EGYPTAIR CRASH PRESSURING AIRBUS TO FIND ALTERNATIVES TO BLACK BOXES

News / Airlines



The challenges that accident investigators are facing locating crash recorders from EgyptAir Flight 804 almost two weeks after the plane went down are reinforcing efforts by Airbus to find alternative ways to tap crucial flight data from lost aircraft.

“This reinforces our overall approach to find solutions to get data out of accidents as soon as possible,” said Charles Champion, Executive Vice President for engineering at Airbus Group SE’s plane making unit.

EgyptAir Flight 804 crashed into the eastern Mediterranean with 66 passengers and crew on board on May 19. The plane was flying to Cairo from Paris.

Air-accident investigators have said the cause for the crash is still unknown adding urgency to find the so-called black boxes that typically provide the best clues about why a plane went down.

Investigators are in a race against time. The cockpit voice and flight data recorders are equipped with underwater beacons to help locate the storage devices, but the batteries on the beacons last only 30 days.

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“What is critical for us is everything is done to find the black boxes,” Fabrice Brégier, Chief Executive of Airbus’s plane-making unit, said on Tuesday.

Airbus has been pursuing a dual-track approach for alternatives to the current problems, which have also hobbled other accidents including the 2009 crash of an Air France flight from Rio de Janeiro to Paris when it took about two years to recover the storage devices.

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