very being reluctant to take this seriously. Certainly, they haven't deployed any assets yet. They haven't sent any aircraft to any ships to that location, and perhaps that will change that when dawn breaks here and they start deploying those aircraft. Certainly what the Australian-led team have said is that they're going to be looking for more information, they've tried to contact the **Chinese** vessel that monitored these apparent pings, it hasn't done yet.

Tried to contact them to get more information. So far they haven't managed to make contact. They have been in contact with Beijing and the relevant authorities there, but so far they're saying they have not got enough information to conclude that this is anything to do whatsoever with that missing Malaysian airliner. So they're looking for more information before they commit to adding resources to that -- to that area, which is outside, remember, the designated area that we were told that the international team was in fact searching in.

KEILAR: Yes, and David, in Beijing, these new details, they are not coming from the search crews directly, they're actually get out via **Chinese** media. Why this communication gap, and it's not coming from the Australian-led search, I guess sort of headquarters there where Matthew is?

DAVID MCKENZIE, CNN INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Well, Brianna, it's too early to probably to tell the reason for that. Often, it's state media that acts as the mouthpiece of the government that puts out information on the search, through these weeks. We've had this happen quite often and initially it's state media, particularly Xinhua, the main state media here in **China**, that puts out information effectively kind of circling around the official process.

We don't know yet what the communications might be behind the scenes between Beijing and Perth, but certainly it does appear that they have jumped the gun, somewhat. Excuse me. They've also been pretty early on after the initial announcement of this signal that was detected, there was follow-up, official statements from government agencies saying that this does not necessarily mean that it's connected to the plane.

And so it does appear that this was effectively kind of getting out on a limb and then retracting somewhat. So we'll have to wait and see as the day progresses here in Asia what exactly they were trying to do by putting this information out -- Brianna.

KEILAR: Yes. And Matthew, the sun will rise soon there in Australia, Sunday will begin momentarily. Will the focus today on this search -- is it going to be where these new pings have reportedly been heard?

CHANCE: I think there's certainly going to be a lot of pressure for the Australian-led search teams to refocus their efforts on that area. Because, you know, no matter what the questions are that have been raised by these **Chinese** disclosures, they are possibly the best lead that we've had in several weeks, and so I think there's a lot of pressure, both in **China** and elsewhere in the world, Malaysia and of course in the media for the Australian-led teams to be involved as much as possible --

(CROSSTALK)

MCKENZIE: Yes, it's going to be a little --

CHANCE: -- on these leads, so that they can show that they're doing everything they can. But the other point I wanted to make is that, you know, this underlines the complex nature of this international search effort. There's eight countries engaged in this search, seven of them report directly to the Australian led teams here, but it's just **China** that refuses to do that and instead channels its information through Beijing and that's led to this confusion. It's potentially a source of friction in the future -- Brianna. KEILAR: Yes, and, David, if you can speak about a little bit because there is so much pressure from many of these families, many of the people who are on the plane are **Chinese**. There is so much interest where you are in trying to figure out what happened. What is the reaction at this point from these folks there in **China** as they hear this news coming from state media?

MCKENZIE: Well, it's worth reminding people that more than 150 passengers on **board** this plane were **Chinese** nationals, and hundreds of the family members of those on **board** are here stuck in a **hotel** in Beijing. They've remained here through these weeks. And the initial reaction has to be, let's wait and see. They've been through this many times, Brianna, when there was a -- what seemed like a credible lead, and then that lead was dashed and that has left emotions raw here over the weeks as they dragged on to find this missing plane.

As Matthew says, this is the most credible lead in terms of possibility of being something credible that we've had in many weeks, so certainly there will be a sense of waiting, foreboding for some of course, because when you finally get that confirmation that this is the data recorder if that is the case, then that will extinguish all hope the family might have, though certainly that hope has diminished as the days go on, and as people wait, they do realize at least privately, I think that, you know, there's very little chance their loved ones are alive.

But they are certainly overnight here in Asia have said to us they want to wait and see to see a physical piece of debris or a credible piece of evidence, and that might be one reason the **Chinese** are channeling the information out through **Chinese** media, because they have a very important **group** here being the loved ones of the families on **board**, that once that information, so effectively they are speaking to their audience -- Brianna.

KEILAR: That's right. So many ups and downs that they've been through. You really feel for them.

Matthew, David, thanks to both of you. Really appreciate it.

And for a month now, it has all come down to this, find this pinger and then find the plane. So could these pulses heard by the crew of a **Chinese** ship be the real thing?

Let me bring in Jeff Densmore whose team is in charge of the design, development and the qualification of underwater locator beacons, and CNN aviation and government regulation correspondent Rene Marsh.

Jeff, to you first, what do you make of the **Chinese** reportedly hearing a pulse signal. Are you confident that this could be the real deal?

JEFF DENSMORE, DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING, DUKANE SEACOM: Good evening. I don't know if I'd use the word confident. We need to know more information, but I'm very hopeful. As I am sure that all the

families are, everyone wants to get to the bottom of this and understand what happened. So finding the recorders is a very important piece of that. So we need to know more information about what was heard, how long it was heard and what type of signal to help better understand whether it could be the locator beacons themselves.

KEILAR: Sure. And so analysts saying, you know, perhaps, and also expressing some hope as you are.

Rene, you're actually learning some new information about the **Chinese** equipment, right? I mean, if folks have been following this, they know that the big pinger locator was the U.S. piece of equipment that was lent to the Australians, the TPL-25, I believe, a giant underwater microphone. This is not that, right? This is something different. What do we know about it?

RENE MARSH, CNN AVIATION AND GOVERNMENT REGULATION CORRESPONDENT: So this is also an underwater microphone. It's a hydrophone. But it doesn't have the same capabilities as the tow pinger, which you were just speaking about, Brianna.

So we just talked to the maker of the hydrophone that the search crews on **board** the **Chinese** ship were using when they reportedly detected a ping on that 37.5 kilohertz frequency for about a minute and a half. Now the equipment is advance. It's an advanced system for locating and tracking underwater pingers. We know that divers can use it or it can be used handheld by divers or handheld from the surface like the **Chinese** were doing in that video that we had there.

And if we put that up, you could see exactly what we're talking about there because it is clear when you look at that video that this equipment is not going as deep as the tow pinger can go. Remember the tow pinger is what is on **board** the Australian ship, the Ocean Shield. The tow pinger can go some 20,000 feet deep under the water, and when you look at that video there, clearly that is clearly not going 20,000 feet deep.

The maximum depth the **Chinese** hydrophone can operate in is about 600 feet according to the maker, and you just saw there was not getting anywhere near that because they were doing this from the surface and lowering it by that pole.

The reason why depth is so important is because, again, as we have been saying, you have to be within a one to two-mile radius to reliably detect a ping from the black boxes. However -- there's a but and there's always a but in this story here. But one ocean surveillance expert points out that there are certain conditions like water temperature that could allow sound to travel a longer distance, such as cold water. So that might fudge the numbers just a little bit when we talk about the one to two-mile radius -- Brianna.

KEILAR: So, Jeff, you know, if I'm listening to news of this pinger, perhaps, being located or the idea that they are hearing this **Chinese** crew has heard something that could be reminiscent of the pinger, could it be something else? Are the things that could impact this signal? I mean, I heard this described as the second hand on the clock. Is this really unmistakably a sound or could there be something else making the sound?

DENSMORE: Obviously, we need to wait and see or get evidence of what was heard and for how long. It is a very unique sound. It did a very fixed the evidence of what was heard. It is a unique sound and in a distinct frequency, and it is like the ticking off a clock. It's very repeatable and very continuous in that way. So even if they heard it partially over the course of 90 seconds, it would be pretty unique to the device itself. Obviously, there are many things in the water that can generate sound, but this is unique in what it produces.

KEILAR: Unique. And we'll be getting more information no doubt as this goes on. Thank you so much, Rene and Jeff. Really appreciate it.

Is this ping the **Chinese** say they heard -- is it actually from Flight 370? We are bringing in our team of aviation analysts after a quick break.

(**COMMERCIAL** BREAK)

KEILAR: Well, for some people, the **Chinese** ship detecting a pulse signal seems unlikely. Why is that? Well, the ship was outside the day's search area, was using a more modest piece of equipment, and experts from the beginning have said that finding a ping without having found confirmed debris first would be very, very difficult.

So let's bring back our own experts to talk about this side of things.

CNN aviation analyst Miles O'Brien, we have CNN aviation and government regulation correspondent Rene Marsh back with us, and CNN aviation correspondent Richard Quest.

Miles, let me start with you he here. If I told you that a ship would find the ping without finding the debris first, what would your reaction be?

MILES O'BRIEN, CNN AVIATION ANALYST: My first reaction would be what are the -- nonpublic satellite images that got them on target, if you will. I suspect the **Chinese** have employed a lot of assets they don't want to talk about to assist them in locating this particular find, if it is indeed a find, and I think they have been playing independently, autonomously outside of the investigation, because of the concerns about their sharing some of their methods for gathering secret information.

And also, frankly, because of the acrimony that we have documented thoroughly here on CNN between the Malaysians and the **Chinese** as this investigation has progressed. So that's what -- my first inclination was the **Chinese** know something that they haven't shared, and that probably shouldn't come as much of a surprise to us.

KEILAR: Yes -- no, I don't think it really does. That's really an interesting take on things, there could be some debris that we don't even know about. We may never know about if this does play out this way.

Richard, this information that we've gotten so far, it's come from **Chinese** state media. Are you surprised that the information could have come out like this? How do you think that this perhaps affects the search if all? RICHARD QUEST, CNN AVIATION CORRESPONDENT: Nothing surprises me about this story anymore, Brianna, and I'm not being facetious when I say it. The truth is, of course, it shouldn't have come out like this. It was supposed to be reported to the JACC in Perth, the coordination center, they will determine if more verification needs to be done, and they would make the announcement, but the **Chinese** don't play by the same rules as everyone else, and that is not a **Chinese** understatement.

That is a comment that basically, all of their information is not going to go directly to Perth, it's going via Beijing, and for good reason. They did have the majority of citizens on **board** this aircraft. They are to some extent if not shutout, they are tangential to it, and therefore they have got to be seen to be taking a very strict and stern way of looking into it. Because ultimately, the **Chinese** the government are going to have to answer for what they did and how they reacted.

One potential thought of course is they may want to find the box first, and I can't see how they would. I cannot see an argument that would let them, but they may try to claim the investigation.

KEILAR: Yes, I mean, we'll see, and obviously, that's many steps ahead, but, Rene, when you look at this, you know, Miles did bring it up, you would expect that if this is the pinger they've located, there must have been some other information.

You've followed this from the beginning and just sort of the idea of how these things work. Can you imagine a ship crossing the path of the black box basically, you know, coincidentally at randomly here?

MARSH: You know, I -- no, I cannot. And honestly, whoever was on **board** that ship should truly go ahead and **buy** themselves a lottery ticket, because it really is about the same here. I mean, this vast, vast ocean that we're talking about here that they have been searching now for about 30 days, and they happened to stumble upon the exact area where they hear this pinging sound. If that is true, and that is truly the case, those are a bunch of really lucky folks on **board** that ship.

So it really begs the question, were they working off of other information that we are just don't have access to? Did they have additional satellite images or whatever it is, other data that we didn't know about that led them to that specific area, and why was the ship in that area? Was it on the way to the designated search area, and just happened to hear this? Or again, were they working off of the other information? That or was this truly the real thing here that we're talking about here or was it a false positive?

Going back to the maker of this equipment that they're using, the maker did admit to us on the phone that there is a possibility of picking up a false positive with this equipment, and it could very well pick up other equipment that is in the area, but then it begs the question, were there other ships nearby emitting a sound that perhaps this equipment may have picked up on?

KEILAR: Yes. And/or was someone, you know, from the **Chinese** ship in a way, I guess you could say to borrow your metaphor, did something -- some intel give them maybe help in picking their lottery numbers.

Rene, Miles, Richard Quest, thanks to all of you.

Now coming up, could the ping heard by this **Chinese** ship be from Malaysia Flight 370? We'll be looking more into that. Martin Savidge and pilot Mitchell Casado are standing by in the flight simulator to explore reasons why the plane might have taken this path.

(**COMMERCIAL** BREAK)

KEILAR: So if the pulse signal does belong to the Malaysian Air 370, and again that is a huge if here, but if it is the plane, what course did the airliner take beforehand?

Let's go now to CNN's Martin Savidge. He is with pilot Mitchell Casado in the flight simulator.

Martin, what have you been able to figure out from the location of this reported pulse signals?

MARTIN SAVIDGE, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Well, hello, Brianna, yes, I think initially when I heard about this ping that I'm skeptical, but now that we've sort of looked at it and plotted it especially, Mitchell has pointed out to me, that it's very close to the arc that this aircraft is alleged to have flown.

MITCHELL CASADO, PILOT TRAINER, 777 COCKPIT SIMULATOR: That's right. It looks like the predictions those scientists were making were paying off. It's very, very close.

SAVIDGE: It was right on that southern arc and this is the information that was gleaned as a result of the Inmarsat communications. So about once every hour the airplane was allegedly not so much checking in, but sending a little signal, and when they plotted them on course, they found that it led to the south, and so this identification here, it was right in between I thought two search areas that had already been checked.

CASADO: That is right, Martin. It looks like it was pretty much right smack in the middle. So, you know, it looks like they were looking in the right area.

SAVIDGE: And so from sheerly -- you know, looking at it on the maps, looking at it on the charts, and navigation, it fits, and it fits very well -- Brianna.

KEILAR: So this is certainly the area where you might expect, and that's very interesting to note, Martin Savidge, Mitchell Casado, as we try to figure out more details about those pings that were heard.

And you know, some of family members of the Flight 360 passengers and crew are holding on to hope that their loved ones are still alive. An update on the latest developments next.

(**COMMERCIAL** BREAK) KEILAR: A quick update now on the search for Flight 370. A **Chinese** ship has reportedly detected a 90-second stream of pings consistent with an airliner's so-called black box, but it's too soon to say whether the sounds are linked to the missing plane. In response to the report, Malaysia's acting Transport minister tweeted, quote, "Another night of hope, praying hard." In fact, some families say the latest reports actually strengthen their hopes that their loved ones are still alive.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SARAH BAJC, PARTNER OF PHILIP WOOD, AMERICAN ON FLIGHT 370: I think that I have come to a realization that for sure that the flight is still intact, and the passengers are still alive because the sequence of information that we've been given actually all points to that, and that was the common theme at the meeting with the families. I believe all the other families feel the same way that I do.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KEILAR: Now for the first time people who are not investigators are listening to the recordings of the final conversations from the cockpit of Flight 370 to air traffic control.

CNN's Joe Johns is joining me from Kuala Lumpur to talk about this.

Joe, just to be clear, we're not obviously talking about the flight data recordings. Those are, we would expect, in the ocean at this point, these are the recordings between pilots and air traffic control. Who listened to these recordings?

JOE JOHNS, CNN SENIOR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT: Well, what we're told is that investigators have allowed friends of the pilots, perhaps even other pilots to listen to audio recording of those conversations with the cockpit and air traffic control, but family members of the pilots have not been allowed the same courtesy, we're told this is because it's still viewed as a criminal investigation until the evidence proves otherwise.

And, Brianna, even the state's recordings of the cockpit conversations are not normally released to the public if there's a criminal investigation underway.

KEILAR: Yes, held close while that investigation continues.

Joe Johns in Kuala Lumpur, thank you so much.

Malaysia announcing today, three committees would be formed, that they will help in the immense task of tending to the families overseeing the investigation and then deploying assets in the search for Flight 370.

CNN's Richard Quest back with us now.

Richard, walk us through this. How Malaysia is trying to stay organized here with these three prongs.
QUEST: Well, they have now announced the formal ICAO investigation into the incident. Pull that to one side that is the big investigation that is going to determine what happened and make recommendations for safety reasons so it doesn't happen again. That is an international treaty obligation.

Put that to that. Now they've separately announced three Malaysian committees. The first will look after issues related to the next of kin, how they're being handled, how their visit will take place, what counseling, all the issues relating to the next of kin. The second committee will be concerned with the investigation, and the final committee will be looking at the search and anything to do with the search and the assets that need to be dealt with. So what Malaysia has done is put structure into it.

I have to say I'm surprised that the formal investigation, the ICAO, the big one, hasn't been started before now. Normally we'd be getting a report by now. The interim report or the preliminary report. But as it may be we've got it now. And as for these committees they are designed I think, Brianna, they are designed for the long haul. This is evident that everybody is hunkering down for a long trudge to find evidence, to find debris, to find answers.

KEILAR: Do you think, Richard, that this could have been formed before now? Is this kind of late or is this sort of what you expect? Because there is that other investigation that you mentioned.

QUEST: The big investigation is the aviation investigation. Well, you know, of course it -- it's normally formed within hours if not days -- but you normally have a plane and you're not normally spending most of your time on a search and rescue operation. So I think you have to allow them a little bit of leeway for things. And also a lot of the functions that these committees will be involved with have been getting on with it.

They have been dealing with the next of kin. They have been doing the search and rescue. They have been looking at the technical aspects. So what this is doing is putting structure into it. It's creating a formal environment in which everybody can move forward. What will be interesting is, from the aviation point of view, because obviously we need to know there are more than a thousand 777 in the air how quickly we really do get the first findings of fact. What do they tell us about what they know about the plane and how it flew.

KEILAR: Sure. Richard Quest, thanks for explaining all of that for us. Appreciate it.

Now if the pulse does indeed prove to be the black box of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, what is next? We'll show you right after a quick break.

(**COMMERCIAL** BREAK)

KEILAR: More on the search for Flight 370 in a moment, but first, we're also watching an important story developing in Afghanistan where voters turned out in large numbers today for historic elections despite threats of Taliban violence.

This is the first democratic transfer of presidential power in the country's history. There were no major attacks in the capital, but 20 people were killed in violence in other parts of the country. Preliminary results will be announced around April 28th.

A short time ago President Obama issued a written statement, part of it says, "I congratulate the millions of Afghans who enthusiastically participated in today's historic elections which represent another important milestone in Afghans taking full responsibility for their country as the United States and our partners draw down our forces.

Now we are waiting for some kind of confirmation on a couple of new developments from the search for Malaysia Airlines Flight 370. The most interesting one is from **Chinese** search crews who reportedly picked up a short series of pulses, 90 seconds worth. Consistent with pings that might come from one of those so-called black boxes.

CNN correspondent Rosa Flores, you're waiting for this confirmation as well. We're anxiously awaiting more information. Tell us what happens if these pings are really from plane wreckage. What happens first?

ROSA FLORES, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Well, Brianna, I'm just fascinated by this type of technology, because it's used on a regular basis in the oil and gas industry. How do I know this? Well, as you know, I

used to work in TV in Louisiana and that's HQ for the oil and gas industry operations in the Gulf of Mexico, so what are we talking about here? We're talking about AUVs and ROVs.

AUVs are autonomous underwater vehicles. They are probes that dive deep into the ocean and map the ocean floor. In this case, what would these probes be looking for? Well, any oddities on the ocean floor so they would be able to find the debris field. Once you find the debris field then you step it up with something called an ROV, a remotely operated vehicle. Now this technology is pretty amazing.

You're looking at it -- on your screen. What it is, these machines are equipped with high definition cameras, arms and jaws. So these high definition cameras are your eyes in the deep sea. This equipment would actually be able to look for the black box. Once you see the black box, then what do you do? You use those arms and hands, those jaws to retrieve the black box.

So, Brianna, what if, for example, the black box is under debris, well, you can rig this ROV with lifting equipment and also with cutting equipment to get your hands on that black box, and then retrieve it up to the vessel. Of course, all of this has to -- we have to find the black box, we have to find the wreckage before any of this comes in -- Brianna.

KEILAR: Yes. Exactly. And even, Rosa, folks who have worked on very shallow situations will tell you this is painstaking, and I spoke with one person who said these vehicles can take one hour per 1,000 feet as they descend or come up. I don't know how deep certainly this area where this **Chinese** crew found the ping is, but we're talking some of these search areas as 20,000 feet. So how long can these devices work underwater? Is there a time limit for some of them?

FLORES: You know, it's a great question because when it comes to AUVs, these are unmanned vehicles, these are unmanned probes so a lot of the times they're operated by batteries so depends on the battery life for the AUVs. They go down, they work whatever battery life they have, they come up. The good thing about those is that once they come up, then they're able to connect them to a computer, and you get that high resolution picture of the ocean floor.

When it comes to ROVs, those are tethered to a ship so those can be underwater working for days, because these ships, these ROV ships are equipped with pretty much 24-hour staffing. They have 12-hour shifts and so long as these 12-hour shifts keep going, then you can keep that ROV in the deep sea working.

So that's the good thing about that. Once the debris field is identified, then these ROVs could work pretty much around the clock to try to find the black box.

KEILAR: Rosa Flores, thanks for explaining that to us. Really appreciate it.

Now no one knows for sure at least not yet what happened to Flight 370 but there are already calls for better measures to secure a cockpit. The latest on a proposal here in the U.S. next.

(**COMMERCIAL** BREAK)

KEILAR: Among those making their mark this week, Senator Bob Casey of Pennsylvania acting on a request by Ellen Saracini, the widow of United Airlines pilot Victor Saracini who died in the 9/11 attacks. Case has introduced a bill that would require a secondary barrier or gate to protect flight crews in **commercial** aircraft. Earlier Senator Casey told me why more security is still needed to protect cockpit crews.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SEN. BON CASEY (D), PENNSYLVANIA: Well, they need it because the evidence shows that there is not enough security even all these years after 9/11. The FAA and others that have looked at this indicated this kind of secondary barrier would be the most cost effective efficient and effective way to provide a full measure of security.

I think it's essential that the airlines discontinue their opposition to this even in advance of passing legislation, but we are going to continue to move forward with our legislation.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KEILAR: Senator Casey introduced his bill last year on September 11th. He says he's hopeful it will eventually become law.

Let's talk about this more with our CNN aviation analyst Miles O'Brien, and Les Abend, CNN aviation analyst and a 777 pilot. Miles, I know that you have really strong feelings on this issue, what you consider the real reason why a secondary barrier has taken so long to be required. Give us your thoughts on this.

MILES O'BRIEN, CNN AVIATION ANALYST: Well, let's just start with the common sense thing that we can probably all agree on. This is a good idea. This simply is a good idea. Since 9/11 and the discovery that a unsecured cockpit is a huge vulnerability, the idea of reinforcing the cockpit door was great, but eventually the crew has to come out on a long-ish flight to relieve themselves to do whatever. And that is a very vulnerable moment.

All that reinforcement is for naught if a determined hijacker decides to hurdle right through the top heavy drink cart and the flight attendant who's standing behind it, so this is a failure of our regulatory system. The FAA should be held accountable for this. Why did we not get rules put in place after 9/11 that would require these additional kind of light netting devices which would be a secondary barrier?

The FAA has -- which we have been accused repeatedly in the past of not properly enforcing the airlines because they tend to be sympathetic to the airlines who don't want to do this, because it costs them money. So now Congress is sort of go around the system which is broken and Congress itself is influenced by the airlines.

So you have to kind of follow the money and the influence here. The airlines don't want this to happen because it cost them money.

KEILAR: And what do you think, Les -- well, first off, I want you to kind of explain to lay people, where would this gate go? If you're talking about something that might be kind of mesh fabric, Miles said, where would this go? And also what do pilots say when they're talking about the need for this? Is this something where they really feel vulnerable and they wonder what the holdup has been?

LES ABEND, CNN AVIATION ANALYST: You know, we've been pushing for this for -- ever since 9/11. What we've moved ahead forward with was the FFD deal program, the Federal Flight Deck Officer program, but that's a last resort thing. That's if the -- if entry is gained into the cockpit. Miles is absolutely right. This is the most vulnerable time we have, regardless of whether we have a weapon in the cockpit.

When that door is opened, we're back to square one almost. So that the entry can be gained very quickly. And the barrier they're talking about from my understanding is of wire mesh type thing that can be attached according to whatever particular airplane model we're speaking of. It's going to have to be modified and be adjusted accordingly, but this is -- this is really a simple solution.

The airline's argument, you know, is of course cost. We compare ourselves to El Al, but they -- you know, their amount of airplanes compared to U.S. airplanes is a lot less, but the airlines, you know, are going to say that they're going to have to pass this on to the customer. I think it would just be a negligible cost compared to the price of the ticket and what passenger wouldn't pay extra to know that they have a more secure cockpit anyhow.

KEILAR: Well, yes, and to that point, we heard Miles say before, and you just mentioned it, El Al already has this in place. I mean, even if it is sort of expensive to do on so many airplanes, losing a plane is expensive as well, isn't it right? The liability issues that come with that if there is a precaution that an airline could have taken. I mean, assuming, you know, we don't know the cause of this, but if it were this, and they could have taken this precaution, that is also a very expensive venture, right?

ABEND: Of course. Of course, it is. I mean, if you add it up per airplane, but I mean, it saddens me that we have to get to this point and revisit it. Ellen Saracini's push for this over all these years over something that we're speculating might have occurred, but it's great, I mean, from that standpoint, you know, here's one benefit of a tragedy that may be Flight 370, but I'm really big endorser as my colleagues are in the airlines to have this in place.

KEILAR: Yes. And we'll see if this pushes some new momentum into this bill that Senator Casey introduced in September.

Les and Miles, thank you to you both.

Now coming up, we'll take you live from Australia for the latest on the search for Malaysia Flight 370, plus the desperate search for the black box as its battery life diminishes, that's next.

(**COMMERCIAL** BREAK)

KEILAR: We continue to follow important developments in the search for Flight 370 and reports of a possible pulse signal with the same frequency as a black box, but as CNN's Chad Myers explains the Indian Ocean is such a remote area, there's no easy map to follow.

CHAD MYERS, AMS METEOROLOGIST: You know, we talk about how much you know about the moon or how much you know about mars, that's because we can actually take pictures of those. You can't take a

picture of the ocean floor because you can't see through the water all the way through the ocean floor especially when it's 12,000 feet deep. So we have to send pings down to the ocean floor. They ping back and they give us kind of what the bottom looks like.

It's about a five-mile wide strip in any one area. The ship is moving about five miles per hour. Do the math there and you get 25 square miles per hour. Then you go to some very ridiculous map. 130 million square miles of the ocean for one ship to do it without even taking a break for fuel, it would take 593 years, one ship. Obviously 10 ships, you can do it in 59 years. But that's completely not doing anything else except mapping.

Let me show you what it really looks like here in the Indian Ocean which is kind of crazy. Let's say that our search area is somewhere up through here now. There is one ship that did a ping here, another ship that are ping through here. There's another one across here. But look at all of the blue area through here that doesn't have one single mapping of it here. And back out here, not one map ever, not one ship ever even drove over that area mapping that part of the Indian Ocean. Now, closer to home, the United States has most of the east coast, most of the west coast and the Gulf of Mexico ships, thanks to NOAA, ship have been all over the place so at least we know a little bit closer to home what the bottom of our ocean looks like, but out there in the Indian Ocean, absolutely not.

KEILAR: All right, Chad Myers for us.

Let's bring in CNN aviation analyst Miles O'Brien and 777 pilot Les Abend.

Miles, tell us a little bit about the difficulty that poses that this -- that there really is no map?

O'BRIEN: Yes, but they'll make one now in this particular area.

KEILAR: Yes.

O'BRIEN: Won't they? Because what will happen is that this pinging becomes verified, they will probably drop in the -- what they call the side scan sonar which has the ability to map the ocean floor. This is how they discovered the Air France 447 wreckage a couple of years after the debris was discovered and ultimately discovered the black boxes on that particular crash. And side scan sonar is an invaluable tool, you just don't want to plunk it down in the water unless you have a good idea of where to go.

The pinging might just do that, and if this is all verified, that's the next step is to get that side scan down there because the pinging is going the stop pretty soon. Maybe it already has, and maybe this is the place to begin that side scan sonar before the winter comes, and after that is done, you'll have a very good detailed map of that ocean floor.

KEILAR: And Les, this is sort of just a shot in the dark here, but when you look back to that Air France flight, I mean, in some of the immediate days after the crash, there was some debris found, but much of it was found at the ocean floor two years later. Was there a similar issue there where the ocean floor wasn't mapped, and did that play any role in it?

ABEND: Well, you know, I'm sorry to say that's beyond my expertise. But you know, it's -- that was my understanding that that was true. I mean, that's pretty vast in that particular area where Air France 447 went down, yes.

KEILAR: But as they -- so as they do this sort of side scan sonar, what are they really getting back? What kind of information do they get back, Miles, and do you think that this is something that they do now even if they're not for sure that it's a ping?

O'BRIEN: Maybe, yes. You know, I think it's kind of given the time constraints, the pressure, and all the issues that we've been talking about, just the families, the fact that, you know, winter is coming, I wouldn't be surprised if it gets done regardless. Even if you can't recreate the pinging noise which the **Chinese** claim to have heard, you might want to start doing this, the assets are in place, they can begin this process.

KEILAR: Yes.

O'BRIEN: And you know think of where they are. This is maybe 10,000 feet of depth, it's pitch black, it's cold, the sonar is the only way you're going to see anything, quote, unquote, you're really hearing returns and echoes, and -- but it can paint a picture, and it's very distinct when you run across wreckage. It would be something that would stand out if you were in the right place.

KEILAR: All right. And Les, just to put a button on it in our last 20 seconds here to you, we're waiting to figure out if this ping is the ping. Are you hopeful?

ABEND: I'm very hopeful. I have been hopeful this whole investigation, and I'd like to see it come to fruition, and we can begin a real investigation at that point.

KEILAR: Yes, we certainly all would, fingers crossed for sure, and we'll be thinking of those families.

Thank you, Les, thank you, Miles.

I'm Brianna Keilar. Thank you so much for joining me.

CNN NEWSROOM with Don Lemon begins right now.

DON LEMON, CNN ANCHOR: Thank you very much, Brianna. You're in the CNN NEWSROOM, I'm Don Lemon. It is the top of the hour. It's 7:00 p.m. Eastern. 7:00 p.m. here in the United States, on the east coast. Several days of nothing. Today there is something. I'm talking about the deep search for Malaysia Airlines Flight 370. And the people in charge are now working out whether this new something is worth pursuing.

CO masys : Malaysia Airline Systems Bhd | khzinv : Khazanah Nasional Berhad

IN i75 : Airlines | iairtr : Air Transport | itsp : Transportation/Shipping

NS gaira : Airplane Accidents | gdef : Armed Forces | gterr : Acts of Terror | nsum : News Digests | ntra : Transcripts | gcat : Political/General News | gcns : National Security | gcrim : Crime/Courts | gdis : Disasters/Accidents | gmmdis : Accidents/Man-made Disasters | grisk : Risk News | gtacc : Transport Accidents | ncat : Content Types | nfact : Factiva Filters | nfce : FC&E Exclusion Filter | nfcpex : FC&E Executive News Filter | niwe : IWE Filter

RE china : China | austr : Australia | usa : United States | kuala : Kuala Lumpur | malay : Malaysia | waustr : Western Australia | beijin : Beijing | apacz : Asia Pacific | asiaz : Asia | ausnz : Australia/Oceania | bric : BRIC Countries | chinaz : Greater China | devgcoz : Emerging Market Countries | dvpcoz : Developing Economies | easiaz : Eastern Asia | namz : North America | seasiaz : Southeast Asia

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