

SUMMARY

DERAILMENT OF FIVE FREIGHT TRAIN WAGONS IN KILPUA STATION, FINLAND, ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2009

On Thursday 17 September 2009 at 13:13 p.m., five Russian pellet-carrying wagons were derailed at Kilpua station on the Oulu-Ylivieska section of line. The derailment occurred at the southern end of the station, when a pellet train en route from Oulu to Kokkola departed from track three towards the main track after giving way to an oncoming train. When the train's rear section was still on track 3, the train driver felt an abrupt jerk and noticed the brake pipe loosening. The train driver immediately stopped the train and went outside to inspect the situation. Although the last three of the train's eight wagons were still on the track, five had been derailed. The train had a total of 45 wagons. Being able to disengage the train at the point where the first wagon had derailed, the driver moved the wagons at the front to Oulainen for further inspection. The total costs of the incident amounted to 112,000 euros.

The incident occurred because the heavy pellet train was directed onto a sidetrack which was in poor condition. Due to oncoming traffic, the remote controller was forced to direct the freight train onto Kilpua's track three.

Another factor contributing to the derailment lay in the driver used the electric brakes only after departing from Kilpua. These only affected the locomotives, therefore exerting longitudinal force along the train. Combined with the stiff bogies, of the wagons' longitudinal force caused the outer rail to give way at a curve, with the result that the wheels on the inside of the curve were derailed.

In order to prevent similar incidents from occurring, the Accident Investigation Board recommends that the Finnish Transport Agency review the actual condition of station sidetracks and their ability to handle heavy, Russian freight train traffic. The Accident Investigation Board also reiterates its earlier recommendation concerning the condition inspection and greasing of pivots on Russian wagons.