

CommSta Murder Trial in Hands of Jury

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ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Prosecutors say a 62-year-old man accused of the double homicide at a Coast Guard communications station Kodiak is the only possible killer in a circumstantial case, countering defense arguments that the government hasn't proven guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The two sides in James Wells' federal murder trial presented their closing arguments Thursday in federal court in Anchorage, returning to themes well-established in weeks of testimony.

Wells is charged with two counts of first-degree murder in the shooting deaths of his co-workers, 41-year-old Petty Officer 1st Class James Hopkins, his supervisor, and 51-year-old retired Chief Petty Officer Richard Belisle in April 2012 on Kodiak Island.

Prosecutors say Wells, a civilian, was unhappy that he was increasingly irrelevant on the job through the advancement of the victims.

Defense attorneys say authorities immediately zeroed in on Wells and ignored other suspects.

There was no indication how long the jury would deliberate.