

## SUMMARY

### FATAL ACCIDENT AT THE HUIKURI LEVEL CROSSING IN LIPERI, VIINIJÄRVI, FINLAND, ON 25 JUNE 2008

On Wednesday, 25 June 2008, at 4:22.50 pm, a level crossing accident involving a scooter and a rail bus en route from Joensuu to Pieksämäki occurred at the Huikuri level crossing. The accident was fatal to the driver of the scooter. The personnel and passengers of the rail bus remained uninjured. The scooter was wrecked beyond repair. The rail bus incurred damage to its left front corner and the obstruction clearing device. The repair costs of the rail bus amounted to EUR 1,400.

The direct cause of the accident was that the driver of the scooter drove onto the level crossing without stopping. The driver of the scooter probably did not notice the rail bus at all or saw it too late. Contributing to this were the following factors:

- the level crossing was very close to a highway with substantial traffic
- the driver of the scooter was focusing on maintaining balance as the road surface changed from tarmac to gravel
- the level crossing was not equipped with an active warning installation
- the rail bus was approaching the crossing at 120 km/h
- rail buses are silent and quite neutral coloured, which makes them difficult to see.

In order to prevent similar accidents, the investigation commission recommends that the Huikuri unprotected level crossing be removed. Furthermore, in order to improve railway safety, the investigation commission reiterates recommendation S230 of investigation report B2/2007R: *The structure of the obstruction cleaning device of Dm12 rail bus should be such that it is either formed of one piece or possible additional parts are attached sufficiently well.*