

Pilots to Blame for An-28 Plane Crash in Kamchatka, Aviation Committee Says

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The Interstate Aviation Committee on Wednesday confirmed that pilot error was to blame for the An-28 crash in Kamchatka that killed 10 people in September.

Anton Artemenko, the head of the committee's transportation investigations department, said the pilots violated landing procedures, gave flight traffic controllers false information on the flight's execution and had alcohol in their blood, RIA-Novosti reported Wednesday. The committee did not find any technical malfunctions.

Medical examiners announced earlier that alcohol was found in the pilots' blood. The blood alcohol level of one pilot was low, while the other was categorized as a "medium level of inebriation," Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported.

Artemenko also cited the "low level of discipline of airline personnel and lack of control over the crew's pre-flight preparations" as factors contributing to the catastrophe. He said

the criminal investigation opened by the Investigative Committee on charges of violating air traffic rules is ongoing. The charge carries a maximum sentence of seven years in prison.

The An-28 plane was carrying 14 people when it crashed on Sept. 12. Four people on board survived. The plane was later found by rescuers on the side of the 500-meter-high Pyatibratka Mountain near the town of Palana, to the west of the far eastern peninsula.

The management of the airline's flight personnel was fired over the incident at the request of the Federal Air Transportation Agency.

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