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## **Captain of an aircraft to appear in court in Saint-Petersburg**

Investigating bodies of the North Western Transport Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee have completed investigating a criminal case against a captain of an aircraft, a pilot of the helicopter EUROCOPTER AS-355N 49-year-old Oleg Cherepkov. He is charged with a crime under part 2 of article 263 of the RF Criminal Code (violation of the rules for traffic safety and operation of air transport by a person, who by virtue of the work he performs or the post he holds is duty-bound to observe these rules involving by negligence grave injuries to a person and death of a person).

According to investigators, on 20 January 2011, Cherepkov, being a commander-pilot of the helicopter, did not properly prepare the aircraft before the flight. The accused not having checked the operability of the helicopter's speed indicator and having received information about temporary worsening visibility, decided to fly the route Balaam Island, Republic of Karelia – airport Rzhevka, Saint-Petersburg.

The same day Cherepkov flew over snow-covered Lake Ladoga at the altitude of 200 meters and got caught in the ice zone. Then he, not having informed the Saint-Petersburg air traffic control center about his actions, decided to land on a platform near the town of Priozyorsk located on the shore of Lake Ladoga in order to remove ice and inspect the helicopter. Having removed the ice, the helicopter continued the flight with the device out of order. During the flight Cherepkov allowed the helicopter to heel to the right side and touched the ice cover of Lake Sukhodolskoye which entailed the helicopter's crash on the ice covered surface of the lake and deformation and destruction of the helicopter. One of the passengers was killed the other was gravely injured.

Investigators have collected enough evidence and the criminal case with approved indictment was forwarded to the court to be tried on the merits.

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