# Captain and First Officer of Private Yacht Jailed in Greece on Arson Charges



The captain and first officer of a private yacht have been jailed in Greece pending trial on charges of arson related to a forest fire on the island of Hydra. The fire, believed to have been ignited by fireworks, broke out on the night of June 21, 2024, and consumed approximately 300,000 square meters of the island's pine forest. Firefighters extinguished the blaze early the next morning.

The yacht, moored 350 meters from Hydra's shore, had 13 Greek crew members who were arrested at a marina near Athens on June 23, 2024. They were charged with starting the fire, although they all deny the accusations. Eleven crew members were released on bail with restrictions, while the captain and first officer remain in custody. The yacht operator, Salaminia Yachting Limited, expressed confidence in the crew's innocence.

Witnesses reported hearing 15 to 20 firework explosions and seeing smoke and flames around 10:30 PM on June 21. A rubber boat and fire extinguisher were also noted near the yacht.

The incident occurs amid Greece's ongoing challenges with frequent and severe wildfires, exacerbated by hotter, drier, and windier conditions. Greece has increased arson penalties in recent years.