

Beat: Miscellaneous

Alaska man arrested in 2012 killings of two Coast Guard members

-, 16.02.2013, 20:22 Time

USPA News - A former coworker has been arrested in the shooting deaths last year of two U.S. Coast Guard members at a communications station on Kodiak Island off Alaska, prosecutors announced on late Friday. Few details were immediately released.

The murders happened on April 12, 2012, when two U.S. Coast Guard members were found shot to death at Coast Guard Communications Station Kodiak in Kodiak, the main city on Kodiak Island, which is separated from the Alaska mainland by the Shelikof Strait. They were the first murders on any Coast Guard property in the United States since 2001. Karen Loeffler, the U.S. Attorney for the District of Alaska, said an "extensive investigation" by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Coast Guard Investigative Service, with support from Alaska State Troopers, led to the arrest of Kodiak resident James Michael Wells on Friday. "Wells was arrested under a federal arrest warrant based on a criminal complaint," the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Alaska said in a brief statement. It said Wells is expected to appear in federal court in Anchorage next week, but the statement gave no other details about the investigation. The victims of the shooting were previously identified as Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class James Hopkins, an electronics technician, and Richard Belisle, a civilian employee and retired Coast Guard chief petty officer. The victims had previously worked with Wells on a Coast Guard project on Shemya Island in the Aleutians in 2011.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-521/alaska-man-arrested-in-2012-killings-of-two-coast-guard-members.html>

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

UPA United Press Agency LTD

483 Green Lanes

UK, London N13NV 4BS

contact (at) unitedpressagency.com

Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619