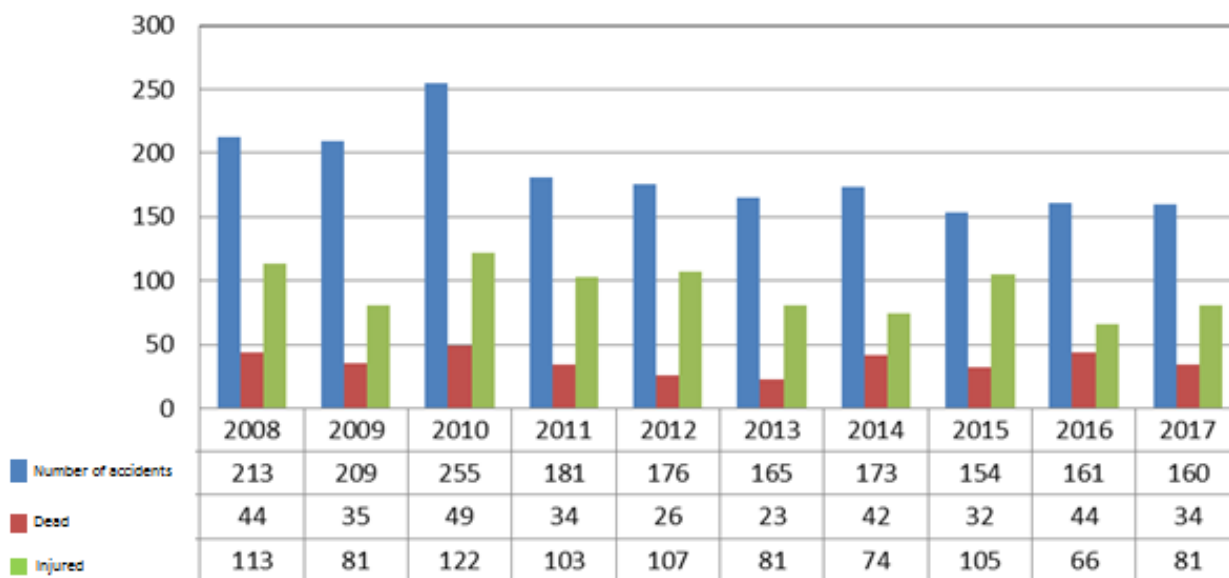


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SŽDC Keeps on Increasing Level Crossings Safety

Správa železniční dopravní cesty (SŽDC) plans to invest 814 million Czech crowns this year to enhance 82 level crossings safety. In addition to modernization of the oldest types of safety installations, it makes up twenty level crossings by barrier beams with other four level crossings to be equipped by warning lights. Dozens of other level crossings will undergo a comprehensive renovation to be focused on the surface of level crossing structure as well. The administrator of the Czech railway network will keep on paying attention to new technologies testing and making preparation of grade separated crossings constructions faster.

SŽDC, in co-operation with the Police of the Czech Republic and the Railway Authority, selects dozens of level crossings suitable for modernization or safety enhancement each year. They mostly include level crossings where traffic accidents occurred repeatedly in the past or equipped by the oldest types of safety installations or St. Andrew's cross boards only. At the same time, SŽDC is also trying to reduce the number of level crossings on the Czech railway. Last year, it was possible to close a total of 16 level crossings, mostly on purpose-built or unpaved roads.



First of all, the fact that the number of level crossings protected by St. Andrew's cross boards decreases in the long term is positive; on the other hand, level crossings equipped by safety installation supplemented by barrier beam augment the fastest. Barrier beams increased in number of 60 level crossings last year only. From the attached accidents development chart for particular

years it is apparent how this trend contributes to a gradual reduction of the number of collisions on level crossings.

"A simple enhancement of a level crossing by barrier beams, however, is not cheap. Ideally, when the current safety installation needs to be enhanced by a barrier beam only, units of millions of Czech crowns may be involved. However, I know such cases when the configuration of an adjacent station safety and signalling plant needed to be changed due to modernization of a level crossing, then we can talk about an amount exceeding substantially ten million Czech crowns," Mr. Martin Krupička, Director of Electrical Engineering and Energy Section was quoted as saying.

SŽDC also focuses on other ways to enhance safety on level crossings. For example, it is testing in long-term the obstacle detectors on level crossings detecting in time the presence of a vehicle on level crossing in operation. This year, SŽDC plans to test the detector in live operation on two level crossings in Olomouc Region. The device will be designed so as in case of detecting an obstacle, signals before level crossing will be repositioned immediately to the stop signal to warn the engine driver of an approaching train without delay. A broader introduction of detectors is prevented so far by a considerably longer period of level crossings' closure, thus having a negative impact on the fluency of road transport and in particular patience of drivers and pedestrians.

Undoubtedly, a grade-separated crossing is the safest form to cross a railway line. In this area, SŽDC is preparing a construction project intent and territorial governance documentation for eight level crossings. Two more selected crossings were included in the investment plan. Project preparation, obtaining a building permit and the selection of a contractor may even take several years. In certain cases, it is necessary to amend the territorial plan, some constructions need even to have a separate environment impact study prepared. *"The financial exigence of these structures is a substantial one, ranging from tens of millions of Czech crowns for simple buildings up to hundreds of millions of Czech crowns for constructing one grade-separated crossing in complicated cases. For example, if existing roads will need to be relocated or more lands to be purchased, we may even think in terms of half a billion Czech crowns,"* Mr. Peter Hofhanzl, Director of SŽDC Civil Engineering Preparation Section was quoted as saying.

Grade-separated crossings in process, presumed implementation after 2020:

- Replacement of the level crossings P8166 Halenkovice, P8167 Napajedla and P8168 Žlutava on the line Břeclav – Přerov.
- Replacement of the level crossing P8155 Rohatec on the line Břeclav – Přerov.
- Replacement of the level crossing P6501 Studénka on the line Přerov – Bohumín.
- Replacement of the level crossing P4897 Uhersko on the line Česká Třebová – Praha.
- Replacement of the level crossing P6508 Polanka nad Odrou on the line Přerov – Bohumín.
- Replacement of the level crossing P6532 Olomouc-Holice on the line Přerov – Olomouc.

Crossings included in the investment construction plan:

- Replacement of the level crossing P2405 in the section Vraňany – Dolní Beřkovice on the line Praha – Děčín.
- Replacement of the level crossing P284 Kařízek on the line Praha – Plzeň.

In addition to level crossings dealt with separately, their grade-separated replacements are being settled in comprehensive structures by line optimization and modernization; this includes dozens of other crossings. Constructions on the lines Plzeň – Domažlice, Kolín – Děčín, Velký Osek – Choceň, Praha – Beroun and Brno – Česká Třebová are mostly involved. In case of structures in the section Brno – Přerov, the closure of all level crossings is suggested due to a line speed increase planned up to 200 km/h.

Selection of largest samplings of modernization and level crossings safety enhancement in 2018:

- Level crossings modernization on the line Frýdek Místek – Český Těšín. Assumed costs amount to 65.5 million Czech crowns. In addition to the reconstruction, it is foreseen to supplement warning lights at level crossings P8310 Dobrá u Frýdku Místku, the junction point Nošovice and P8320 the junction point Nošovice – Hnojník.
- Enhancing level crossings safety of P4448, P4449, P4450 between Nový Bydžov and Skřivany on the line Chlumeck nad Cidlinou – Trutnov for 35.5 million Czech crowns.
- Reconstruction of double-track level crossing P3658 between Krahulov and Okříšky on the line Brno – Jihlava for 41 million Czech crowns or reconstruction of the level crossing safety installation with barrier beams including the reconstruction of the level crossing structure at the level crossings P3666 and P3668 in the section Bransouze – Luka nad Jihlavou for 76 million Czech crowns.
- Level crossings modernization on the line Planá u Mariánských Lázní – Tachov. Assumed costs amount to 66 million Czech crowns.

Level crossings supplemented by warning lights:

- Level crossing P5948, P5949, P5951 in the section Rataje nad Sázavou předměstí – Ledečko on the line Kolín – Ledečko. Assumed costs amount to 20 million Czech crowns.

Level crossings supplemented by barrier beams:

- Line Strakonice – Volary: P954 Strunkovice nad Volyňkou – Volyně, P1002 Vimperk – Brloh and P1034 Lenora – Volary. Assumed costs vary about 24 million Czech crowns.
- Line Březnice – Strakonice: P1348, P1360 Blatná – Sedlice and P1367 Sedlice – Radomyšl. Assumed costs amount to 18 million Czech crowns.
- Line Blatná – Nepomuk: P1269 Blatná – Lnáře for 15 million Czech crowns.
- Line Domažlice – Planá u Mariánských Lázní: P687 Polička – Borová u Poličky with costs amounting to 7 million Czech crowns.
- Line Horní Cerekev – Tábor: P6382 Obrataň – Chýnov for 9 million Czech crowns.

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