



Flights wait as Greek air traffic controller sleeps

ATHENS (AFP) — Two planes were forced to circle over a Greek island awaiting permission to land on Monday after an air traffic controller overslept and was late for work, Greece's civil aviation authority said.

The Transport Ministry launch a probe into the incident at the airport in the island of Lesbos that delayed a domestic flight from Athens and a charter from Slovakia, the YPA aviation agency said.

The air traffic controller told his bosses that his

mobile phone alarm had broken down, causing his tardiness, according to Greece's Net television.

While the planes circled over the island, the airport director called one the controller's colleagues. After waiting 30 minutes, the two aircraft landed safely, YPA said.

The European Commission told Greece in September to improve its oversight of airport safety to conform with EU rules or face action before the European Court of Justice.

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The father who threw his two young children from a fourth-floor hotel balcony will not be tried for murder in Britain when he is released from a mental hospital in Greece.

John Hogan was found not guilty of murder by a Greek court which ruled in January that he had been insane when he carried out the terrible act that killed his six-year-old son Liam.

Now the Crown Prosecution Service has revealed it will not retry him when he returns to Britain, which could be within as little as six months.

The decision was met with disbelief yesterday by Hogan's former wife, the children's mother, who is terrified that he will try to re-establish contact with the daughter who survived his attempt to kill her.

So great is Natasha Visser's fear for four-year-old Mia that she has emigrated to Australia with her.

Speaking on behalf of 36-year-old Mrs Visser, who has remarried, her stepfather Brian Chandler bitterly criticised the decision not to prosecute.

He claimed CPS lawyers 'ignored' evidence pointing to Hogan's guilt and by doing so have 'accepted the verdict of a poorly-informed EU court'.

Hogan, from Bradley Stoke near Bristol, turned killer during an argument with his then wife on a family holiday to Crete two years ago. In a fit of anger the former floor-tiler pushed Mia, then aged two, and Liam from the balcony before jumping himself.

Liam died within hours but Mia survived with relatively minor injuries.

The Greek court found that



Hogan, now 34, was insane and therefore legally incapable of murder.

However, Liam's inquest in Bristol in March heard that the chaotic Greek trial ignored key evidence, including the testimonies of at least three eyewitnesses

Accordingly the Avon and Somerset coroner found that Liam had been 'unlawfully killed'.

Campaigners said the hitherto-unknown witness statements constituted the 'new and compelling evidence' required under English law to trigger a retrial.

But CPS lawyer Stephen O'Docherty said yesterday: 'Any "new and compelling" evidence would have to relate to Mr Hogan's mental state as it was in August 2006.

'Such evidence would also have to be "substantial" and "highly probative" of any case against him.

The Director (of Public Prosecutions) has concluded that there is no evidence in this category that would enable an application to be made



Greek Drug-Addict Arrested for Murder of 31-Year-Old Bulgarian Woman

The Greek authorities detained Monday Dimitrios Mihalis for the brutal murder of the 31-year-old Bulgarian Penka Yankova, whose body was discovered by a hunter's dog in northern Greece.

The news was announced by Bulgaria's Consul-General in Thessaloniki Aleksandar Mihov. Mihalis is a drug-addict. He and Yankova were in a relationship, and he was arrested after testimonies by Yankova's sister, who also lives on the Halkidiki Peninsula.

Yankova is from the northern Bulgarian town of Troyan. She worked as a hotel maid in the Greek town of Metamorfoosi. Her body was discovered close to the town of Olintos.

The brutal murder is believed to have happened on Friday. The motives of the alleged perpetrator are still unclear.

Greek gays press for same-sex marriages

ATHENS, Greece: Greek gay and lesbian activists are protesting a prosecutor's bid to have the country's first same-sex marriages annulled.

Some 50 people took part in Monday's peaceful protest outside Parliament, with banners that read: "Same-sex weddings are legal," and "I want to get married too."

A lesbian couple and two gay men made legal history in Greece in June by getting married in two civil ceremonies on the small Aegean Sea island of Tilos. They took advantage of a loophole in a 26-year-old law that does not specify gender in civil weddings.

A prosecutor on the nearby island of Rhodes has tabled a lawsuit seeking the marriages' annulment. The case is due to be heard Thursday.

The lawsuit followed a directive from Greece's top public prosecutor saying same-sex marriages were illegal.