

# R2010-01 Train collision with a person working on the track in Uimaharju on 3 February 2016

## SUMMARY

On Wednesday 3 February 2016 at 8:09 am, a regional train on its way from Nurmes to Joensuu hit a person, who was marking cables at the Uimaharju railway yard. The person was seriously injured.

A cable marking, in which the cables in the terrain are marked in order to avoid damage to the cables, had been ordered for soil sample drilling. The intention was to mark the cables with a trackwork permission. Cable markers from two separate companies were responsible for marking the cables at the worksite. The cable markers had already arrived at the worksite before the arrival of the drilling team. When the drilling team and the trackwork supervisor arrived at the site, the cable markers were carrying out preparatory tasks, and one of them had also started marking the cables in the terrain. The trackwork supervisor did not have the time to request a trackwork permission before the accident occurred, but the supervisor did not interrupt the work, either.

The accident happened when one of the cable markers did not notice the approaching train and moved too close to the rails. The cable marker's attention was focused on the cable detector. In addition, the current weather conditions and the train being quiet made the train more difficult to notice. Due to the suddenness of the situation, the engine driver had no chance to avoid the collision.

The root causes are related to faulty work practices in cable marking in particular. Cable marking is not seen as actual trackwork, and it is often carried out without protective measures. This had an effect on starting the work before receiving a trackwork permission. In addition, the information about the intention to mark the cables with a trackwork permission had not been transmitted to the cable markers. This was affected in return by the cable marking form not being filled out at the order stage and by the form remaining incomplete when it was finally filled out. The form does not clearly require any comments on the protective measures to be taken, either.

It is difficult to determine the need for protective measures in advance, because the maps available cannot be used to evaluate the need to move within the trackwork hazard zone. The company marking the cables had not paid attention to the faulty practices, and higher management had not addressed them, either.

The distance between organisations and the many links in the contract chain blurred the responsibilities and weakened the flow of information.

In order to avoid similar accidents and improve safety, the Safety Investigation Authority recommends that the Transport Safety Agency ensure the enforcement of the following new recommendations directed at various actors:

1. The Finnish Transport Agency shall renew the instructions on cable marking and adapt the cable marking request form so that the purchaser must comment on the protective measures to be used in the work.
2. The Finnish Transport Agency must also find out if the instructions could be changed so that a trackwork permission could also be requested for cable marking without an advance notification (Advance information on train traffic (JETI)), if necessary.

In addition, the Safety Investigation Authority repeats the following recommendations that it first made in connection with a previous trackwork accident:

- The Finnish Transport Agency shall determine stricter minimum requirements for trackwork safety training. [R2013-02/S342]
- The Finnish Transport Agency shall ensure that contracts include a separate and sufficient timeframe for planning trackwork and clarifying responsibilities before trackwork is begun. [R2013-02/S345]

- The Finnish Transport Agency shall increase the field monitoring of trackwork safety regulations by allocating appropriate resources for such work. [R2013-02/S346]