

Railway accident investigation report

Railway operator : Central Japan Railway Company

Accident type : Train fire

Date and time : About 11:30, June 30, 2015

Location : At around 66,920 m from the origin at Tokyo station, between Shin-Yokohama station and Odawara station, double track, Tokaido Shinkansen Line, Odawara City, Kanagawa Prefecture

SUMMARY

On June 30, 2015, the outbound 225A, named "Nozomi 225" composed of 16 vehicles, starting from Tokyo station bound for Shin-Osaka station, Tokaido Shinkansen Line of Central Japan Railway Company, departed from Shin-Yokohama station on schedule, 11:19.

At about 11:30, the driver of the train, while the train was in powering operation at about 250 km/h, confirmed the indication in the monitor display of the operation desk, showing that the communication buzzer installed in the toilet in the first vehicle was operated. Just after that, as the driver confirmed indication showing that the communication buzzer installed in the cabin of the second vehicle was operated, he applied an emergency brake and asked the conductor to check the first vehicle using the public address system.

On the other hand, the conductor of the train, engaged in examination of tickets in the 4th vehicle, informed from the passenger that a passenger sprinkled oil in the first vehicle, and find the fire outbreak in the first vehicle on his way to the first vehicle, he announced "fire broke out" by the public address system using portable telephone carried with him for service.

After the train had stopped, the driver and the conductor checked the cabin of the first vehicle, as they found the fallen passenger in the rear deck, they took relief activities. Furthermore, as they found another passenger fallen in the aisle of the front cabin in smoked surroundings, they carried out firefighting with the fire extinguisher.

There were about 900 passengers, the train driver, 3 train conductors and 5 pursers onboard the train, among them, two passengers fallen in the first vehicle were dead. Furthermore, 25 passengers, 2 of them were seriously injured, and the train driver and 2 train conductors were injured.

The seats, floor, side wall, sealing, etc., from the front to the mid part of the first vehicle were burnt by the fire.

PROBABLE CAUSES

It is highly probable that the accident occurred because the passenger onboard the train sprinkled gasoline and ignited fire by himself in the cabin of the first vehicle.

It could not be determined precise reason why the passenger ignited the fire by himself, because the passenger was dead by the accident.