

Inmarsat offers global airline tracking service after MH370

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A crew member looks out an observation window aboard a Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) P3 Orion maritime search aircraft as it flies over the southern Indian Ocean looking for debris from missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 on April 11, 2014

British satellite operator Inmarsat said Monday it was offering a basic tracking service to all the world's passenger airlines free of charge, following the disappearance of Malaysian Airways flight MH370.

Inmarsat, which has played a role in the search for the missing plane, said the service it was offering would provide definitive positional information.

It will allow a plane to determine its location using GPS and send that data over Inmarsat's global network at 15-minute intervals.

While GPS (Global Positioning System) is commonplace in cars and mobile phones, the international air traffic control network is still almost entirely based on radar.

Rupert Pearce, CEO of Inmarsat, said that in the wake of the loss of flight MH370, which disappeared without a trace on March 8 during a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 239 people on board, it was "simply the right thing to do" to provide a free service.

In the so far fruitless search for the Malaysian jet, electronic pings from Inmarsat equipment on the lost plane led investigators to search for wreckage in the Indian Ocean.

Inmarsat said it would also offer a "black box in the sky" service under which a plane that had deviated off course—which is believed to be the case with [flight](#) MH370—could transmit historic and real-time information from the [flight data recorder](#) and [cockpit voice recorder](#).

More than two months since MH370 disappeared, no wreckage has been found to even confirm a crash, despite teams scouring sites in the Indian Ocean.

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