

《中国乘客家属就诉讼咨询专家》

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Families of the Chinese passengers on the missing Malaysia Airlines jetliner are seeking advice from domestic and overseas legal experts to prepare lawsuits.

A committee representing the families is in touch with the Ribbeck Law firm in Chicago about filing a group lawsuit against the airline, according to a member of the committee who works in France but has returned to China because his parents were on the plane.

The committee was set up last week at Beijing's Metropark Lido Hotel to represent the interests of relatives of the 154 Chinese passengers on flight MH370. Families mull lawsuits over missing plane

The families are considering hiring a foreign law firm, but the committee is still seeking opinions from all relatives, said the member, who declined to be named.

Ribbeck Law has sent lawyers and assistants to Malaysia to arrange meetings with the passengers' families as more of them seek legal recourse for the loss of their loved ones, the firm said on Thursday.

It said it expects to represent the families of more than half the passengers in a lawsuit against the airline and Boeing Co, the manufacturer of the aircraft, alleging the plane crashed due to mechanical failure.

Ribbeck Law has filed a petition for discovery against Boeing and Malaysian Airlines in Cook County Circuit Court in Illinois, United States. The petition is aimed at securing evidence of possible design and manufacturing defects that may have contributed to the plane crashing, the firm said.

The lawsuit, which will be filed soon, will seek millions of dollars in compensation for each passenger and ask Boeing to repair its entire 777 fleet, according to the firm, which is also representing 115 passengers on an Asiana Airlines flight that crashed in San Francisco in July, killing three teenage Chinese students.

Zhang Qihuai, vice-president of aviation law research for the China Law Society and also an experienced lawyer on aviation matters, said some families had talked to him about possible lawsuits.

The Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777-200, which had 227 passengers onboard, has been missing since shortly after taking off from Kuala Lumpur for Beijing on March 8.

Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak said on Monday that the flight ended in the southern Indian Ocean and there were no survivors.

An international search operation has been taking place in the suspected crash area for the past five days.

