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## Alaska Air National Guard Airmen rescue firefighter near Beluga Point

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** — Alaska Air National Guardsmen of the 176th Wing rescued an Anchorage Fire Department firefighter Aug. 16 near Beluga Point south of Anchorage near the Seward Highway late yesterday.

Alaska Air National Guard Senior Master Sgt. Evan Budd, Alaska Rescue Coordination Center superintendent, said four hikers were stranded when they could neither safely ascend or descend on steep terrain. The party called 911, and the Anchorage Fire Department deployed a rescue team skilled in technical climbing.

The AFD firefighters managed to rescue the four hikers. During the rescue, one firefighter sustained a minor leg injury. The AFD contacted the AKRCC and requested aerial evacuation of the injured firefighter.

The AKRCC notified 176th Wing who dispatched a 210th Rescue Squadron HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter carrying two 212th Rescue Squadron pararescuemen (PJs).

Aircrew of 210th RQS are trained in day or night personnel recovery operations in challenging weather and environmental conditions. PJs of 212th RQS are highly trained search-and-rescue experts and paramedics with advanced mountaineering skills as part of their mission.

The aircrew navigated to the firefighter. The 210th RQS special mission aviator hoisted the PJs to the firefighter. On-scene firefighters medically assessed their injured colleague before PJs packaged him for hoist into the helicopter.

The PJs continued to render medical aid aboard the helicopter en route to the Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage where they released the firefighter to hospital medical personnel.

Budd said it is important for hikers to understand and mitigate risks when venturing into the Alaska wilderness.

“When you go outdoors, have a plan,” he said. “Recognize your abilities and don’t exceed your abilities.”

For this rescue, 210th RQS, 212th RQS and AKRCC were awarded one save.

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