

By David, 26th February, 2024 ([rev 27th Feb](#))

Summary of the “60 Minutes” Australia broadcast about MH370, Sunday 26th February, 2024.

The broadcast put together some views as to why a new search for the sunken wreckage at the crash site should be conducted and, for the ATSB Chief Commissioner's part, why not, as yet.

There was some mixing of comments with contexts, stemming principally from conflation of a new search for what the trawler found with searching for the aircraft crash site.

Also there seemed to be no understanding that even if the trawler find was an MH370 wing, or even horizontal stabiliser, that would not lead directly to finding that crash site.

As to the statement attributed to Kit Olver, that he thinks the wing is from MH370, apparently already quoted widely; he did not say that. Indeed he tells me that that attribution annoys him greatly. He says he went to some pains to explain that initially he thought it was but now just thought it might be. That was after he had discussed it with a “retired ex-Navy aeronautical engineer”, describing to the interviewer some reasons for that change. Colour was one, MH370's wing being grey. He agrees that from just that aspect half the horizontal stabiliser might be more likely being white, his clear recollection, particularly if his and George Currie's estimates of the wing's size were somewhat awry.

[\(Also, while unrelated to this broadcast he would like it known that he has no criticism of AMSA, which he got in touch with about his find, or Ocean Infinity, which he informed later, fully understanding their reactions/non reactions.\)](#)

Peter Waring endorsed a search for it on the basis it could be from MH370 and as such should be comparatively simple if separated from the issue of the main search.

However as to whether it is realistic to assume it could drift that far he may be unaware that a wing section as described would sink quite quickly and, besides, would have various pieces of flap, flap operating mechanism and slat that should be apparent. Also such a wing part is unlikely to have followed a very different course to the other wreckage, since current dominates windage.

Yet even if the search is just to confirm that it is not from M370 while finding out what it is, that has appeal if simple.

Peter Waring also was critical of the selection of the ATSB to run the pre-OI underwater search, the ATSB being a “transportation agency”. In particular he was concerned that when a decision was made to extend the original search, that was on the continuing basis that there was no active pilot at the end. He thought - and thinks - this to be questionable. As to why this basis would have persisted he observed that, “it was psychologically very challenging to consider that someone may have cut off the oxygen to all of the passengers then flown the aircraft for hours and hours afterwards. I think it was the psychological scale, so much off the scale for people to think about.” Apparently he is unaware that there were reasons to support, prima facie, that there was no active pilot, including such as the APU auto-start explanation for the final log-on request.

Fued Sharuji, who was in charge of managing the crisis at Malaysian Airlines, observed that, “if we could turn back the clock there are certain things we could have done differently...we could have

improved intercommunication of the various Government organisations”, like Military, Ministry of Transport.... That, “wasn’t very effective.”

He denied it was a deliberate act of mass murder by his friend and colleague of 30 years, Captain Zahari, “He does not have the capacity or the character of an assassin.” He said that the flight path to the southern Indian Ocean on Z’s simulator was only one of 3,000. Of reasons Captain Zahari could have been plotting that flight he said. “I do not know. It is very common for pilots to practise ditching, landing in the sea... and to take his own life I can’t fathom at all.”

The interviewer put some direct and incisive questions to the ATSB Chief Commissioner. One was about whether the choice of the ATSB for the job was right. He responded, “This certainly wasn’t an ATSB solo effort, this was very much an international effort to search for the plane that you know, tragically, was unsuccessful at the time.” He said he, “has taken a look at Richard Godfreys’ research and is aware of Kit Olver’s claim that he found (sic) the wing of MH370 off South Australia but it’s still not enough.”

The interviewer also asked him, “Is it something you are pushing for?” He replied, “I’m pushing for the ability to investigate all of those other 900 odd investigations in the aviation sector in the last 10 years”.

She, “I think this is the most important.”

He, “I think they are all important. I have over 200 fatalities since that incident but ultimately there are some things beyond our capabilities and at this stage that is where the MH370 sits.”

She asked whether the ATSB should be more active in pursuing a new search, though without indicating where that should be and to what extent the prospects mattered - because the families want it found.

Taken to its extreme that approach could amount to a search for a search’s sake. The ATSB Chief Commissioner earlier had explained that the ATSB was an evidence based organisation and it had gone as far as it could. He explained that it was up to Malaysia to decide whether the prospects were sufficient. If Malaysia requested Australian assistance and that Government agreed, the Government would decide which organisation would manage that. He explained too that it was not the ATSB that decided whether a new search should be conducted, given the resources needed, but again the Government.

The interviewer said that there was little hope the Malaysian Government would encourage a new search, even at this anniversary. Evidently the program team did visit Malaysia. She said of that, “There is little hope. No-one from the Prime Minister down would speak to us....”

Peter Waring’s view was that , “.. the Australian Government needs to potentially sponsor a new search and put some pressure if they can on Malaysia. We started something and I think most Australians would agree that once you start something you should try and finish it.”

He added that without the support of the Malaysian Government, “what we really need is some generous philanthropist who was willing to spend some money on a new search so that’s really the

next question. Are you willing to go out there and solve the greatest mystery of the 20th (sic) century?"

Richard Godfrey's theory was the only proposal the program seemed to be aware of as to where to search for the main sunken wreckage. Even so, the ATSB, Ocean Infinity and presumably the Malaysian Government will be aware of others, less publicised.

Ocean Infinity was reported as saying that, "they want to try again in a different area of the Indian Ocean later this year."

So, finally, as to the program trailer's claim of the trawler's find that, "that changed everything", I think not; though at this stage if Australia did look into what the trawler raised, of itself that would display continuing interest and help keep MH370 in the public eye.

But also, the interviewer did assert that at the end, "Kit Olver can't stop thinking about how close he might have come to solving the mystery of MH370." As per the earlier view attributed to him that he thinks this is from MH370, that is something of an overstatement.

Nevertheless the program did cover a lot of ground in a short time and did prompt some comments of interest.