

2010-0304-5

On 16 July 2010 at 10:25 hrs, train no. 35045 collided with a car at LC AS13 between Nyékládháza and Hejőkeresztúr stations. The LC is protected by warning lights which were operating normally at the time of the accident. As a consequence of the collision, the driver of the car lost his life at the site, his passenger suffered minor injuries. Two trains were cancelled and one train was delayed by 35 minutes.

Train no. 35045 travelled with the permitted speed. The IC believes that the engine-driver did his utmost to avoid the collision.

In the course of the investigation, the IC established the following:

- There is a signpost on road no. 3307 pre-indicating the nearby LC.
- The signposts on road no. 3307 pre-indicating the nearby LC are inadequate.
- The reduced visibility triangle towards the rail track (for road vehicles approaching the LC) is not ensured.
- It is difficult to see the signals of the warning lights from the direction the car was approaching the LC.

Taking the above findings into consideration, the IC issued safety recommendations.

The IC believes that the car driver drove into the LC without sufficient attention and caution. He was unable to cross the LC in time before the train would reach the LC and thus the two vehicles collided.

CONCLUSIONS

Factual statements directly connected to the occurrence of the accident

Based on the findings of the site-survey, the obtained documents and the evaluation and analysis of the available photographs, the IC concluded the following:

- Train no. 35045 travelled with the permitted speed. The engine-driver did his utmost to avoid the collision.
- The car driver drove into the LC without sufficient attention and caution. He disregarded the Stop signal of the warning lights and was unable to finish crossing the LC in time, which resulted in the collision of the two vehicles.

Factual statements indirectly connected to the occurrence of the accident

It is difficult to see the signals of the warning lights from the road. The reduced visibility triangle from the car's direction towards the rail track is not ensured due to the height and thickness of the vegetation. The vegetation significantly hinders visibility.

Other risk factors

The indication (signposting) of LC AS13 on the road is not unambiguous. On the signpost (after the junction, before the LC) indicating 'LC with warning lights, without barriers nearby' not the distance of the LC is indicated but the width limit (8m) for vehicles wishing to cross the LC.

SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

BA2010-304-5-01: The IC established in the course of the investigation that the visibility of the warning lights of the LC between Nyékládháza and Hejőkeresztúr stations in railway section no. 13+75 is different from each direction. It is particularly difficult to see the signals from the direction where the car was arriving to the LC.

Therefore the IC recommends the NTA to examine the construction of the LC between Nyékládháza and Hejőkeresztúr stations in railway section no. 13+75, with special emphasis on the visibility of the warning lights, and take the necessary actions after the completion of the examination.

By implementing the recommendation, the visibility of the warning lights would be ensured and thus the risk of accidents would be reduced.

BA2010-304-5-02: The IC established in the course of the investigation that the so called visibility triangle is not ensured due to the height and thickness of the vegetation at the LC.

Therefore the IC recommends the NTA to examine the LC, with special emphasis on the visibility triangle, and take the necessary actions after the completion of the examination.

By ensuring the required visibility triangle, both the railway and road vehicles would clearly see the LC, which reduces the risk of further accidents.

BA2010-304-5-03: The IC established in the course of the investigation that on the signpost (after the junction) indicating 'LC with warning lights, without barriers nearby' not the distance of the LC is indicated but the width limit (8m) for vehicles wishing to cross the LC. Furthermore, the similar signpost located in the opposite direction is also faulty (the train on the signpost is facing the opposite direction).

Therefore the IC recommends the NTA to examine the signposting of the LC on the road, and take the necessary actions after the completion of the examination.

By implementing the recommendation, the LC would be clearly and adequately signposted for road vehicles.