

Beaufort Testifies About Finding Bodies at CommSta in 2012

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ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — The Coast Guardsman who discovered the bodies of two murdered men nearly two years ago says he thought at first they were playing a prank on him.

Petty Officer Cody Beaufort testified Wednesday in the trial of James Wells, who's charged with shooting to death retired Coast Guardsman Richard Belisle and Petty Officer James Hopkins at Coast Guard Base Kodiak Communication Station.

Prosecutors say Belisle used a security card to open the Rigger Shop, a satellite building at the communication station, at 7 a.m. April 12, 2012. Hopkins' truck pulled in eight minutes later.

Beaufort arrived at about 7:30 and found Hopkins lying in a break room. He spoke to Hopkins but received no response.

Beaufort found the body of Belisle in an office near Belisle's desk. Beaufort returned to the break room to phone for help.

The trial will continue Thursday at Federal Court in Anchorage.