

## SUMMARY

### FATAL LEVEL CROSSING ACCIDENT IN RÖYKKÄ, NURMIJÄRVI, FINLAND ON 13 AUGUST 2007

On Monday 13 August 2007 at 3.15 p.m., a level crossing accident occurred in Röykkä, Nurmijärvi, in which a passenger car collided with a freight train en route from Kirkniemi to Riihimäki, resulting in the death of the car's passenger and serious injuries to the car driver.

The car was driving in the direction of the track along Korventie road before making a turn on the Leppälammentie road, which crosses the track. The driver stopped before the level crossing, at the STOP sign, and started crossing the track, but the engine stopped and the car became stuck in the middle of the crossing. The driver of the car and the passenger on the driver's right tried to restart the engine. The driver then saw the train approaching from the right and heard the warning whistle. The freight train had departed from Kirkniemi at 2.22 p.m. The train driver noticed that a passenger car had stopped on the track on a straight section after a bend on the approach to the Korpi crossing. The train driver gave a warning whistle 250 metres ahead of the crossing. Emergency braking began about 150 metres before the crossing. The train collided with the right side of the car, at the point where the front wheel was situated. This collision threw the car onto the track embankment about 18 metres from the point of collision. The driver and the passenger were still inside the car. The train stopped 276 metres from the point of collision.

The front of the train engine suffered some damage and the car was entirely wrecked.

The direct cause of the accident was that the passenger car died in the middle of the level crossing without restarting and the train was unable to stop in time despite applying the emergency brake.

The driver of the car possibly made a mistake that led to the engine extinction on the crossing. A technical failure in the car prevented the engine from restarting. The weakening of the passenger's judgement due to intoxication also had an impact on the driver's decision not to leave the car as the train approached. Furthermore, being alarmed by the approaching train affected the decision not to leave the car.

In order to prevent similar accidents, the investigation commission recommends that the Korpi level crossing be equipped with half-barriers.

The investigation commission's observations support earlier recommendations relating to problems rescue operations have in locating the sites of accidents:

*Level crossings should be equipped with signboards displaying at least the name of the level crossing and its location in the coordinates and relevant track-km. The signboard should be clearly visible in both running directions of the road. [B1/00R/S143]*

*The instructions for the drawing up of an emergency notice should be developed to ensure that whenever urgent aid is needed from the rescue service, also the general emergency number is called from the incident site, in addition to the notifying of the traffic control unit. [B1/05R/S211]*

*The compliance of the localization data used by the railway with the data system of the Emergency Response Centre Agencies shall be ensured, e.g. by installing the track-kilometre data in the data system of the Emergency Response Centre Agencies. [B1/05R/S212]*