

SEA SEARCHES

Search and Rescue Operations (SAR)

The searches to find the airplane have involved the Brazilian, French American and Spanish Navies. They have been coordinated by the MRCC (Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre) in Recife, the airplane having disappeared within its area of SAR responsibility. The SAR searches ended on Friday 26 June, no bodies or airplane parts having been recovered for nine days. The aircraft then stopped their patrols. The ships from the Brazilian Navy also left the area. The ships from the French Navy have stayed in order to provide support for the search for the recorders.

Recovery of bodies

Sailors from the Frigate *Ventôse* and the BPC *Mistral* recovered about thirty bodies between 6 and 7 June 2009. Brazilian sailors found a further twenty. These bodies were taken to Recife for autopsy.

Recovery of airplane parts

Parts of the airplane were recovered between 6 and 20 June 2009. Those that were recovered by the Brazilian Navy were grouped together at Recife. They were taken into account by the BEA, which made an inventory and began the first visual examinations. The debris recovered by the French Navy was placed on *Mistral*. All of the airplane wreckage will be sent back to France for examination.

Searches for Recorders

The acoustic search equipment to locate and recover the recorders is based on the following additional means:

- the « Fairmount Glacier » and « Fairmount Expedition » from Louis-Dreyfus Armateurs (LDA), each of which is towing one of the hydrophones supplied by the US Navy,
- the French Navy *Emeraude* submarine,
- the « Pourquoi Pas? » oceanographic ship from IFREMER, which is carrying two specialised exploration and intervention vehicles, the *Nautile* submarine and the *Victor* ROV.

These ships have been exploring the zone since mid-June. This first phase of searches will come to an end on 10 July 2009, beyond the final limit date for acoustic broadcasts from the beacons. If the recorders are not found by 10 July, a second phase of searches of a month's duration will begin. The « Pourquoi Pas? » will conduct new searches using diving equipment and towed sonar.

2 July 2009