

Coast Guardsman Dies of Injuries Sustained in November Rescue

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Annie Ropeik/KUCB

A Coast Guard petty officer has died in a Seattle hospital, more than a month after being injured during a rescue in the Eastern Aleutians.

In a statement, the Coast Guard says Petty Officer Third Class Travis Obendorf died yesterday (Wednesday) at Swedish Hospital following surgery. He was a crew member aboard the Cutter Waesche.

On November 11th, the Waesche sent its small boat to rescue the crew of the fishing vessel Alaska Mist. The 166-foot freezer-longliner had lost power and was adrift off Amak Island, which is north of Cold Bay.

The Coast Guard reports that Obendorf suffered a head trauma while bringing the cutter's small boat back aboard after the rescue. One of the Coast Guard helicopters on scene flew him to Cold Bay, where he was medevac'd on a commercial life flight to Anchorage and later Seattle for treatment. The cause of his accident is under investigation.

(KMXT's Jay Barrett contributed to this report)