

USCG Lt. Lance Leone Describes Fatal Crash, Aftermath

Friday, 23 November 2012

Part 1:

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/121123.leone_interview_1.mp3{/audio}

Part 2:

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/121123.leone_interview_2.mp3{/audio}

Part 3:

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/121123.leone_interview_3.mp3{/audio}

Ed Ronco/KCAW

In 2010, a helicopter crash in Washington State claimed the lives of three men from Coast Guard Air Station Sitka. The sole survivor of the incident was Lieutenant Lance Leone.

The MH-60 Jayhawk, known by its tail number, 6017, had been upgraded in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, and an aircrew of four left Sitka to pick up the chopper in Astoria, Oregon, and fly it back to Alaska.

On July 7, 2010, during the first leg of that return flight, the helicopter struck power lines near La Push, Washington, and crashed into the sea. Lieutenant Sean Krueger, who was the pilot in command, along with Petty Officer First Class Adam Hoke and Petty Officer Second Class Brett Banks – were killed.

Leone, the co-pilot, faced criminal charges in the aftermath of the crash. Those charges were dismissed, but an official reprimand was placed on his record, and he was transferred to a desk job in San Antonio, Texas.

This week we've been bringing you a three part interview with Leone conducted by KCAW's Ed Ronco. In the first segment, Leone talked about the moments leading up to the accident. In part two, he described the crash itself,

and in part three, he discusses the shock he felt when finding out the Coast Guard was filing charges against him.

This interview was conducted November 12th. Leone was recorded at the studios of Texas Public Radio in San Antonio.

You can find much more information online at KCAW.org, including photographs of Leone, the memos in the case, and earlier stories about Coast Guard helicopter 6017.