

This document is a translation of the original assessment in Swedish by SHK of the response to the recommendation. In case of discrepancies between this translation and the Swedish original text, the Swedish text shall prevail in the interpretation of the assessment.

Swedish Transport Administration
Röda vägen 1
781 89 Borlänge

The Swedish Accident Investigation Authority's report RJ 2018:01

On 14 December 2018, the Swedish Accident Investigation Authority (SHK) published the report RJ 2018:01 on the collision between a freight train and a timber lorry with trailer in Hökmora, Västmanland County, on 1 February 2018.

The report contained a total of five recommendations, of which four were directed at the Swedish Transport Administration.

Recommendation RJ 2018:01 R1

The Swedish Transport Administration was initially recommended to chart locations on category 5 roads where several concurrent factors could give cause to raise the road management classification and to consider whether it is possible to raise the classification in these sites.

In its response to the recommendation, the Swedish Transport Administration stated that a communication initiative would be carried out in the spring of 2019 targeted at the Swedish Transport Administration's maintenance districts. It would include information and repetition of the rules set out in VV Publication 2002:147 "Val av vinterväghållningsstandard" (Choice of winter road maintenance standard). These regulations provide a possibility of choosing a different road maintenance standard if this is motivated by special conditions. Examples given of such conditions are significant variations between summer and winter traffic, a high proportion of heavy vehicles, important industry transports as well as extensive public transport. According to the response, the information to the districts will also include relevant parts of SHK's final report.

It can certainly be good to provide information regarding currently applicable regulations. Such information could of course also entail different decisions regarding the road classification in certain sites within the maintenance districts. However, the recommendation was for the Swedish Transport Administration to both chart and identify the sites where several concurrent factors make it necessary to raise the category and to consider whether or not to raise the category of these sites. The chosen approach does not give the Swedish Transport Administration the possibility to form its own opinion and gain knowledge of how the regulations are implemented in practice. The administration also lacks the

ability to monitor the progress of work, especially since the information does not appear to be combined with any form of follow-up or reporting requirements for the maintenance districts. With this in mind, SHK finds that the recommendation can only be considered to have been partially implemented and the reply can only be considered partially satisfactory in this part.

Recommendation RJ 2018:01 R2

The Swedish Transport Administration was recommended to review how and in what way the requirements that are set for the subcontractors in “Standardbeskrivning för Basunderhåll Väg” can be considered to handle severely slippery conditions in intersections on roads in road category 5.

According to its response, the Swedish Transport Administration will continue in the autumn of 2019 to introduce increased requirements regarding registration of shortcomings and measures with the aim of ensuring contractor compliance with contract requirements. This will be done through analytic tools and an established inspection programme. The Swedish Transport Administration will also investigate the possibility and reasonableness of changed regulatory requirements specifically in regard to level crossings between road and railway for road categories 4 and 5.

The measures planned by the Swedish Transport Administration must be said to correspond well with the recommendation issued in the report. SHK therefore makes the assessment that that the recommendation can be considered implemented and the reply received from the agency is satisfactory in this part.

Recommendation RJ 2018:01 R3

The Swedish Transport Administration was also recommended to consider whether the regular heavy timber traffic on county road 755 and 759 via Hökmora results in the fulfilment of the traffic related requirement “road vehicles with particular risk”, which would lead to an upgrade of the choice of road protection facility (RJ 2018:01 R3).

According to its response, the Swedish Transport Administration will review the requirements for level crossings with special traffic conditions in accordance with the guideline “Plankorsningar – val av skyddsalternativ” (Level crossings – choice of protection), TDOK 2015:0311 in the autumn of 2019. This review will also consider how the assessment of “road vehicles with particular risk” can be implemented on different roads intersecting operational railways. The results will be presented in a report.

Provided that the review also leads to a concrete decision regarding the choice of road protection facility at the level crossing between county roads 755 and 759 involved in the report, the planned measures must be said to correspond with the recommendation issued in the report. The recommendation can therefore be considered implemented and the reply is satisfactory in this part.

Recommendation RJ 2018:01 R4

The Swedish Transport Administration was finally recommended to consider whether the area of use for obstacle detection systems can be expanded to also include other railway crossing types with specific risks other than high speed (RJ 2018:01 R4).

In its response, the Swedish Transport Administration has stated that it will review the conditions for using obstacle detection systems in order to reduce the risks of level crossings in the autumn of 2019. According to the agency, the points of departure include “needs and access to materials in relation to the established requirements”. The results will be presented in a report.

In a clarification of its response in this part, the Swedish Transport Administration has explained that the technology currently being used is old and based on laying wires in the road. It is difficult to find spare parts for these. For this reason, the Swedish Transport Administration has therefore been testing a new type of obstacle detection system, which is based on radar technology and has a high safety standard. However, the tested version has issues with false alarms. The Swedish Transport Administration is therefore attempting to develop another version of the radar technology that is more reliable. The current guidelines stating that level crossings must be reinforced with obstacle detectors in certain traffic conditions are difficult to comply with considering the difficulty in maintaining the old detectors and the problems that have arisen in developing new ones. These problems will be dealt with in the report mentioned above.

Provided that the report will also entail some form of decision regarding the possibilities of expanding the area of use for obstacle detection systems, SHK finds that the planned measures can be considered to correspond to the recommendation and the response is considered satisfactory in this part.

Best regards,

Helene Arango Magnusson
Chair Accident Investigations