
Investigation launched in unsafe services following collision of private hydroplane and helicopter over Istra Reservoir



The investigating bodies of Moscow Interregional Transport Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee continue investigation in a crime under part 3 of article 263 of the RF Penal Code (violation of safety standards for traffic of air transport entailing death of two or more people) following a collision of a private hydroplane and a helicopter over the Istra reservoir.

Investigators have found that on 8 August 2015, at about 8:10 PM, a Robinson R-44, that had taken off from a private property in the village of Lechishchevo, collided with a Cessna 206 hydroplane, which was also flying over the Istra reservoir. 9 people were killed in the accident, among them were 2 underage. At present, bodies of all 9 victims were found and retrieved from the reservoir.

According to the investigators, the hydroplane was flying too low and crossed with the course of the helicopter which was taking off at that moment. The left float of the hydroplane caught the helicopter's propeller and both aircrafts crashed. This is only preliminary version. More precise information will be available after all the evidence has been analyzed. There are not only statements of witnesses, but objective data as well, first of all the results of forensic inquiries.

An investigating team of Moscow Interregional Transport Investigations Directorate are working at the scene together with the officials of the Central office of the Russia's Investigative Committee, Russian Emergencies Ministry and Moscow Region Main Office of the Interior Ministry. Criminalists are using special equipment to find fragments of the helicopter and the hydroplane deep underwater. They are hunting for GPS-navigators both aircraft had. The recovered fragments and objects are being examined together with the Interstate Aviation Committee.

The investigators are confiscating flight documents of both aircraft and collecting characteristics of both pilots. By now it is known that the pilot of the Robinson helicopter had notified dispatchers about the flight, while the pilot of the Cessna hydroplane had flown without notifications or coordination.

As it was revealed that the Cessna 206 hydroplane was on an entertaining flight carrying passengers and with no proper license, the investigators have opened an investigation in a crime under part 3 of article 238 of the RF Penal Code – provision of unsafe services entailing death of two or more people.

This tragedy demonstrates the situation we have today with small aircraft. Let's call a spade a spade, there is a real bacchanal in the air when it comes to small aircraft. This is a vivid example, as we have flight notification system. One of the pilots had notified the dispatchers, while the other had thought it unnecessary, and it now appears had never done that before.

I can say that the behavior of the hydroplane pilot is typical. We have more and more aircrafts that take off without notifications or permissions so that only they know where they are going to fly. I think that if we don't start putting things right in the air today, then tomorrow we will get the same situation as the one we have on the roads where we see terrible crashes claiming many lives each week. I speak about it because the number of small aircraft is now growing exponentially.

Considering that the small aircraft fleet grows so rapidly, we can't say even the rough number of aircraft that take off in our country each day. Russia is close to European standards of the number of small aircraft, but with lack of control or restraint so typical of our country.

For instance, do you know that today there is a huge number of uncertified and therefore unregistered planes and helicopters of that kind? You can imagine their technical condition. Now to the pilots that fly them.

If during investigations in air crashes of passenger jets we reveal that they were flown by pilots with forged certificates, you can imagine who fly those small aircraft and helicopters, the level of their training and who checks their health. Such pilots, as with that Cessna one, use their planes for commercial purposes and namely for such extreme entertainments.

This is why I repeat once again, if we don't straighten the things today and don't tighten requirements

and punishment for breaches of such requirements, then I am afraid we are going to face sad times, because as you all understand such air crashes can cause far more serious impacts. In this case the crash happened in the air over the reservoir and only pilots and passengers were killed, but what would have happened if they crashed on the beach or a residential block, which are numerous in the area. I think we all understand the real scale of such a crash.

The investigation is under control of the senior officials of the Russia's Investigative Committee.

Head of Media Relations V.I. Markin

10 August 2015

Page address: <https://en.sledcom.ru/news/item/956462>