

TRAIN PILE-UP SPARKS PROBE

By JACQUI HOCKING

THE State Rail Authority has ordered an investigation into a near-fatal accident in which two trains smashed into a car on the southern line between Como and Jannali.

Vandals pushed the derelict car onto the line last night.

SRA chief executive Pat Johnson said today the smash could have been a disaster.

Police said the vandals were potential murderers.

They said the vandals waited until two trains travelling in opposite directions were about to pass before pushing the wrecked Volkswagen into their path.

The trains struck the car almost simultaneously.

Passengers, many of them elderly people returning from Mother's Day outings, were hurled about in the carriages as the trains slammed into the car between Como and Jannali about 6pm.

A police spokesman said today it was a mira-

It could have been murder — police

cle no one was badly injured.

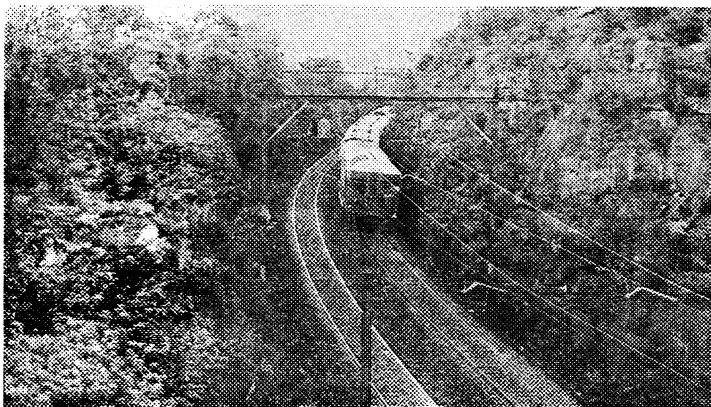
The dazed and shaken passengers had to walk 1km to Como station after being helped from the trains.

An spokeswoman for the SRA said today an urgent investigation had been ordered into the accident.

"But it is impossible to increase security to prevent such a senseless act of vandalism happening again," she said.

"Nothing like this has ever happened before."

She said repair gangs cleared away the debris by about 7.15pm but that the accident caused delays of up to 2½ hours.



"One train was travelling from Sydney to Wollongong, the other from Sutherland to Sydney," she said.

"The debris from the car became wedged underneath one of the trains.

"It could have been a very grave accident.

"The drivers were powerless to do anything."