

otsi

THE OFFICE OF
TRANSPORT
SAFETY
INVESTIGATION

safe and reliable transport services for new south wales



Interim Factual Statement

Old Burren

6 April 2005

Derailment of Pacific National Wheat Train

At approximately 17.45hrs on 6 April 2005 a fully loaded wheat train, operated by Pacific National Limited, became derailed at approximately 665.800km at a location known as Old Burren whilst traversing the section between Merrywinebone and Burren Junction on the Pokataroo line. Old Burren is located approximately 100 kilometres west of Narrabri in the North West Region of NSW. The track is a single line Class 5 grain line. The train consisted of three locomotives and 37 wheat wagons and was enroute from Merrywinebone to Port Waratah at the time of the incident.

The train crew stated that they felt a slight wobble as the leading locomotive passed over the track just prior to the incident. The driver then observed, in the rear vision mirrors of the locomotive, the leading wagons of the train begin to rock from side to side progressively more violently and applied the emergency brakes.

The three locomotives and the leading wagon remained on the track. However, the following six wagons derailed and came to rest at various angles on the northern or up side of the track, with two wagons also toppling completely onto their sides. Although toppling, only a small amount of wheat was spilt from these wagons. Approximately 100 metres of track was also destroyed.

There were no injuries as a result of the derailment.

Despite being in a remote area, communication equipment carried on the train and by the crew allowed for immediate notification of the incident to Control located at Broadmeadow in Newcastle.

There was no disruption to passenger train services as the line was designated for grain train use only. Other wheat train services on the line were suspended pending recovery of the wheat from the derailed wagons and repairs to the damaged track.



Photograph 1

Status of the Investigation

OTSI's investigation into the incident continues and is being assisted by Pacific National Limited and the Australian Rail Track Corporation.

The Minister for Transport Services will table the completed investigation report in Parliament as required by Section 68 of the Rail Safety Act.

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