

## FATAL LEVEL CROSSING ACCIDENT IN KARJAA, FINLAND, ON 14 APRIL 2010

On Wednesday 14 April 2010 at 4.47pm, a fatal level crossing accident occurred on the Leskinen/Leppämäentie unprotected level crossing in Raasepori, Karjaa. The accident occurred when an SUV<sup>1</sup> leaving a nearby logging site collided with a commuter train (railbus) en route from Hanko to Karjaa. The only person in the SUV was the driver, who died immediately. The damage caused by the accident to track equipment amounted to €94,500. The SUV was wrecked beyond repair.

The accident occurred because the car driver observed the approaching train too late and was no longer able to stop before the level crossing.

The factors contributing to this were:

- The driver was probably focused on something other than making a safe crossing.
- The crossing was quite familiar to the driver, which usually reduces vigilance when approaching.
- The level crossing was not equipped with warning installations.
- Driving and a safe crossing were hindered by the road being on an incline, the lack of wait platforms, high track embankment and trees surrounding the road.

In order to prevent similar accidents, the investigation commission recommends that the Leskinen/Leppämäki unprotected level crossing should be replaced by an interchange. In addition, the investigation commission reiterates recommendation S211 presented in investigation report B1/2005R concerning the establishment of a direct mobile phone connection from accident site to the emergency response centre.

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<sup>1</sup> Sports Utility Vehicle