Cause of death determined

McMurdo Station radar technician John Biesiada died of a large blood clot in his lungs, according to a New Zealand Coroner’s Office report released last week.

The report, issued January 15, stated that Biesiada was killed by a massive pulmonary embolism following severe clotting in the veins of his left leg, which he had broken several weeks earlier.

Biesiada, 43, a Canadian citizen and resident of St. Catharines, Ontario, was pronounced dead by McMurdo medical personnel in the early morning of January 8. He had been scheduled to be flown to Christchurch later that same day to receive further medical treatment for his leg.

The coroner conducted the autopsy January 11 in Christchurch, shortly after Biesiada’s body was transported there from Antarctica.

Biesiada was a civilian employee of Aviation Technical Services, a contractor of Space and Naval Warfare Center, based in Charleston, S.C.

According to Dwight Fisher, McMurdo’s NSF representative, Biesiada’s family in Canada have been notified of the coroner’s findings. They have also received Biesiada’s personal effects from McMurdo, Fisher said.

Palmer Station update
By Bob Farrell

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