

Chopper Crashes on Icy Lake in Karelia

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A helicopter crash landed Friday on an ice-covered lake in Karelia, near the border with Finland, injuring the four people on board, RIA-Novosti reported.

The A-119 chopper landed hard on the ice covering Lake Yanisyarvi on Friday afternoon, about five kilometers from its destination, the difficult-to-reach Black Rocks resort on the lake's shore, an Emergency Situations Ministry spokesperson told the news agency.

Two crew members and two passengers were on board the aircraft. All four were injured in the crash, one of them severely.

The helicopter had traveled to the lake from St. Petersburg. An Emergency Situations Ministry spokesperson told Interfax that the road to the resort is in bad condition, so vacationers take helicopters to get there.

It takes five to six hours in winter to reach the resort by car from St. Petersburg, according to directions on the resort's website.

A police source told Interfax that poor weather conditions may have caused the crash.

Meanwhile on Friday, a Bell-407 civilian helicopter crashed in Tatarstan, killing the pilot,

who was alone on the aircraft.

The chopper fell off the radar on Friday, RIA-Novosti reported. A few hours later, at around 11:30 a.m. Moscow time, the crashed helicopter was found by a resident of the Nizhnekamsky region in Tatarstan, located 200 kilometers southeast of Kazan. The helicopter had taken off from the Tatarstan town of Bugulma and was heading for Kazan, about a 300-kilometer journey.

The pilot, Valery Maiorov, died in the accident, an Emergency Situations Ministry spokesperson said. The spokesperson did not specify the likely reason for the crash.

Another helicopter of the same model, Bell-407, manufactured by U.S.-based Bell Helicopter, crashed last month in the Volga River near Nizhny Novgorod after clipping an electric wire.

The pilot, who was the only person on board, died in the incident.

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