

**Information note on the progress of the survey  
concerning the collision between a freight train carrying phosphoric acid and a semi-  
trailer carrying a ship, which occurred on 16 June 2021 on level crossing no. 17 in the  
commune of Rumigny in the Ardennes  
(railway line no. 212 000 in its section between Hirson and Liart)**

**Warning:**

*The BEA-TT technical investigation is not yet complete.  
The following progress note is part of a process aimed at informing about the  
progress of the technical investigation and announcing the first preventive  
orientations to the entities concerned as soon as possible.  
It is based on elements that are still partial.*

**The circumstances of the accident**

The accident occurred on the morning of Wednesday 16 June 2021 at about 3 a.m. on an automatic level crossing equipped with flashing red lights, a bell, emergency telephones and two half barriers. The freight train, despite emergency braking, hit the semi-trailer of the road convoy, stopped on the crossing, at a speed of approximately 92 km/h.

The driver of the train was slightly injured, while the driver of the lorry, who had managed to evacuate his vehicle before the impact, was unhurt. The ship being transported was destroyed, first by the impact and then by a fire. The locomotive and eight tank wagons derailed, causing the product being transported, namely phosphoric acid, to leak.



*Photo of the boat fire  
following the accident*



*Photo of the derailed train  
following the collision*



*Photo of the locomotive lifting  
operation  
of the locomotive*

The railway infrastructure was seriously damaged, both the track and its equipment and the level crossing facilities.

The rescue, recovery, clean-up and infrastructure restoration operations mobilised significant human and material resources and lasted for almost two months, during which time rail traffic was interrupted on this busy line of the national rail network.

## Expertise carried out

The BEA-TT investigators had access to the documents of the legal proceedings, conducted by the public prosecutor and carried out by the national Gendarmerie, and visited the accident site at the time of the recovery operations and after the reopening of the railway line.

They interviewed the driver of the accident train, the first responder from the SNCF manager Réseau, the representative of the Ardennes departmental council, which manages the RD 27, and the services of the Ardennes departmental directorate of territories responsible for examining requests for authorisation for the movement of abnormal loads convoys crossing the department.

They examined the wreckage of the road vehicles involved, as well as the train locomotive and parts of the wagons involved.

		
<i>Review of infrastructure</i>	<i>Examination of the road convoy components</i>	<i>Examination of the locomotive components</i>

## The main cause and factors identified at this stage

The main cause of this accident was the blocking of the road convoy on the level crossing due to its insufficient ground clearance.

Several factors may have contributed to the accident, including the lack of preparation and the failure of the road convoy to comply with the traffic and approach conditions on the level crossing no.17. In particular, the road haulier did not contact the railway manager in order to plan and organise the crossing of the railways under appropriate safety conditions. The escorts of the road convoy did not use the alarm telephones to warn of the blockage of the convoy on the level crossing.

## Safety guidelines and progress of the investigation

At this stage, the suggested safety guidelines relate to these particular factors. Other recommendations could include the conditions for appointing a road convoy leader and the detection of stationary obstacles on the crossing.

The preparation of the survey report is underway. The stakeholder consultation phase on the draft report is planned for the summer, with publication of the final report in the autumn.

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