
International cooperation exercise between railway infrastructure managers

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A regional train of the French company Ter Sud Paca, hailing from Ventimiglia and bound for Menton, came to a halt following the electrocution of a person hiding on the roof of the train in the locality of Calandre, along the section of the line between the Ventimiglia and De Mari tunnels.

The train crew disembarked from the train for the necessary checks and, having realised what had happened, rendered first aid and immediately made an emergency call to the traffic manager to request medical assistance. Subsequently, the exodus of passengers, who will continue their journey on replacement buses, is requested and managed with the support of the fire brigade, police forces and RFI maintenance personnel.

This is the scenario for the exercise in international cooperation between railway infrastructure managers organised to test the emergency activation and coordination procedures for rescue operations and assistance to passengers, in the event of emergencies along the railway in a particular section of the line, characterised by being located on Italian territory, yet where the management of train circulation is the responsibility of the SNCF railway company and where there are different power supply voltages on the line – the voltage for trains departing and arriving at Ventimiglia coming to 1,500 Volts of direct current, compared with that for trains arriving and departing from Menton at 25,000 Volts of alternating current.

The exercise took place in the so-called “neutral section” of the line, about one kilometre from the Ventimiglia station, where trains carry out technical operations to prepare for the change in voltage. Within this section, the management of train circulation, emergencies and infrastructure maintenance are regulated by procedures shared by the two neighbouring operators, RFI and SNCF.

Coordinated by the Prefecture of Imperia, the exercise saw the participation of Rete Ferroviaria Italiana and FS Security (FS Italiane Group), SNCF Réseau, the French railway company Ter Sud Paca, the Liguria Region Civil Defence, the Ventimiglia Municipality, NUE 112 (the EU’s common emergency telephone number), the Liguria Railway Police Division, the Imperia Police Headquarters, the Imperia Provincial Fire

Brigade, the Ventimiglia Carabinieri and the Guardia di Finanza.

Particular attention was paid to verifying the effectiveness and speed of the activation of the new coordination procedures between the Italian and French traffic managers for handling emergencies, with the specific aim of rendering more effective, efficient and safe the intervention of the rescuers and the staff of the two managers and railway companies involved in the stretch of railway between Ventimiglia and the national border.

The exercise forms part of the periodically-planned initiatives to monitor the effectiveness of the flow of communications and the chain of coordination, as well as the readiness of the territorial structures. This is all so as to improve safety standards and the protection of people, property and the environment.

The activities caused no repercussions on train traffic.

(FS Group)