
Railway workers guilty of train crash at Bekasovo station convicted in Moscow Region



A court has recognized the evidence gathered by the Moscow Interregional Transport Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee sufficient to convict 42-year-old foreman of Moscow-Kiev distance Alexander Sokolov, 33-year-old supervisor of the same distance Alexey Vinogradov and 28-year-old master of measurement and track examination brigade Nikolai Ivhcenko. They were found guilty of railway transportation safety breach that entailed death of two or more people (part 3 of article 263 of the RF Penal Code).

The court and investigators revealed that, in the morning of 20 May 2014, the supervisor of Moscow-Kiev distance while not having any data on the actual temperature of tack fixation at the 69th km between Bekasovo-1 and Nara stations, send there a brigade of improper qualification and without enough tools to eliminate deviation in track maintenance norms revealed before. When arrived, the foreman and master ordered their subordinate fitters to start realignment. They failed to restrict the

unsafe area by stop signals, did not issue warning on the decrease of train speed or organize non-operation of the track for the period of repairs. While working they revealed the change in the track geometry which was an entrance angle and informed the supervisor about it. However, nobody of the accused did not take any measures to make signal for trains to stop. They also failed to take measures to limit the speed of trains or ban railway services, but continued the repairs. As a result, at 12:34 PM, the driver of a freight train on route from Sukhichi Glavnoye via Bekasovo to Sortirovochnoye while going on the said section saw a group of fitters and used a service brake application, then, when he saw a track change he used an emergency brake application stopping the locomotive. The fitting platform with a container got on the next track with a passenger train travelling from Moscow to Kishinev on it. One of the passenger train cars collided with the platform.

The crash claimed lives of 6 people and 23 people were injured. There were 2 children among the victims. 350 meters of railway was damaged, one passenger car was damaged beyond repair, the container and 15 freight train cars were also damaged. The break in railway services reached 6 hours and 39 minutes.

In addition, three companies OAO Russian Railways, Moldavian Railways, LISKI transportation service center suffered damage of over 20 million rubles.

To find out all the details of and reasons for the crash the investigators have carried out a lot of investigative and search operations: they questioned over 120 victims and witnesses, ran over 3 dozens of forensic inquiries, studied and examined over 4000 volumes of technical documents, listened and watched over 16 hours of audio records of talks between employees of OAO Russian Railways, sent 3 requests for legal assistance to other states.

There are 41 case files.

In order to eliminate reasons and conditions that contributed to the crime, the investigators sent an ordinance addressed to the President of the Russian Railways. Following its review, 29 employees were disciplined, 8 of them were dismissed, the company had a new bonus system, made changes to the procedure of repairs at continuous welded rail tracks, revised its plan for training and professional development of its track workers.

The court has sentenced Sokolov to 4 years 5 months, Vinogradov to 4 years and 6 months, Ivchenko to 4 years and 4 months, all of them to be served in a penal settlement. Based on the resolution of the State Duma “On amnesty in connection with the 70th anniversary of Victory in the Great patriotic War of 1941-1945” the convicts were released.

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