

Accident at the level crossing on 4 April 2020 in the railway section Ilmaja - Kalvene
No 5-02 / 1-20



The accident occurred on Saturday, 4 April 2020 at 8:42 on the railway section Ilmaja - Kalvene 182 km in the 7th picket on the level crossing No 731 (hereinafter - level crossing), where a truck collided with passenger train No 724M (hereinafter referred to as train) of the last wagon.

The train was going on the route from Liepaja to Riga, performed by JSC "Pasazieru vilciens" using three wagon diesel train DR1AM No 222.3 There were three crew members on the train: a diesel train driver (driver) and two conductor controllers. There was only one passenger on the train.

The truck "SCANIA" in connection with the trailer (tank) drove on the highway A9 (Riga - Liepaja) in the direction from Kalvene to Liepaja at a speed of approximately 70 km/h.

After the collision, the truck overturned to the left. Its trailer (tank) was not overturned and stayed on railway. The truck was badly damaged, and traces of spilled cargo (milk) were visible on the ground next to it. The driver of the truck was seriously injured.

After the collision, the last wagon of the train derailed and was seriously damaged, but there were no casualties on the train. Due to the damage, the train could not move further on its own. The only one passenger of the train was transported to the destination by road.

The level crossing was equipped with an automatic level crossing light and sound alarm, the level crossing traffic light was clearly visible from the road and a prohibition signal was lit at the time of the accident.

The truck driver applied the brakes too late because he did not make sure if he could cross the level crossing safely.

The direct cause of the accident:

Truck driver's unauthorized crossing of level crossing No 731 at a time when there was a train on it and the level crossing traffic light signal was forbidden.

The main causes of the accident:

Failure of the truck driver to notice the light and sound signals at the level crossing;

Action of the truck driver approaching the level crossing - the driver did not make sure, if he could cross the level crossing safely.

During the investigation, three safety recommendations were developed covering the following areas:

Recommendation 2021-1

The Ministry of Transport shall evaluate the possibility to make amendments or issue new regulatory enactments regarding the equipment and maintenance of level crossings in order to increase traffic safety at railway level crossings, including the provision of level crossings with barriers or other safety and warning elements.

Recommendation 2021-2

SJSC "Latvijas Valsts celi" to evaluate the possibility on the pavement of the road before the crossing No. 731 to install a transverse noise bar to draw the attention of drivers when approaching a level crossing.

Recommendation 2021-3

State SJSC „Latvijas dzelzceļš” to consider the possibility of crossing No. 731 and equipping with automatic barriers.