

# Egypt ferry's black box recovered

*Al Jazeera*

*The black box has been recovered from an Egyptian ferry that sank in the Red Sea, killing 1000 people.*

Mohammed Mansour, the transport minister, announced on Tuesday that “two experts, from France and Great Britain, belonging to the International Maritime Organisation, located the black box and brought it back to the surface”.

Quoted by the official MENA news agency, Mansour added that the black box of the Al-Salam Boccaccio 98 – which sank in the Red Sea with more than 1400 people on board on 3 February – would be analysed in Britain by the United Kingdom Marine Accident Investigation Branch.

“It will take around a week to know the causes of the accident and determine who was responsible,” Mansour told Egyptian public television.

The voyage data recorder was located with the help of a robotic submersible after the wreck of the ferry was found on 16 February in the middle of the Red Sea in 800m of water.

## Regulations

Mansour said the oil ministry lent one of its ships at a cost of \$1 million to perform the retrieval 30km off the coast of Safaga, the doomed ship's port of destination.



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The ferry was sailing from the Saudi port of Duba and carried mostly Egyptian workers, some of whom were bringing months if not years worth of savings back home.

International regulations require passenger ships and other ships of 3000 gross tonnage and upwards to carry data recorders to help in accident investigations.

The devices, which resemble black box flight recorders fitted on aircraft, enable accident investigators to review procedures and instructions in the moments

before an incident and help to identify the cause of any accident.

Surviving passengers said after the disaster that the ship caught fire two hours after leaving Dubai.

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Passengers and their families have criticised the captain for deciding not to return to Dubai after the fire broke out, and also incriminated the crew for monopolising the life rafts.

### **Double standards**

Doubts over the safety procedures enforced by the owners as well as the Panamanian register and the Italian classification company have been raised.

Experts have highlighted the double standards applied to maritime safety in the world after the accident, the deadliest since nearly 1800 people lost their lives when a ferry sank off the coast of Senegal in 2002.

The Al-Salam Boccaccio 98, a 36-year-old ship, was modified to increase passenger capacity a few years ago and was deemed unfit to continue to serve on its original European routes.

The Egyptian government, which was criticised over its management of the crisis, has set up an investigation panel to look into the accident.