

Date: 7 February

Hundreds of Millions of Crowns Will Help Increase Safety at Level Crossings This Year

Also this year, Správa železniční dopravní cesty continues to increase safety at level crossings. In the years 2013-2016 it has modernized a total of 276 level crossings for 2.3 billion crowns. The railway infrastructure administrator intends to continue in this trend this year as well as it plans to spend a total of 1.4 billion to increase safety at level crossings.

Reconstruction and repair works on crossings took place almost throughout the whole country in recent years. It was not just about modifications on individual railway level crossings with the road, but also on entire sets of crossings. Hundreds of them thus acquired modern security equipment. SŽDC preferentially selects crossings for modernization that were previously only equipped with St. Andrew's crosses. The second group of level crossings that have been under upgrade consists of those which are fitted with the oldest types of security equipment. Often these are devices originating from the USSR.

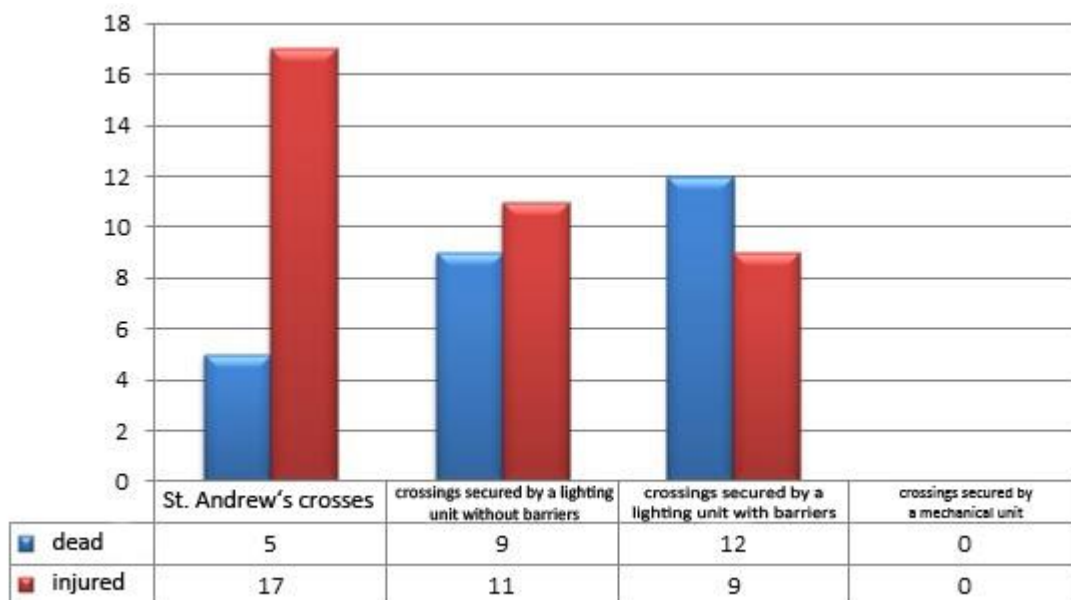
For the first time in history, the number of level crossings with traffic lights over outweighs crossings secured with St. Andrew's crosses. The number of places where the light signaling is complemented by barriers then rose from 1,245 to 1,310.

Another positive finding is that SŽDC managed to cancel 8 level crossings in the last year. Even so, 7,961 of them remain on the Czech rail network. This means nearly one crossing on every kilometre of line throughout the country.

Still, it is true the fact that a crossing is only as secure as safely a driver will behave on it. Not even the best security will be worth anything when the driver voluntarily chooses to disregard it. The vast majority of accidents at level crossings are caused precisely by motor vehicle drivers!

Drivers do not respect even the crossings equipped with barriers. They either go around or lift it or enter already when the red warning light is in operation. Moreover, a whole trio of traffic signs warns before each crossing in the range of 240, 160 and 80 metres before the crossing. Nor the argument that they did not know about the crossing or did not have time to manage to bring a car to a halt will stand here.

From the chart showing the clashes at level crossings at the date of 7 August, 2016 we can conclude that the most fatal accidents occur precisely at crossings equipped with barriers.



Many drivers drive onto the crossing as soon as the barriers are just beginning to rise. They do not realize in doing so that the signaling warning device plays always the decisive role. Thus, until the red lights are in operation, it is forbidden to enter the crossing. It may easily happen that another train will arrive from the other side and falling barriers will imprison them there. When it happens, clearly the best solution is to step on the gas and break through the barriers. You will cause damage of thousands of crowns but you will not kill yourself, your family or innocent people on the train.

If this is not possible for some reason - for example, a vehicle becomes stuck at the level crossing, leave it immediately and call the number 158 or 112. Report the incident here together with the number of crossing which can be found on the back of St. Andrew's crosses in the form of P 12xx. So dispatchers will immediately know exactly where you are. The last thing you can do is to run along the track in the direction of the expected arrival of the train. A passenger may run to the other side and you both may signal danger by circular movements with your right hand held high above your head. The engine driver will know he has to immediately stop the train using all available means.

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