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On 9 December 2009 freight train with two Czech locomotives (series 740) running from Ostrava to Ajka-Bauxitakodó - carrying coal - was separated at Devecser station as the rest of its route was going to be on a hilly area.

While the train was waiting for departure, its crew left it - without stopping the locomotive and locking the wagons - and went to the traffic office. As a consequence, the train broke loose (as the station is on a slight incline), split points no. 1 open and rolled towards Tüskevár station.

The crew was unable to stop the train either at the area of Devecser station or on the open track. It was eventually stopped by the movements inspector of Tüskevár station - who had been notified about the incident - with two double scotch blocks. Beforehand he arranged for train no. 905 (which was to arrive at Tüskevár) to be stopped at the neighbouring station.

The IC established the following:

- the train was not braked adequately,
- although it is not directly connected to the above, no brake test was conducted on the train,
- the crew left the train contrary to the regulations,
- the locomotive was not equipped with a train control system prescribed for this railway line,
- the vigilance warning device - on which the buttons, handles and signs were labelled in a language unknown to the engine-driver - was disabled,
- the operation licence of one of the locomotives had expired before the time of the occurrence and it was given to a different railway undertaking (not the one that operated the locomotive).

Furthermore, it is difficult or in some cases not possible for certain railway undertakings to gain knowledge about the railway line.

The IC issues safety recommendations in order to rethink/review the rules on gaining 'line-knowledge' as well as to harmonise the language of the signs on the control panels of locomotives with the language knowledge of engine-drivers.

CONCLUSIONS

Factual statements directly connected to the occurrence of the accident

The crew left the train without taking the required measures to secure the train against free run and to lock it.

The vigilance warning device of the locomotive was disabled, therefore it was unable to serve its train-stopping function when the train broke loose.

Factual statements indirectly connected to the occurrence of the accident

The operation licence of the traction locomotive was invalid. According to its operation licence, the assisting locomotive had no permission to run on this railway line as an assisting locomotive.

At Devecser station, the track which was chosen to park the wagons on had no safety dead-end track.

The movements inspector of Túskevár station did not answer the phone when Devecser called, therefore he was informed about the occurrence with a delay.

Other risk factors

It is difficult for certain railway undertakings (not regularly running on the Hungarian railways) to gain knowledge about the railway lines.

The switches on the locomotive were labelled on a foreign language unknown to the crew. Nor did they have any knowledge of the functions of the switch.

