
Criminal investigation in plane crash killing 44 people, Lokomotiv hockey team among them, finished



The Main Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee has finished investigating a criminal case over Yak-42 plane crash in Yaroslavl Region killing 44 people including a starting lineup of Lokomotiv hockey team, with charges brought against former flight organization Deputy GM in YAK SERVIS airlines Vadim Timofeyev. He is accused of a crime under part 3 of article 263 of the Russian Federation Criminal Code (violation of the rules for traffic safety and operation of air transport).

Investigators have found out the causes of the plane crash that happened in September 2011. Besides the violation in the work of the crew during the take-off from the airport of Tunoshna in the Yaroslavl Region, it was found that the crew were allowed to the flight by employees of YAK SERVIS with grave violations of air transport safety rules.

According to investigators, Timofeyev being by virtue of his official duties and position a person obliged to observe rules for safe traffic and operation of air transport was in charge of flight organization, qualification of crew members, rising their professional level, organization of trainings and checks of pilots. In addition, it was Timofeyev who had the right to allow the crews to fly and to

suspend them in case of improper qualification. Having studied all circumstances and facts which had preceded the crash, investigators found that Timofeyev allowed the crew to fly illegally, violating the rules for safe operation of air transport, and did not have the right to perform independent flights at the moment of the crash. Namely, the flight permit for the captain was issued by Timofeyev based on forged documents, the second pilot at the time had not finished his re-qualification course on Yak-42 planes yet and was not qualified to fly them. Timofeyev had not supervised professional training of pilots, had recalled them from training sites regularly, and in spite of the unfinished course had let them fly, that means, that Timofeyev was well aware that the crew had not finish their flying course and consequently lacked skills to fly safely.

The investigators have also found that basically Timofeyev did not analyze the data of airborne recorders that had registered the errors made by the pilot during his previous flights. It turned out that there had been a lot of such errors with some of them putting the safety of flight in danger. Timofeyev, however, had done nothing about that, and let the pilot fly. Moreover, it was only a third flight for the two pilots and the flight mechanic together. That crew had never trained together on an emergency flight simulator. So the emergency situation aboard that Yak-42 was the first one for them. At that point we can say that proper attitude to the training of the crew could have helped to avoid the tragedy that claimed 44 lives. As for the state of the plane, an expert examination has found it was in good order.

The investigators have gathered enough evidence, so the criminal case has been sent for the indictment to be approved and then to be forwarded court to be tried on the merits.

At present the Investigative Committee continues carefully studying other causes that contributed to the tragedy. It is well known that the issues related to pilot training plaid their role in the 2013 plane crash in Kazan, so the investigators keep on revealing facts when flight training centers illegally issued documents that later became bases for extending the pilots' flight licenses.

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