

TACTICS OF INSPECTION OF RAILWAY ACCIDENT SCENE

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ABSTRACT

The reasons and purposes of inspection of the scene of the accident in the area of responsibility of the railway, the actions for formation of an investigative and operational group, and involvement of specialists of railway transport and other industries in inspection that can provide substantial assistance in establishing the causes and assessing

the conditions that contributed to the extraordinary or criminal situation, are set out. The author discusses the need to return witnesses when inspecting the scene of the accident, raises questions that relate to the industry specificity of investigative practice. Attention is drawn to the need to use the latest technical and forensic tools in order to identify and fix traces of the incident.

Keywords: railway, accident, investigation, tactics of scene inspection, witness, examination.

Background. Defining the tactics of investigation of the scene of the railway accident, we will specify what actions are envisaged in the regulatory document. In Art. 176 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Russian Federation (CPC), known as the «Grounds for inspection», there are no such grounds as such, but it is said about the purposes of inspection, which include «detecting traces of crime and ascertaining other circumstances relevant to the criminal case» [1]. The grounds, based on the logic of the Russian language, can be those circumstances that answer the question «why» this or that action is performed (in this case, an inspection), and why it is done – it is already a goal or goals.

In other words, the grounds for inspection are justified assumptions about the possibility of detecting traces of a crime and other circumstances relevant to the incident during inspection [2, 304]. In this case, the purpose of inspection is detection of traces of a crime, seizure of objects, samples, documents, identification of any other circumstances relevant to investigation of the criminal case. The most important purpose of inspection of the place of the transport accident is to establish the cause of the accident and its mechanism. Inspection of the scene of the incident on the railway transport has features that are not inherent in other types of inspection. Firstly, when inspecting the scene of the incident, it is necessary to conduct an investigative action as soon as possible to restore further movement. Secondly, the scene itself often occupies a significant territory (tens, if not hundreds and thousands of meters in length), which requires the use of scientific and technical means to accurately fix both the site of the incident and its details. Thirdly, the investigation of transport crimes requires specific knowledge that the investigator may not have, so there is a need to involve a wide range of specialists in the inspection who are able to identify both the primary causes of the incident and the «secondary» causes of the occurrence of specific traces.

Objective. The objective of the author is to consider tactics of inspection of railway accident scene.

Methods. The author uses general scientific methods, scientific description, comparative analysis.

Results.

1.

A special feature of investigation of the scene of the accident is that Federal Law No. 23 of March 4, 2013, the domestic criminal procedure legislation excluded the participation of witnesses in its production, and this aroused the discontent of the supporters of this institution. After all, in accordance with Art. 60 of CPC duty of a witness is to certify the fact of performance of an investigative action, its content, course and results. We believe that compulsory participation of witnesses in inspection of the scene of the accident is necessary, and excluding them from participants in

inspection is not a thought-out and dangerous step that hampers the implementation of justice. Even the Code of the Russian Federation on Administrative Offenses requires the presence of witnesses when examining the scene of action [3].

The requirement of the legislator to use instead of witnesses technical means to fix the process and the results of the inspection of the scene (part 1.1 of article 170 of CPC) does not eliminate emerging fears, because it is not specified what is related to such technical means? A cheap mobile phone, on which nothing can be explored, is also a technical tool. And if you do not have reliable technical equipment at hand? So, in the protocol, the investigator will write that the technical means were missing and that's enough? It should be pointed out that the course and results of investigation should be recorded on video camera, which is available in all investigative units, and in its absence or failure to involve witnesses for fixing the course and results of inspection. Witness, as a living person, can tell the investigator what the investigator and the video recording operator did not pay attention to. And how to fix the smell of alcohol on the video camera? In this case, a witness is an uninterested person, and the video recording operator, like the investigator, represents the authority with certain official settings.

Now about timeliness of inspection of the scene of the accident, which predetermines the very possibility of obtaining information about organization of train traffic, technical reasons and mechanism of the accident, to find traces, material evidence and other details of the picture in question. A timely inspection will prevent possible changes in the situation, whether due to interference of certain persons, or by weather conditions (snowfall, heavy rain, strong wind, etc.).

The CPC RF permits to inspect the scene of the accident prior to initiation of a criminal case in order to exclude changes in the situation and to determine whether the crime or some other was not a criminal act.

Traces and material evidence to be inspected in the event of a rolling stock accident are located on or near the railway bed, which requires the use of a front inspection covering the railway bed along its width and in the area along it. The peculiarity of such an inspection is considerable length of the area under examination, as signaling means, railway mileposts, etc. may be located at some distance from the scene of the accident.

Preparation for inspection involves solving a rather wide range of issues. First of all, the objects of transport infrastructure are recorded, which refer to the scene of action. Further, the composition of an investigation team is determined, which, in addition to the investigators, includes railway transport specialists as advisors for the accident. If an accident is associated

with a locomotive, the engineering staff of the locomotive depot is involved, when inspecting the car – train car specialists, when examining the railway track – railway masters, etc. Among the invitees may be members of a departmental or interdepartmental commission specially created to investigate the accident. If necessary, employees of scientific research, design, design organizations and specialized educational institutions are involved. If people died, then forensic experts are needed, at the very least doctors, in order to fulfill the part of their general work that they are entitled to.

Investigatory inspection should be carried out in such a way as to ensure that all defects and malfunctions of both the rolling stock and the railway track in the area of the accident are identified, since the unknown causes of the accident could have acted either alone or in combination with each other. For this purpose, in preparation for inspection, it is necessary to establish contact with the bodies of transport police, the departmental commission, the leaders of the emergency train and the repair and recovery brigade. They will help to find out the situation in the area of the accident, intensity of train traffic, the nature of track and other works conducted there before the accident. It is necessary to establish the types and quantity of scientific and technical means necessary for inspection. If there is an assumption about the defects of track or rolling stock as the cause of the accident, appropriate equipment, templates, and devices are prepared.

2.

First of all, the following objects are subject to mandatory inspection:

- to establish the measures taken by the driver to stop the train: locomotive control devices, including indicating speed of movement, signaling devices and fixing the actions of the driver;

- on the locomotive all brake pads, on cars selectively to determine their application during braking, checking serviceability of the brakes;

- stop-locks of the locomotive and cars, end cranes of the train for determining switching-on of auto brake, application of emergency braking;;

- sections of the railway track to the scene of the accident, on the scene of the action and those on which the repair and restoration work is already underway.

The sequence of production of inspection is determined by the nature of the accident, namely: whether it occurred due to derailment of the train or as a result of collision of trains. In the first case, the track itself, track devices and structures, switchgears, rail crossings, and locomotives and cars – tires and rims of wheel sets, which first derailed, their structural dimensions, the presence of «flat spots» on them, are subjected to a particularly careful examination. When the trains collide, the means of road signaling – traffic lights, semaphores, interlocking means, braking and autobraking lines – are subject to initial inspection.

When inspecting rolling stock, attention is drawn to the state of the locomotive controls and instruments present in the driver's cab, position of the controller's handles, the brake enable handles. All this is fixed by means of photo or video recording. The functions of lighting devices (presence of lamps in them) are checked, whether they are switched on. With the help of specialists, operability of automatic locomotive signaling, autopost, locomotive repeater of traffic signals, speedometer is installed.

The signaling, centralization and blocking devices, their serviceability, presence of seals on them, position of track signals, degree of their visibility are examined

together with the specialist. When inspecting the track, it is revealed that there are foreign objects on the rails, the condition of the rails, whether there is rust, slag, sand, or other soil on them that could cause malfunctioning of signaling, centralization and interlocking.

When the trains collide on the station routes, the route of their movement is established, the position and serviceability of switches on the route, switch indicators, control switch locks, work and readings of traffic lights or semaphores, the system of interconnection of signals and switches is clarified, as it is in the form of electric or mechanical centralization, dependencies and whether the zone of the event is not violated. The records in the alarm log are checked for malfunction of alarm devices, centralization, interlocking or their malfunction elimination, as well as the status of output traffic lights and semaphores, and their compliance with the program. With the participation of specialists, the work of blocking devices of semi-automatic locking and the switched-on block mechanisms, which are designed to lock the levers of semaphores, is evaluated; it is determined in what state are the automatic blocking centralizers control the output traffic lights, whether the locking system devices are operating correctly, whether the integrity of the control seals is not violated.

Investigatory inspection of the rolling stock with which the accident occurred begins with the development of the most common reason for derailment, that is, from checking the integrity of the running parts, primarily wheel sets, for which a thorough inspection of the axles, centres, tires and rims of wrought wheels and their flanges is made. Attention is drawn to the depth of rolling of tire or rim of the wheel, it should not exceed 7 mm for long distance passenger trains, 8 mm for suburban and 9 mm for freight trains. Possible «weld-on deposits» on the rolling surface of the wheel, which appeared due to the movement of metal particles due to changing operating conditions, the growth of the speed of movement or in connection with the use of composite pads, are identified; the presence of a flat spot, a shift or loosening of the wheel hubs.

When the wheel is shifted towards the middle of the axis, an annular crack of paint with a torn layer is possible at the point of its interface with the hub, and on the side of the wheel facing the journal-box, an annular strip is formed on the axis next to the hub, which sharply differs from the neighboring surface. If the wheel has moved to the side of the axle box, such a strip is possible near the end of the hub, facing the middle of the axis. In this case, the appearance of an unpainted strip, cracks in the paint layer, grease and rust is a sign of loosening the wheel hub on the axle. The shift is confirmed in measuring the distance between the inner edges of the tires or rims of the wheels, it should be no more than 1443 mm and not less than 1437 mm in the wheel sets of trains at a permissible speed of up to 120 km per hour. It is checked whether the weakening of the tire fastening ring, which is permissible by a total length of not more than 600 mm, or its weakening, located within 100 mm of the lock, regardless of length, has occurred. All this is necessary to establish the cause of the event: whether the indicated faults and changes in wheel sets led to an accident, or they appeared as a result of the accident itself.

During the inspection, the automatic couplers, their serviceability and condition are to be checked, using universal templates and special short crowbars;



fastenings and the condition of the braking equipment and other parts and devices suspended to the frame of the locomotive or car to the body, a wheel bogie, etc., the breakage and fall of which could have caused the accident. Place and time of production, inspection and repair of broken and faulty devices and parts are installed according to their countermarks (or passports).

To determine the technical causes and mechanism of the accident, the results of decoding the speed belt, fixing the speed, air pressure in the brake line, the time of departure from the last stop and between individual points of traffic, the time and points of sudden change of motion are used. Sometimes it is possible to determine by the speed belt which car or locomotive, derailed first.

3.

Let us dwell on the tactics of inspecting the railway track and the rails at the scene of the accident. Examining the railway track, it is necessary to register broken and highly defective rails, widening or narrowing the distance between the rails, distortions and sharp corners of the rails, «hijacking» of the rail track relative to the embankment, ejecting the section of the railway bed, track twists, the presence of track boil or track pocket, the presence and size of gaps in joints between rails and other defects, which individually or in combination could have caused the incident. The direction of the curve in the plan and along the chords and its state is checked.

During the inspection of the rails, special attention is paid to their curvature horizontally and vertically, the presence of traces of friction of tires and rims of wrought wheels on the head of rails, impacts on the heads, necks and rail bases from the wheels that have derailed, availability, sufficiency and efficiency of the anticreep devices. When evaluating broken rails, their marking, type, place of manufacture, time of laying, signs of acute damage (cracks in heads, neck, bases, around the bolt holes) are fixed.

The damaged sleepers are subject to obligatory inspection, their condition before the accident is determined, the existing defects are identified that could be its cause. In addition to the damaged sleepers, other sleepers are carefully inspected in both directions from the given place, the distances between sleepers are measured. The sleeper pads are inspected for defects in them, which can cause broadening of the rail gauge, clearing of the rail lines and general track disorder. Then the fasteners, the integrity of pads and linings, the presence of paired lined pads, the condition and the number of bolts, crutches, screws are inspected. During the investigative actions, shifted and tapped sleepers can be identified, which is probably the cause of the accident.

Starting to inspect the switches, the aim is to identify the breaks of the switch points, frame rails, track crossings and their core, check rails. It is checked whether there are any rupture of the counter rail bolts, whether the switch points are disconnected and what is the density of their attachment to the frame rail, whether there are chips, metal cracking, lowering against the frame rail. The distance between the working face of the head of the counter rail and the check rail and the working edge of the crosspiece core are measured; the possible vertical wear of the frame rails and the cores of the crosspieces is set higher than permissible. The broadening and rough distortions in the turnout and the angles of the turnout switch, deviations from the required position of the moving

parts of the turnout switch, which could lead to the bursting open the switch, are detected.

When inspecting the turnout switch, the track caliper PShV «Putetetz» is used to measure the gaps between the switches and frame rails, between the bases of the blades and the pads, to measure the dimensions of the rails, the height of the frame rail on the undercarriage sheet, the vertical wear of the blades, and their lowering against the frame rails. In addition, the level, templates, straightedges, and depth gages are used.

The accident associated with the train separation or «squeezing» of the car requires a thorough examination of all the details of the automatic coupler, an analysis of the degree of their wear and tear, defects, and the condition of the car on which the automatic coupler was located. At the same time, the throat of the auto coupler is measured, the thickness of the lock, how much the big tooth is worn out, the impact surface of the throat and the small tooth. The investigator attracts a specialist to assess the operation of the device, which protects against separation.

For more effective inspection of the scene, scientific and technical means should be used. High results are achieved with the use of the laser scanner Trimble TX5, which allows to create a 3D model on which it is possible to measure up to a millimeter any distances, and then reconstruct the event of the incident. Such a device was used when inspecting the aerodrome in Rostov-on-Don, where in March 2016 the aircraft flying from Dubai to Rostov crashed.

When inspecting locomotives and cars, it may be necessary to check the internal cavities of a car or locomotive box or other closed cavities. For this, a VS70 video endoscope (Flir Systems Inc. USA) equipped with a manual control unit with the ability to rotate a probe of a 5,8 mm diameter chamber by 180 degrees in a confined space is used. This allows to shoot high-resolution video. It is irreplaceable for such a video endoscope to solve expert problems, when access to tracks and objects is limited, but significant diagnostic, situational and identification information is required.

If the inspection of the scene of the incident is a railway crossing where the train collided with a car, tractor or other means of transport, the position of the train after its stop and the position of the vehicle relative to the railway track are found out and fixed, among other things; the position of barrier shields, barriers, traveling traffic lights and the visibility of their signals, the state of all these devices, including damage. The protecting signal and the presence on the roads before the crossing of the sign «S», requiring an obligatory sound signal from the train driver, as well as the distance from the crossing to the protecting signal and the «S» sign, are examined. The position of the buttons and toggle switches on the control panel of the crossing foreman, the presence of seals on the buttons are explored.

It is checked, in what condition is the covering of the carriageway not only within the boundaries of the crossing, but also the motor road at the entrance to the crossing, and the presence or absence of ice, snow, moisture from the rain on the roadway. If there are traces of braking of a vehicle on the road before the crossing and at the crossing, the distance from the border of the crossing to the beginning of the trail of the braking is measured and the length of this trace is determined from what distance the driver of the vehicle could see the approaching train and the train driver – the vehicle on the crossing. The presence and condition of warning road signs on the entrance, how

many of them are on each side and at what distance from the boundaries of the crossing are located, appear in the zone of visual visibility of the driver of the vehicle. The work of radio and telephone communications on the crossing is evaluated.

When inspecting the scene of the accident that happened in the dark, the condition of illumination of both the carriageway of the crossing and the entrances to it, and the visibility of the locomotive's train signals (searchlight, lanterns at the buffer bar) on the train approaches to the crossing are mandatory. It is necessary to obtain a profile and road map at the entrance to the crossing on both sides.

Damage to the vehicle, work of brakes, lighting, steering, sound signal are fixed.

If there is an automatic crossing signal at the crossing, the length of the approach sections and their compliance with technical standards are checked; the time is set for the beginning of the delivery of a warning signal about the approach of a train before the prohibition signals of traffic lights are switched on at the crossing and the transfer of the traveling beam to the closed position begins, and also the compliance of the specified time with the standards.

4.

The most important feature of the inspection of the scene is recording of the progress and results of the investigative action, including the compilation of a detailed protocol. In addition to the text of the inspection protocol, schemes, plans, photographing and video shooting are applied. The most effective type of fixation is video shooting, which allows to fix the process in dynamics.

With regard to photography, it distinguishes orienting, survey, nodal, detailed photography. In the process of orienting photographing, not only the immediate location of the incident is imprinted, but also the sections of the railway track and the right-of-way that are adjacent to it. The survey photographing fixes the location of the train, derailed cars (and the locomotive, if it also touched it), the locomotive and (or) the cars that were broken up, overturned, as well as the part of the train that remained on the tracks.

Nodal photography is aimed at fixing individual parts of the scene and objects found during the inspection, including the locomotive cabs on the outside and inside with all instruments and devices; wheeled carts, other parts and components, detached from the locomotive and cars; damaged rails, sleepers, supports of the contact network, other structures available on or near the railway bed, destroyed railway bed and other artificial structures, significant for investigation.

Through detailed photography, small objects and traces can be recorded on a larger scale, which will increase the ability to identify their features and signs to obtain evidence of the cause (s) of the incident.

In the final part of the incident scene inspection protocol, the conditions of photography and video recording (the time of day, the type of lighting, weather conditions, cameras used, video cameras, the type and mark of the light filters when they are applied, whether the flash was activated) are indicated. Video recording and printed photos, their negatives are attached to the inspection protocol or attached flash cards of digital photographic equipment or digital video cameras. Items, documents, articles found during the inspection of the scene and seized for further investigation are indicated. The inspection protocol is certified by the signatures of the investigator, the

persons present (experts, forensic experts, witnesses if present and other participants in the process).

Speaking about «seizure» of objects, documents, samples found at the scene, we note that such a term is not defined in the Criminal Procedure Code, and the action itself is not envisaged as an independent investigative action, although it is constantly applied in practice, and the legislator is also accustomed to applying it. Seizure is not only possible, but also exists in various investigative operations. We support the opinion of A. R. Belkin on the addition to the Code of Criminal Procedure of article 164¹ – «Seizure of objects, documents, samples» [4, 10], which determines that «seizure is an act performed in the course of investigative actions for the purpose of subsequent inspection and examination of seized items, documents, samples, and for their safety» [4].

Which documents are subject to inspection and can be seized? First of all, the technical and administrative act of the station, the timetable and the log of the movement of trains through the station, the register of radio and telephone messages relating to trains, graph of completed timetable for the movement of trains. The books of comments and instructions of the inspector for traffic safety, condition and repair of the track, locomotives, wagons, signaling and communication devices are checked; audit reports and their acts indicating the defects found during inspection that threaten traffic safety; acts of technical inspection of rolling stock, books of repair records of locomotives and comments of machinists, a log of track inspection, devices of signaling and communications, switch transfers, and also books with written warnings about malfunctions are studied. Acts of inspections and memoranda of responsible persons on identified defects in the organization of train traffic, work of locomotive and wagon depots and written explanations of those responsible for the part of the road on which the incident occurred are being studied.

If there are already materials of official investigation of the incident, they are also being studied, copies are made and are attached to the criminal case file.

5.

For most accidents with railway transport, expert assessments are being made to establish the immediate causes of the accident, the relevance of certain items, details, faults and defects to this incident. At the time of appointment of the examination, the investigator must have an official opinion on the cause of the incident; the scene inspection report; the testimony of the driver of the locomotive, his assistant, officials of the services of track, signaling, centralization, blocking, locomotive and car economy. The study of the submitted materials will allow to establish whether the appointment of an examination is really necessary, and if so, what questions should be posed to the expert.

In the case of a train collision, experts may be asked questions about the presence of faults and defects on the locomotive that caused the accident; whether there were violations of the rules of technical operation and job descriptions on the part of the locomotive brigade; in what state are the devices of the signal system and communications, are there any malfunctions in them that caused the collision of trains or a collision with an obstacle; whether there is a violation of the rules for organizing shunting operations; whether the requirements of the technical and administrative act were violated by the station duty officer or other persons.

Forensic and technical expertise in the investigation of incidents that occurred during shunting operations



is appointed. The expert (s) are asked whether the assignment for the maneuvering work, during which the incident occurred, corresponds to traffic safety requirements; Whether workers were correctly placed – participants in the shunting work and whether their actions were mutually agreed upon; whether instructions on the movement of trains and shunting work were violated by the members of the locomotive brigade, if so, in which it was expressed; whether the maneuvers before the reception to the train station were terminated.

To determine the reasons for the derailment of the rolling stock, a forensic expert examination is appointed, the following questions are posed: what is the state of the track at the site of the derailment and whether the rails and sleepers have the defects that caused the incident; whether the rules of repair and current maintenance of the track were violated by track service employees? what is the technical condition of the locomotive and wagons, do they have defects that cause the derailment; whether the rules of technical operation and job descriptions on the part of employees of the wagon depot were violated; whether the cars were overloaded, if so, was not this the reason for the derailment of the train; whether the cargo is correctly distributed, packed and fixed in wagons; whether the composition of the train, which wagons are derailed, corresponds to the rules and regulations in force.

If, when inspecting the cars, there were fractures in the axes, the axle necks, the destruction of the wheels, the experts asked what is the cause of the fracture of the axis or neck of the axle, the destruction of wheels, etc.; what causes caused the faults in the track that appeared at the scene, including its broadening, narrowing, distortions, and distortions.

When investigating accidents on railway transport, the questions arise of determining the quality and structure of metal of parts (rails, axles, necks of axles, axle boxes, automatic couplers, etc.), metal sawdust found in axle boxes of locomotive and wagons, the type and structure of metal in objects found at the scene of the incident or seized from the suspects. Under these conditions, a metallographic examination is appointed to clarify why the part has been damaged; when there was a destruction of the node in relation to the events of the incident; whether there was initially damage, which led to their destruction, etc.

Fingerprint and tracological examinations are required to investigate fingerprints on tools, handles and stopcocks, on parts, road appliances and devices, as well as footprints left on the scene in the cab or locomotive cab.

In case of incidents involving injuries to human health or death of a person, a forensic medical examination is appointed, the questions are raised about the causes and time of death, the nature of bodily harm, their connection with a transport incident, signs of alcohol intoxication of the suspect. At the same time, the question arises: why the state of intoxication in violation of traffic rules and the operation of transport is recognized as a qualifying sign of the composition of the criminal offense, but not the composition of violations of safety rules for the

operation and operation of rail, air, sea and inland water transport and underground. And the answer here is not for experts. This is a completely different topic.

Conclusion. To sum up, we note that the problems related to the tactics of carrying out an investigative inspection of the scene of the incident involving rail transport are extremely important and relevant and require more detailed consideration in a monographic study. Nevertheless, the issues raised by us can be relevant to practical workers, especially with regard to the application of the latest scientific and technical means, formation of an investigative and operational group with the obligatory involvement of a wide range of specialists, the use of video recordings, and the overcoming of gaps in the criminal procedural legislation. All this, in our opinion, will increase the effectiveness of this investigative action and, as a consequence, the detection of transport incidents and criminal encroachments on transport infrastructure objects [9, 10].

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Article received 22.06.2016, accepted 15.11.2016.