

Railway accident investigation report

Railway operator : West Japan Railway Company

Accident type : Train derailment

Date and time : About 11:31, January 24, 2017

Location : In the premises of Gokei station, Hakubi Line, Soja City, Okayama Prefecture

SUMMARY

On Tuesday, January 24, 2017, when the outbound Electric 1825M train, started from Okayama station bound for Bitchu-Takahashi station, Hakubi Line of West Japan Railway Company, departed from Gokei station on schedule at 11:14, the driver of the train noticed the fire came out from around the turnout of up track in right side of the front track. Here, the words front/rear and left/right were based on the running direction of the train and vehicle numbers were counted from the front. Then the driver stopped the train about 15 m beyond the predetermined stop position, and communicated with the conductor and the train dispatcher, then got off the train for firefighting.

After the firefighting was finished, the driver communicated with train dispatcher and the conductor again, and started the train according to the departure sign from the conductor. Immediately after the train had started, the emergency brake was acted and the train was stopped again after running about 7 m ahead.

After that, the driver was informed about the situation from the conductor, and got off the train to check the vehicles. It was found that the second axle in the front bogie of the third vehicle was derailed to right.

There was no casualty in the accident.

PROBABLE CAUSES

It is highly probable that the second axle in the front bogie of the third vehicle of the train was derailed to right because the left wheel of the second axle ran onto the wheel stopper that was set by the conductor at the left wheel of the second axle when the driver got off the train for firefighting, and forgot to remove it before the train was restarted, in the accident.

It is probable that the conductor set the wheel stopper, in relation with that he thought as wheel stopper should be set when asked measures to prevent rolling wheels from the driver, according to his experiences up to that moment, even though it was not conductor's mission.

Also, it is probable that the conductor forgot to remove the wheel stopper before restarting the train, in relation with that his attention was focused on early restart of the train, in the process of communication with the driver after finishing firefighting.