

BASF Works Fire Department:

TUIS-Operation, Level III, Railway accident in Hannover on 09.12.97

On Tuesday, 9th. December 1997 at 17:38 hrs. the BASF Industrial Fire Brigade were informed from the German Rail Association (Deutsche Bahn AG) about a rail accident in Hannover. Due to the type of incoming information (Rail tankers, explosions, injured persons) a vehicle with 2 crew members set off to Hannover at 18:10 hrs. Time of arrival: 21:15 hrs.



Situation on site:

A fully occupied regional express train collided frontal with a goods train, made up of 22 rail tankers containing heating oil. Several rail tankers burst into flames immediately. As the BASF Industrial Fire Brigade arrived all of the injured persons were in medical treatment and the fire was extinguished. 5 damaged and partially burned-out rail tankers from the initial 22 rail tankers were still on site. Remains of heating oil were still in 4 of the 5 damaged rail tankers, 1 rail tanker was completely ripped open at the front due to the accident.

The BASF Industrial Fire Brigade together with Hannover's Municipal Fire Brigade and the Emergency Manager from the German Rail Association agreed upon the co-ordination of the further measures of the damaged rail tankers (removal of remaining product, clearing area, fire protection during the salvage process), through the BASF Industrial Fire Brigade. The task was

given from the German Rail Association.

After the accident site was given the "All clear", Hannover's Fire Brigade and Hannover's Railway Fire Brigade began to salvage pump 40 000 l of heating oil from the damaged rail tankers into readily positioned replacement rail tankers. This started at 02:00 hrs. on 10.12.1997.

On Wednesday the 10.12.1997 a rail cranewagon began to remove the damaged rail tankers from the rails and laid them down on a free area next to the track. The last damaged rail tanker was lifted from the tracks around midday.

The TUIS-Special Equipment Vehicle and 4 BASF-Firemen were ordered to assist the intervention teams on site. The crew and equipment arrived at the scene of the accident at 14:30 hrs. on Wednesday, the 10.12.1997.

The BASF Industrial Fire Brigade carried out following tasks on the rail tankers:

- Application of a foam blanket inside the rail tankers
- Rail tanker ventilation using venting equipment
- Monitoring oxygen cutting procedures of openings on the ends of the rail tankers within the foam blanket
- Monitoring the atmosphere within the rail tankers in case of explosive gas
- Supervision of scrapping work

A cable duct filled with heating oil was pumped out and briefly cleaned with water.

Following measures were carried out by the BASF's Commanding officer parallel to this:

- Consultation and co-ordination with present companies
- Determination of fire protection measures upon the railway's (contaminated with heating oil) premises
- Information to Hannover's Fire Brigade Control Room, stating the likely release of dioxins from the crashed locomotives.

On Thursday 11.12.1997 in the afternoon the rail tankers were scrapped to the extent that no hazard was longer given. This determined that the operation for Hannover's Railway Fire Brigade, Hannover's Municipal Fire Brigade and the BASF Industrial Fire Brigade was finished.

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