

Bulletin of General Information

Rear-end collision between two freight trains Merelbeke - 04/02/2026

DOCUMENT VERSION TABLE

Version number	Subject of revision	Date
1.0	First version	11/02/2026

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.



1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. NATURE OF THE EVENT

An HSL Belgium freight train collides with the rear of a DB Cargo Belgium freight train.

1.2. TYPE OF EVENT AND SAFETY INVESTIGATION

Accident with safety investigation.
The safety investigation is ongoing.

1.3. DATE AND TIME OF THE EVENT

04/02/2026 around 9:41 p.m.

1.4. PLACE OF THE EVENT



Line 50, track B.

± 1,4 km in advance of Merelbeke station, in the direction of Melle.

1.5. TRAINS

The DB Cargo freight train E44507 that was hit (Gent-Zeehaven – Aachen) consists of 17 wagons and is loaded with steel.
The second freight train Z47559 of HSL Belgium (Zeebrugge Ramskapelle – Montzen) consists of 19 wagons and is loaded with passenger cars.

1.6. VICTIMS

There were no victims.

1.7. DAMAGES AND CONSEQUENCES

- Train E44507: minor damage to the last wagon.
- Train Z47559: minor damage to the locomotive, leakage of coolant and diesel.
- Load of train Z47559: some passenger cars shifted.
- Infrastructure: no damage.

2. FACTS

On Tuesday 4 February 2026, at around 09:45 p.m., freight train E44507 is on track B of line 50 and waits for a green signal aspect to depart. The train driver feels a jolt and sees that his train slides forward briefly.

Freight train Z47559 continues at low speed after passing through Merelbeke station. When the driver notices train E44507 ahead, he performs an emergency braking but cannot avoid a collision.



Last wagon of train E44507



Locomotive of train Z47559

3. INVESTIGATION

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

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



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