

Guernsey (Lanigan), Saskatchewan (2019)

Location: Guernsey, Saskatchewan

File Number: 1201-03

TSB File Number: R19W0320

The Accident

According to the Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSB) report, on December 9, 2019, a Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) crude oil unit train, destined for Stroud, Oklahoma, experienced a train-initiated emergency brake application at Mile 48.85 near Guernsey, Saskatchewan. CP confirmed that the train was hauling a mix of jacketed CPC-1232 cars and retrofitted TC-117R cars loaded with petroleum crude oil - UN 1267. Thirty-four tank cars derailed, 33 of which carried crude oil. About 23 of the cars released product. The derailment resulted in the leaking of some 1.5 million litres of oil and igniting a large blaze, which burned for approximately 24 hours. Lack of visibility due to fire smoke resulted in the closure of Highway 16.

Damages

No injuries or casualties were reported. CP said in a news release that it did not believe local waterways had been affected. A local resident from Lanigan, Saskatchewan, told news officials that she believed some oil may have spilled at the end of her pasture and was worried about the possibility of her wells having been contaminated.

CP's emergency response team worked to clean and restore the affected areas. The railway company said it would implement a soil remediation plan based on the tests being done by its specialized experts in consultation with the local authorities.

TSB has reported the cause of the incident was suspected to be a broken rail.

Measures Taken by the Administrator

The Administrator's office reached out to CP's Claims Department, who predicted that the damages incurred from the incident would not likely utilize CP's insurance.

The Fund for Railway Accidents Involving Designated Goods (the Fund) consulted available reporting from the TSB's Rail Transportation Safety Investigations and Reports database. Based on the available data and the extent of damages resulting from the accident, it is most unlikely that the Fund will be triggered for compensation purposes.

Status

The file remains open as of September 2023.

Related files

1201-04, Guernsey (6 February 2020), very close to this accident's location.