



Správa železniční dopravní cesty

PRESS RELEASE

Regular passenger train collided with a truck at Praha-Chodov

Prague, 10 June 2016 – Fortunately, the collision was only a simulation. By this demonstration of railway firemen's training, Správa železniční dopravní cesty (the Czech Railway Infrastructure Administration) joined the International Level Crossing Awareness Day ILCAD 2016. The topic of this year is the issue of ignoring warning signals at railway crossings by car drivers. We can see almost each day how apt the issue is.

Despite the fact that the number of such collisions is decreasing in the last years, the statistics are still rather dire. **Only in 2015, 154 accidents at railway crossings occurred with 32 fatalities.** They are caused more and more by a special group which nobody would expect such a thing from, namely professional drivers. Precisely collisions of trains with trucks or tanks trunks are the most tragic ones.

It is quite clear from cases recorded by cameras at railway crossings that even the most sophisticated signalling and safety equipment cannot be effective if it is not respected by the drivers themselves. Even then, SŽDC invests hundreds of millions of Czech crowns each year into increasing railway safety. Just **one example: since the end of 2013 up to the end of 2016, 276 level crossings are to be modernised at a price of 2.3 billion Czech crowns.**

"99 percent of accidents on railway crossings are caused by road drivers. Recently they did not respect even crossings equipped with barriers. They bypass them, lift them or enter the crossing when the warning red light is already on, although three road signs warn of each crossing at distances of 240, 160 a 80 metres in front of the crossing, so that any argument that they did not know about the crossing or could not have braked in time does not stand", says Mr. Pavel Surý, Director General of SŽDC.

A simulated collision with a tank trunk occurred similarly within the premises of the Prague SŽDC's firemen unit at Chodov.

During an attempt to cross the railway crossing by a truck transporting dangerous goods, a collision with a passenger train occurred in the electrified section of the line. **The warning signal on the crossing was already active.** Five passengers were injured in the regular passenger train, two of them seriously and three slightly. During the collision, part of the goods on the truck deck toppled and one canister fell on the road which caused a leak of unknown dangerous stuff. During the train's collision with the truck, the tank with hydraulic oil on the vehicle was damaged; it got into contact with the exhaust tube and consequently got fumed.

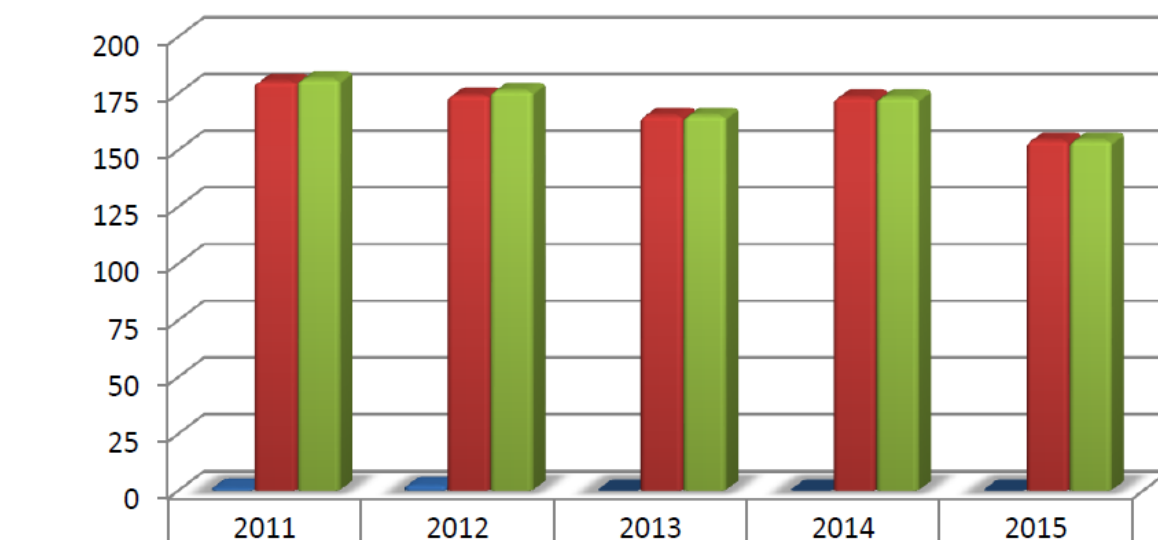
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STAVÍME NA TRADICI – VYTVÁŘÍME BUDOUCNOST

"We still remember the tragic event which occurred last year at Studénka railway crossing. Although millions of people saw recordings of that collision, we still witness cases when drivers do not respect warning signals at railway crossings. We would hardly find a better topic than the one chosen for this year's Safety day at railway crossings - ignoring warning signals at railway crossings by road car drivers. Each day, reckless drivers endanger not only themselves but also our passengers and employees. Besides human lives taken and people injured, we must also mention the material point of view. Only repairs of the destroyed Pendolino train will cost 210 million Czech crowns", said Mr. Jiří Jeřeta, Director of Department for Passenger Transport Trade of České dráhy.

The Firemen's Unit of SŽDC Praha managed to cope with this dangerous accident 20 minutes after being called on the spot. Immediately upon arrival, railway firemen had to short-circuit the catenary in order to exclude a possible burn by electric current; the tension in the overhead line amounts up to 25,000 volts and the voltaic arc between the catenary and a person could vault over almost up to one metre. In a better case, a person hit by current could bear consequences of such a short circuit for his/her whole life. Following this operation, the rescuers provided first aid to injured persons and they handed over the rest of the passengers to their colleagues from fast rescue service. Following that, the railway firemen had to secure the site against danger of fire. The final step was the elimination of dangerous stuff in gas-proof pressure suits.

Development of collision cases at railway crossings.



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