

# Wing part could help solve what happened to MH370

By Andrew Meldrum and Sylvie Corbet  
The Associated Press

**S**AINT-ANDRE, Reunion — A barnacle-encrusted wing part that washed up on a remote Indian Ocean island could help solve one of aviation's greatest mysteries, as investigators work to officially confirm that it belongs to the Malaysia Airlines flight that vanished more than a year ago.

The surprise discovery of the debris on a rocky beach stirred hopes and emotion among families of the missing, after a year and a half of grieving and frustration at a lack of answers, despite a wide, deep, and expensive multinational search effort in the southern Indian Ocean, the China Sea, and the Gulf of Thailand.

Even if it is confirmed to be a long-awaited first clue to the disappearance of Flight 370, there's no guarantee investigators can still find the plane's recorders or other remains.

French authorities moved the plane piece from the beach to the local airport on Reunion and sent it to the city of Toulouse, according to the Paris prosecutor's office.

Toulouse is the hub of Europe's aerospace industry, with the headquarters of Airbus and a network of hangars and plane facilities. The plane part will be analyzed this week in special defense facilities used for airplane testing and analysis, according to the Defense Ministry.

Air safety investigators, including one from Boeing, have identified the component found on the French island of Reunion as a "flaperon" from the trailing edge of a Boeing 777 wing, a U.S. official said. The official wasn't authorized to be publicly named.

Flight 370, which disappeared March 8, 2014 with 239 people on board, is the only 777 known to be missing. The unsuccessful search for the plane has raised concerns worldwide about whether airliners should be required to transmit their locations continually via satellite, especially when flying long distances over the ocean.

Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, whose country is leading the search for the plane in a remote patch of ocean far off Australia's west coast, expressed hope that the part would help solve the baffling



**FLAPERON FOUND.** French police officers carry a piece of debris from a plane in Saint-Andre, Reunion island. Air-safety investigators, one of them a Boeing investigator, have identified the component as a "flaperon" from the trailing edge of a Boeing 777 wing, according to a U.S. official. Flight 370, which disappeared March 8, 2014 with 239 people on board, is the only 777 known to be missing. (AP Photo/Lucas Marie)

will find out the truth so that they may have closure and peace," Prime Minister Najib Razak said in a statement.

French law enforcement authorities went to Reunion island to examine the piece, according to an official close to the investigation of the debris. A French law enforcement helicopter is scouring the waters around the island in hopes of spotting more debris, and U.S. investigators are examining a photo of the debris.

The wing part was found on a desolate, rocky beach in the small town of Saint-Andre.

Flaperons are located on the rear edge of both wings, about midway between the fuselage and the tips. When the plane is banking, the flaperon on one wing tilts up and the other tilts down, which makes the plane roll to the left or right as it turns.

The piece could help investigators figure out how the plane crashed, but whether it will help search crews pinpoint the rest of the wreckage is unclear, given the complexity of the currents in the southern Indian Ocean and the time that has elapsed since the plane disappeared.

The last primary radar contact with Flight 370 placed its position over the Andaman Sea about 230 miles northwest of the Malaysian city of Penang. Reunion is about 3,500 miles southwest of Penang, and about 2,600 miles west of the current search area.

Officials predicted that Indian Ocean currents would eventually carry any floating debris from the plane to the east coast of Africa. But experts say it would be difficult if not impossible to trace those currents back to the precise location of the main wreckage, given the length of time that has elapsed and the vast distance the part may have travelled.

There is precedence for large objects travelling vast distances across the Indian

mystery that has left the families of those on board in an agonizing limbo.

"Nothing has been confirmed, but obviously this is, by far, the most encouraging sign so far," Abbott told Sydney radio station 2SM. "We have long thought it went down somewhere in the Indian Ocean and, at last, it seems that we may be on the verge of some confirmation."

If it turns out to be part of the Malaysian plane, it could bolster the theory that the plane deviated from its path between Kuala Lumpur and Beijing and turned south into the Indian Ocean. And it would put to rest speculation that it could have travelled north or landed somewhere after being hijacked.

The discovery has changed the life of Reunion environmental worker Johnny Begue. He told The Associated Press that he stumbled across the plane part while collecting stones to grind spices.

"I knew immediately it was part of an aircraft, but I didn't realize how important it was, that it could help to solve the mystery of what happened to the Malaysian jet," Begue, 46, told The Associated Press.

He said he called several of his workmates and they carried the wing fragment out of the water so that it would not be battered by the surf against the volcanic rocks that make up most of the beach.

Begue also discovered a piece of a suitcase about 2.5 meters away, he said, though it's unclear whether there is any link to the plane wing.

Authorities wouldn't comment on whether Begue was the first to report discovering the component. Colleague Teddy Riviere corroborated his account, and praised him for the discovery. Members of Begue's soccer team kidded him on his new fame in local media.

Australian officials expressed skepticism that the suitcase was associated with the wing part. Australian transport minister Warren Truss noted that there did not appear to be any marine life attached to the suitcase, indicating it probably hadn't been in the water for long.

The wing piece is about six feet long. Investigators found a number on the part, but it is not a serial or registration number, Truss said. It's likely a maintenance number, he said. Another number was reportedly found on the wing; more information will be discovered after analysis of the part begins Wednesday.

Malaysian authorities also headed to Reunion and Toulouse.

"We have had many false alarms before, but for the sake of the families who have lost loved ones, and suffered such heartbreaking uncertainty, I pray that we

## South Korean prime minister says MERS threat is over

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korean Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn says the country is now virtually free of the deadly MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) virus that killed 36 people and sickened nearly 200 since an outbreak was declared in May.

Hwang in a meeting with policymakers urged people to return to normal as the country hasn't seen a new MERS case in more than three weeks and there is no longer anyone isolated at hospitals and homes for treatment.

MERS was discovered in 2012 and the cases had been mostly centered in Saudi Arabia before the outbreak in South Korea. The MERS virus belongs to the family of coronaviruses that include the common cold and SARS, and can cause fever, breathing problems, pneumonia, and kidney failure.

## IBM's Watson computing technology learns Japanese

TOKYO (AP) — The IBM Watson super-brainy computing technology, which has helped organize massive data as well as beaten champions on the "Jeopardy" TV show, is now learning Japanese.

IBM Watson, a unit of the U.S. technology and consulting company, said it was working with Japanese telecommunications and robotics company Softbank Corp. to share Watson with startups and universities for a variety of consumer applications starting in October.

Watson senior vice president Mike Rhodin told reporters Watson is an effective tool in handling a large amount of unstructured data, such as clinical tests, information on drugs, and regulations in the legal field. He says Watson can help teachers, too.

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			2	5			
			7		8		
7	8		3	2		6	
	9	7		6	3		
		5	3		4	9	
6		3		8		2	7
	4			5			
		1		6			

Difficulty level: Hard #25787

**Instructions:** Fill in the grid so that the digits 1 through 9 appear one time each in every row, column, and 3x3 box.

### Solution to last week's puzzle

Puzzle #34261 (Medium)

All solutions available at <www.sudoku.com>.

5	3	4	1	7	2	9	6	8
1	9	6	8	4	5	2	3	7
2	8	7	6	9	3	1	4	5
3	1	5	2	8	7	4	9	6
8	4	9	3	5	6	7	2	1
7	6	2	4	1	9	8	5	3
6	2	8	9	3	1	5	7	4
4	5	3	7	2	8	6	1	9
9	7	1	5	6	4	3	8	2

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### Building Codes Division

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Hiring a licensed electrician or plumber helps ensure that the person doing the work is qualified. To check on whether a person you wish to hire is licensed, visit our website at [bcd.oregon.gov](http://bcd.oregon.gov), then click on "license holder search." For more information about obtaining a license, please call (503) 373-1268. BCD also wants to remind you that permits help protect the safety and value of your home.

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- Adding a room
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- Building a deck 30 inches above ground
- Building a fence taller than 6 feet
- Adding electrical circuits
- Building a shed

Call your local building department or check our website, [www.PermitsProtect.info](http://www.PermitsProtect.info), to find out when you need a permit for your building or remodeling job.

[www.bcd.oregon.gov](http://www.bcd.oregon.gov)