



AMERICAN SALVAGE ASSOCIATION NEWS RELEASE
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AMERICAN SALVAGE ASSOCIATION MEMBER RECOVERS AIR FRANCE
FLIGHT 447 BLACK BOXES

Arlington, VA – The expertise of an American Salvage Association (ASA) member culminated in locating and recovering the “black boxes” of Air France Flight 447, which crashed into the Atlantic Ocean on June 1, 2009, killing all 216 passengers and 12 aircrew on a flight from Rio de Janeiro to Paris. The black box recoveries took place in 3,900 meters of water (msw) and were made possible using the ASA member company-designed and operated Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV).

The recoveries were completed in a very short period of time given the technical complexities of operating in extreme water depths. The ROV located the Flight Data Recorder (FDR) within 12 hours on its first dive on April 27. Unfortunately, the critical Memory Unit had separated from the chassis of the FDR. An intensive and methodical visual survey of the sea floor was then initiated in search of the proverbial needle in the haystack. With the ROV operating around the clock, the unit was found on May 1, and brought to the surface. The ROV returned to the debris field to commence the search for the Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR), which records supplemental information critical to the investigation into the cause of the crash. On May 2, the intact CVR was located and brought to deck of *Ile de Sein*, the Alcatel-Lucent cable ship supporting the recovery project. Both boxes will be returned to France for analysis. In the interim, the ROV will continue to survey the debris field and recover items of interest as directed by the French Bureau d’Enquetes et d’Analyses (BEA) and the on-site investigative team.

”This high-tech search and recovery job demonstrates yet another professional response that an ASA member was able to provide, that can hopefully shed light on the cause of this horrific, tragic crash,” said ASA President Mauricio Garrido.

The American Salvage Association is a trade association promoting professionalism and improving marine casualty response in North American coastal and inland waters.