



Interim Factual Statement

Wauchope

7 March 2005

Derailment



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Rail Safety Investigation

Derailment of Pacific National Freight Train at Wauchope - 7 March 2005

Overview

At approximately 11:00hrs on 7 March 2005 a freight train, 1 WB3, operated by Pacific National derailed approximately 7kms north of Wauchope. All but one of the 51 wagons remained on the rails and the derailed wagon remained upright.

There were no injuries but approximately 3.1kms of track and a rail bridge were damaged as a consequence of the derailment. The rail line was reopened at 23:30hrs on 7 March 05, but a 20kph speed restriction was imposed over the damaged track.

Investigation

OTSI investigators deployed to the incident site and their preliminary investigation has identified that the wagon derailed when an axle bearing failed. The wagon was 49th in a consist of 51 wagons and three locomotives, stretching 930.5m in length, and the driver of the train did not become aware of the derailment until he lost air pressure in the braking system.

OTSI has commenced a detailed investigation and seeks to establish the following:

- a) the factors, both primary and contributory, which caused the accident;
- b) whether the accident might have been anticipated and the effectiveness of any strategies that were in place to manage the related risk/s;
- c) the effectiveness of emergency actions in response to the accident; and
- d) any other matters arising from the investigation that would enhance the safety of rail operations.

Once completed, OTSI's investigation report will be tabled in Parliament by the Minister for Transport as required by Section 68 of the Rail Safety Act.