

Bulletin of General Information
Collision between an empty passenger train
and a railway crane
Belsele
12 March 2024

DOCUMENT VERSION TABLE

| Version number | Subject of revision | Date |
|----------------|---------------------|------------|
| 1.0 | First version | 19/04/2024 |

*Any use of this report with a different aim than of accident prevention - for example in order to attribute liability - individual or collective blame in particular - would be a complete distortion of the aims of this report, the methods used to assemble it, the selection of facts collected, the nature of questions posed and the ideas organising it, to which the notion of liability is unknown. The conclusions which could be deduced from this would therefore be abusive in the literal sense of the term.
In case of contradiction between certain words and terms, it is necessary to refer to the Dutch version.*

GENERAL INFORMATION

Nature of the event

Collision between an empty passenger train and a railway crane causing the passenger train to derail.

Type of event and safety investigation

Significant accident which, under slightly different circumstances, could have led to a serious accident.

The safety investigation is on-going.

Date and time of the event

12/03/2024 around 11:21 p.m.

Place of the event

Line 59 track A at kilometre marker 27.662.

Trains

- Empty SNCB/NMBS passenger train – EM2772, (Sint-Niklaas – Dendermonde).
- SNCB/NMBS passenger train – E1822 (Oostende – Antwerpen-Centraal), 48 passengers on board.

Victims

The driver of train EM2772 and a fellow train driver are taken away to hospital with minor injuries.

Damages and consequences

- Infrastructure, damage is found on:
 - the track (including sleepers, Pandrol clips, rails);
 - the catenary (including gantry support and cables);
 - the signalling (including crocodiles and beacons).
- Train EM2772
 - Of the six bogies, bogies 1, 3, 4 and 5 derailed.
 - The first and second carriages are damaged in such a way that they cannot be re-tracked. They have to be towed away via low-loader lorries.
 - The third carriage can be towed away by rail after re-tracking.
- Train E1822
 - Damage to the pantograph and burn marks on the roof of the locomotive.
- Railway crane
 - Lots of damage.
- Train traffic
 - Train traffic between Sint-Niklaas and Lokeren is completely interrupted in both directions until 18/03/2024 around 4:00 p.m.

FACTS

Planned works on line 59 (L59) at Belsele require two railway cranes to be placed on track B near level crossing 35 on the night of Wednesday 13 March.

To get to this location, one of the two railway cranes follows the cycle highway that runs along track A of L59 on the night of Tuesday 12 March.

At about 11:20 p.m., the railway crane tumbles down the sagging cycle highway and enters the clearance gauge of track A of L59 near kilometre marker 27.662. The driver of the railway crane manages to leave his cab.

At about 11:21 p.m., the empty passenger train EM2772 hits the railway crane and derails with four bogies.

While derailing, train EM2772 covers about another 300 metres and comes to a halt in rear of level crossing 38. The second carriage, derailed, is in the space between the tracks, a few tens of centimetres from the clearance gauge of track B.

At the same time, the driver of passenger train E1822, running in the opposite direction on track B, sees sparks at the level of the catenary and performs an emergency braking.

During braking, train E1822 passes the derailed train, a few tens of centimetres from the second carriage of train EM2772.

Train E1822 comes to a halt in time to avoid a collision with debris and part of a catenary gantry support, which was bent following the accident.



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| 1. Line 59 track A, direction of travel of train EM2772 | 2. Railway crane |
| 3. Train EM2772 | 4. Location of the collision between train EM2772 and the railway crane; lateral distortion of the track |
| 5. Train E1822 on line 59 track B | 6. Damage to catenary |

INVESTIGATION

An investigator from the RAIU goes to the scene of the accident to make initial findings and gather initial information.

The day after the accident, investigators from the RAIU also go to the scene of the accident.

The accident investigation is ongoing to determine the contributing, organisational and systemic factors that led to the accident.



Photo : Front of train EM2772



Photo : Derailed bogie 3

Rail Accident and Incident Investigation Unit
<http://www.raiiu.be>

