

Glacier Express: Line tested – operations running to schedule

Brig (Switzerland), 26 July 2010 The Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn is profoundly shocked and saddened by the serious rail accident that occurred between Lax and Fiesch on 23 July 2010 involving a Glacier Express train. The management of the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn would like to extend their deepest condolences to the relatives of the passenger killed in the accident. Our heart-felt sympathy also goes out to the injured passengers, who are still being looked after by representatives of the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn.

On Saturday, 24 July 2010, all the injured were visited by representatives of the management, where possible after consultation with the attending physicians. The railway company continues to maintain close contacts with the injured and their families.

At around 8 pm on Friday, 23 July 2010, the Upper Valais Examining Magistrate's Office and the Federal Investigation Bureau for Railway, Funicular and Boat Accidents released the accident site and the railway line. The Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn subsequently cleared the accident site and repaired the railway line in accordance with applicable standards and regulations. The railway line and retaining wall damaged by the accident were repaired by in-house and outside specialists.

At 4.30 pm on Saturday, 24 July 2010, the railway construction company SERSA surveyed the existing track geometry using its specialist Palas measuring and guidance system and calculated the required geometry for the track to be repaired. On completion of the second tamping the "track reference protocol" was drawn up. This track reference protocol was additionally verified by the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn infrastructure engineering department and the data used to calculate the permissible speed. In accordance with applicable standards and legislation the section of track can be travelled at a speed of 35 km/h, which corresponds to the original speed.

The damaged rolling stock was taken out of service and examined by the responsible authorities. No obvious damage such as breaks in the axle, suspension or wheelset could be determined. The examination is continuing. This type of panoramic train has been in use for the Glacier Express for several years without any instances of technical defects.

Prior to its re-opening the track was tested by running three trains without passengers along the section concerned. At the recommendation of the Magistrate's Office a reduced-speed section was put in place along this section of track. The trains operate there at 10 km/h.

The Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn resumed its scheduled services at 6 am on Sunday, 25 July 2010. Passengers of the Glacier Express and the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn are guaranteed a safe journey.

For more information:

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