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News

Explorer awaiting Russian release

An explorer from Hull who is being held in Russia after walking across the Bering Strait may face a long wait to be released, his father has said.

The Foreign Office is trying to secure the release of Karl Bushby - the first Briton to cross the 58-mile frozen sea from North America to Russia on foot.

The Russian authorities are holding him over alleged paperwork irregularities.

Keith Bushby said his son had expected to be detained and had "no gripes" about what had happened to him.

The British explorer, formerly of Sutton Park in Hull, spent 14 days walking on shifting plates of ice in temperatures of -30C, to conquer the strait with temporary companion, Dimitri Kieffer.

They were detained by border officials on arrival in Russia and later moved to Lavrentiya where they are staying with a young orthodox priest.

"A week or two is nothing in the grand scheme of things"
 Keith Bushby, Karl Bushby's father

Keith Bushby said they had had their equipment seized and were not allowed to leave the village but were otherwise living freely while they waited for officials from Moscow to arrive.

His son had known they were travelling to a sensitive area and Mr Bushby said he had tried to contact government departments in Moscow months in advance to let them know of their plans.

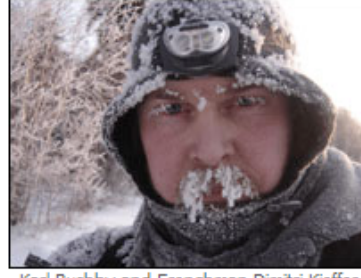
"I tried to tell them an attempt was going to be made on the Bering Strait and they couldn't land on one of the designated landings. As they were walking, they had to hit Russia wherever they could.

"But my lack of Russian and Karl's unique crossing combined, was a bit too much for the system."

The Foreign Office said Karl Bushby appeared to have made a genuine mistake and they were working with the Russian authorities to try and resolve the situation.

"We knew it would take a long time," Keith Bushby said. "It's their country and that's the way they do it.

"A week or two is nothing in the grand scheme of things. They've no gripes with what's happened to them. They're being well looked after."



Karl Bushby and Frenchman Dimitri Kieffer are staying with a local priest



It took 14 days to cross the strait

Karl Bushby began his record breaking attempt to walk around the world in Chile in 1998 and is hoping to return to England by 2010.

The 36,000 mile trip will take him across four continents, 25 countries, six deserts and seven mountain ranges.

BBC NEWS

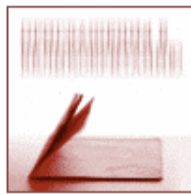
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