

7 - Louisville
Narrative Report

Gressler, John (OGC)

From: Spangler, Kevin C. (LVL)
Sent: Friday, December 11, 1998 8:22 AM
To: Quester, David D. (OGC); Selvage, Paul A. (OGC); Unger, Joseph R. (OGC); Bartz, Jerry A. (LNB); Bialko, Jerry C. (OGC); Bodine, Kevin F. (PLQ); Burrell, Chris (HNY); Cote, Francios S. (ALGC); Fletcher, Tom J. (SCT); Manning, Tim G. (LPT); Stolfo, Carl M. (PED); Barnes, Jason E. (OGC); Comeaux, Mackie A. (PLQ); DesJardins, Robert (DPK); Kaminski, Mitch J. (TRH); Lamble, Nola J. (SCT); Lesko, William F. (LPT); O'Keefe, Dennis P. (PED); Shelley, David A. (LNB); Waltemate, Herman (OGC); Kiel, Jim A. (PED); Livermore, Holly L. (DPK); Hinson, David J. (LPT); Cameron, Kathy K. (LPT); Gressler, John (OGC); Higby, Glenn E. (HOU); Beeler, Edward L. (OGC); DiRienzo, David J. (OGC); McWhirter, Byron E. (DPK); Waher, Mike U. (NIA); Davis, Ron (NIA); Wronko, Robert R. (LPT); Delisio, James J. (LVL); Martin, Ron (TRH); Johnson, Scott D. (HNY); Martin, Ron (TRH)
Subject: Louisville VCM Railcar Derailment 12/1/98

The Geon Company - Louisville Plant
VCM Railcar Derailment

Summary

On December 1, 1998, _____, Material Handling Relief Operator, was driving the skidder to switch VCM railcars. The skidder lost traction and slid off into the center of the tracks at the derail causing it to flip up. One set of trucks on the empty VCM railcar was pulled over the derail causing the car to derail. No injuries or damage occurred.

On December 2, 1998, a Board of Review was conducted with the following in attendance:

Paul Reger	Plant Manager
Dave Hicks	Health, Safety, Environmental, Utilities and HR Manager
Steve Brown	Resin Production Manager
Frank Levy	LPA Safety Training Supervisor
Kevin Spangler	Sr. Safety/Environmental Engineer
	Material Handling Relief Operator

Corrective Actions

1. Replace tires on track mobile. (Jim Hafling 12/15/98)
2. Insure track mobile is still operating as a 4 wheel drive unit (Jim Hafling 12/15/98)
3. Check on changing pressure on track mobile tires for better traction. (Frank Levy 12/11/98)
4. Check the cost of the present skidder versus the cost of leasing a track mobile made for moving railcars. (Steve Brown)

Narrative

On December 1, 1998, _____, tank farm operator where switching VCM railcars for the morning unloading. _____ was driving the skidder while _____ was working as the brakeman. The operators completed the first switch of replacing the empty cars on the west unloading tracks with two full cars. _____ then pulled the three empties on the east-unloading track and proceeded to connect the two full cars on the storage tracks. While pulling the train of three empties and two full VCM cars north, the skidder's tires lost traction just before the derailer on track 6. The skidder slid to the west, dropping the rear tire between the tracks. Unknown to _____ the knobs on the tire grabbed the derailer and flipped it up _____ straightened out the skidder pulling one set of trucks of the empty VCM railcar over the derailer

REDACTED

resulting in a derailment. PAL Railroad was called in and re-railed the VCM car.

Facts

1. _____ has been driving the skidder for 5 years.
2. This switch takes place every morning that the plant is in operation.
3. No injuries or damage occurred
4. The Railcar remained upright.
5. The track mobile inspection sheet was properly completed.

Management Systems

1. Railroad ties have been installed on the outside of tracks parallel to the tracks to prevent the skidder from digging holes and covering the tracks with rock.
2. The railroad ties on the sides of the tracks were frosty and wet.
3. The tires on the skidder were worn.
4. The plant has been using a wood skidder to move railcars for 20+ years instead of a track mobile, which is made to move railcars.
5. The operators experience traction problems every morning
6. The operators state that the skidder still has some traction problems when new tires are installed.

Conclusion

VCM railcars were being switched using the skidder when traction problems developed. The skidder slid in between the tracks at the derailler. The tire of the skidder grabbed the derailler flipping it up. The front trucks of the first railcar were pulled over the derailler resulting in the derailment of the front set of trucks of an empty VCM railcar. The cause of this incident is that a wood skidder is being used to move railcars, which is not its intended use.

