

Railway accident investigation report

Railway operator : East Japan Railway Company

Accident type : Train derailment

Date and time : About 18:15, January 25, 2015

Location : At around 37,954 m from the origin at Yonezawa station, between Uzen-Numazawa station and Tenoko station, single track, Yonesaka Line, Iide Town, Nishiokitama District, Yamagata Prefecture

SUMMARY

On January 25, 2015, the inbound local 1134D train, composed of two vehicles, started from Sakamachi station bound for Yonezawa station, Yonesaka Line of East Japan Railway Company, departed from Uzen-Numazawa station on schedule, 18:07, by one man operation.

The train driver, operating between Uzen-Numazawa station and Tenoko station, noticed the stacked snow on the track at the exit of Utsu tunnel, and took an emergency brake, but it was too late, the train ran over the stacked snow and all two axles in the front bogie of the first vehicle derailed to right.

There were 6 passengers and the train driver onboard the train, but there was no casualty.

PROBABLE CAUSES

It is highly probable that the accident had occurred as the train hit the snow stacked on the track and derailed by ran over the stacked snow, due to the snow in cutting slope of the left side of the track flowed on the track.

It is somewhat likely that the snow flowed into the track by occurrence of the whole layer avalanche induced by the snow in the slope that was in the condition liable to melt away, as temperature at nights were mild from the day before the accident day and temperature in daytime raised due to fine weather from the day before the accident day.