



207 passengers on board VIA Rail train were bussed to Montreal

● Gilles Gagné

The January 5-6 VIA Rail train bound for Montreal was stopped in Drummondville on the morning of January 6 because of a power failure of one of the two locomotives' generators.

Many Gaspésians were on board that train since it was the second Halifax-Montreal train after New Year's Day. Almost all the 207 passengers on board were bused to Montreal a couple of hours after the stop. The two locomotives were pulling 20 cars.

The spokesperson for VIA Rail, Karl-Philip Marchand Giguère, explains that the generator failure stopped all the electrical power on the train, including the heating system

"A train of such length necessitates the generators of the two locomotives in order to function in winter conditions, when the electricity needs for the heating system are multiplied by 10," he says. So the

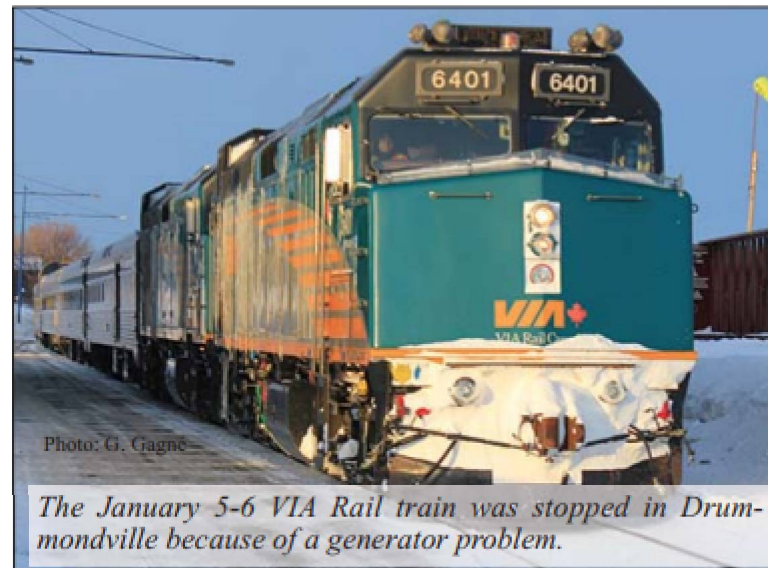


Photo: G. Gagné

The January 5-6 VIA Rail train was stopped in Drummondville because of a generator problem.

generator of one locomotive were not filling the train's needs.

The stop in Drummondville took place after an attempt made by the train staff to repair the failure, at Saint-Wenceslas, a short distance away. The stop was justified for "safety reasons," writes Mr. Marchand Giguère. "VIA Rail is sorry for the inconvenience caused by the situation and is offering the passengers who wish a travel credit valued at \$100 if it does-

n't exceed the (initial) value of their ticket," he adds.

The people who were supposed to take another train in the Quebec City-Windsor corridor were also admissible to a credit applied to trains that are late by more than an hour.

More information is available at VIA Rail's customer service. The phone number is 1-888 VIA Rail (1-888 842-7245) or 1-800 268-9503 for the people with a hearing impairment.