
Sentence passed over 2011 Yak-42 crash in Yaroslavl



A court has recognized the evidence gathered by the main Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee sufficient to pass a sentence over a criminal case over a Yak-42 crash that happened in 2011 in Yaroslavl Region and claimed lives of 44 people, including the Lokomotiv hockey team. Former flight organization Deputy GM in YAK SERVIS airlines Vadim Timofeyev was found guilty of violation of the rules for traffic safety and operation of air transport (part 3 of article 263 of the Russian Federation Criminal Code).

The court and investigators have revealed that 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. The impartial assessment of the crash took the investigators 3 years, during which they ran a lot of forensic inquiries, analyzed thousands of pages of different documents, questioned several hundreds of witnesses. The result is not only a confident statement that the reason for the crash was mistakes of the pilots, but also all that hid behind those mistakes and had brought about those mistakes. The investigators found a cause-and-effect connection between the mistakes of the crew and the training of the crew Timofeyev was in charge of. He shut his eyes to the fact that the Yak-42 crew skipped practice flying training, during which actions during contingencies were practiced among other things. Timofeyev had permitted the same pilot to fly, though he had done mistakes before, but they just had not got fatal. It was Timofeyev who had to analyze the mistakes and make certain conclusions to either suspend the pilot, or work on the mistakes. Nothing of the kind had been done and having permitted the crew to fly on 7 September 2011, he apparently as usual acted on the off chance.

But aviation is not the area of life where you act like that all the time and get away with it. Lack of proper flying practice of this kind of the plane, confusion and lack of agreement between the crew members, which by the way could have been avoided if there had been proper training, led to the

fact that the emergency situation became tragic not only for the crew but for all the passengers aboard. But if we talk in general about initial causes of accidents in commercial aviation, then of course we should be talking about imperfection of our laws. Today control and supervision authority of proper bodies are basically moved to the margin which hinders them to take preventive measures in commercial aviation. There are no clear-cut criteria for assessing operation of airlines either. YAK-SERVIS had been checked 3 months before the catastrophe and formally there were not faults. All this tells us that there is the necessity to improve laws in this area. And by the way this criminal case, the first in the Russian investigative practice, when the defendant is an official who actually was on the ground during the crash, confirms this conclusion completely.

The court sentenced Timofeyev to 5 years in a penal settlement. In accordance with the resolution of the State Duma of 24 April 2015 “On the amnesty dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Great Patriotic War 1941 - 1945” Timofeyev was released.

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