

Beat: Lifestyle

Debris spotted in search for vessel in distress near Antarctica

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USPA News - Search planes responding to an emergency distress beacon from a large fishing vessel near Antarctica have spotted debris in the area, Australian officials said on late Sunday, adding that they held "grave concerns" for the unknown number of crew members. The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) said the emergency distress beacon was activated on early Sunday when it was in the far southern Indian Ocean about 3,241 kilometers (2,013 miles) southwest of Perth in Australia, or some 648 kilometers (402 miles) north of the Antarctic mainland.

The emergency distress beacon is registered to a 75-meter (246-feet) Tanzanian-flagged fishing support vessel, but it was unclear how many crew members were on board, though a vessel of that size could carry dozens of people. Efforts to contact the vessel have been unsuccessful. A civil jet carrying rescue workers and a Royal Australian Air Force P3 Orion were both sent to the area to respond to the distress signal, but the large distance meant it took them more than five hours to reach the location. The P3 Orion, which is capable of dropping survival equipment, had initially been tasked to search for missing Malaysia Airlines Flight 370. "A civil jet and a RAAF P3 Orion were tasked to locate the vessel. The vessel was not located but debris was seen in the location of the beacon signal," AMSA said on late Sunday after the planes were forced to return. A broadcast to shipping was also issued but it is unlikely any ships will be near the area due to the remoteness of the location. AMSA said the search and rescue operation was expected to resume on Monday morning, subject to weather conditions. Weather conditions in the area on Sunday were described as "extremely poor" with low clouds, rain, snow and a water temperature of 2 degrees Celsius (35.6 degrees Fahrenheit).

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<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-2052/debris-spotted-in-search-for-vessel-in-distress-near-antarctica.html>

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