

Decision No.

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

Decision No. 3707

ORIGINAL

In the matter of the application of the Southern Pacific Company for permission to discontinue handling of less than carload non-perishable freight at its Drumm Street Station, San Francisco, California.

Application No. 3437.

Elmer Westlake, for applicant,
Seth Mann and Harry E. Stocker, for
San Francisco Chamber of Commerce,
protestant,
Felix Gross, for Draymen's Association,
protestant.

LOVELAND, Commissioner:

O P I N I O N

Applicant maintains two freight stations in San Francisco, the principal one of which is located in the southern part of the City, in the immediate neighborhood of Fourth and King Streets, and handles all classes of freight, both carloads and less. Under the jurisdiction of and operated as a part of the King Street facilities is a platform and shed at 16th and Harrison Streets, approximately 1.2 miles distant, at which L.C.L. outbound freight is received.

The other, which is known as Drumm Street station, is situated some two miles from the King Street yard on the north side of town in the fruit and vegetable district and handles carload freight, both inbound and outbound, with the exception of certain specified commodities consisting of bulky freight and articles which, on account of their nature, are dangerous or objectionable. Less than carload freight handled at this station is restricted to movement to or from points in the following territory and in many instances is further confined to fresh fruit and vegetables:

Western Division:

San Francisco to Stockton, Cal., inclusive,
San Ramon Branch, Avon to Radum, Cal., inclusive,
Benicia to Suisun, Cal., inclusive.
Napa Branch, Suisun to Calistoga, Cal., inclusive.
Buchli to Union, Cal., inclusive.
Santa Rosa Branch, Napa Junction to Santa Rosa, Cal.
inclusive.
Napa Junction to South Vallejo, Cal., inclusive.
Suisun to Elmira, Cal., inclusive.
Rumsey Branch, Elmira to Rumsey, Cal., inclusive.
San Francisco to San Jose, Cal., inclusive (via
Oakland, Cal.)

Stockton Division:

Stockton to Elk Grove, Cal., inclusive.

Coast Division:

Points south of San Jose to Santa Cruz, Cal. (via
Glenwood, Cal.), inclusive.

It will be seen that the territory to or from which less than carload freight is handled at Drumm Street comprises only a small portion of the whole.

Applicant proposes to amend its present rule governing the handling of less than carload freight at this station to read as follows:

- (a) No outbound or inbound less carload freight will be handled at Drumm Street Station, except as provided in Paragraphs B and C.
- (b) Shipments of outbound or inbound less carload freight moving under Rules of G.F.D. Circular No. 211-W (C.R.C. No. 2137) will be handled at Drumm Street Station, provided same are loaded or unloaded by Shipper or Consignee on Team or Industry Tracks.
- (c) Inbound less carload shipments of Fresh Fruit and Fresh Vegetables will be delivered at this Company's Drumm Street Station, San Francisco, Cal., when from the following territory, providing Consignees will take delivery of such freight at the car door.

The territory mentioned in Paragraph (C) is the same restricted area to and from which less than carload freight is now handled at Drumm Street station.

The practical effect of proposed change will be to confine less than carload shipments, outbound, to perishable freight and packinghouse products loaded on team or industry tracks, in refrigerator cars iced at shipper's expense and subject to minimum of 10,000 pounds, and to confine inbound less than carload shipments to the same class of refrigerated freight as handled outbound, in addition to which less than carload shipments of fresh fruit and vegetables will be delivered at Drumm Street station from aforementioned restricted area, provided delivery of such freight is taken at car door. No change whatever is contemplated in the handling of carload freight.

It is urged by applicant that proposed change will appreciably conserve equipment, effect a saving of 24 hours' time in ultimate delivery of less than carload freight, reduce the handling of this class of freight at way stations, lessen warehouse and clerical expense at Drumm Street and yard switching force at Fourth and King Streets, provide needed additional team track space at Drumm Street, and incidentally contribute to relief of the water front congestion at San Francisco.

Petitioner testified that an average of six cars of less than carload freight move out of Drumm Street daily, four of which are transported to 4th and King Street station where the contents are consolidated with other cars and taken to ultimate destination; that the inbound less than carload freight (exclusive of perishables) averages three cars per day. Argument is made that if petition is granted an immediate conservation of equipment will be obtained to the extent of the four cars in use between Drumm and King Streets and that a saving of 24 hours would be effected in delivery of outbound freight account elimination of transfer at King Street; also that the three inbound cars could be unloaded at 4th and King Streets from 12 to 24 hours earlier than at Drumm Street.

It is applicant's contention that the present team track facilities for loading and unloading carload freight are inadequate and that the elimination of less than carload freight as proposed will make available, for team track purposes, space to the extent of eight additional cars which cannot be otherwise obtained. Protestants' position is that if the practice of handling nonperishable less than carload freight at this station is abolished, it will necessitate a much longer dray haul between Fourth and King Streets and their places of business adjacent to Drumm Street and add to the congestion already existing at former point, with consequent delay in obtaining delivery of inbound freight and a much greater team detention than occurs at Drumm Street.

It was testified by one of these protestants that in making the trip to and from King Street station two hours more time would be consumed than in going to and from Drumm Street, which figure, it was stated, does not include the detention to dray at King Street, due to the great volume of freight handled at that point and congestion attendant thereon.

Statement was made by one of the protestants and unrefuted by applicant that it would not be feasible to use the Drumm Street house track for team track purposes, as it is in a depression and could not be improved without tearing down the shed.

An important objection on part of protestants was directed to the earlier hour of departure from their places of business where King Street station is used, and it was shown that orders received in the afternoon cannot be shipped that day, whereas, in the case of Drumm Street, owing to its proximity and less volume of business, these afternoon orders can be shipped out the same day.

Considerable testimony was presented through draymen concerning difficulty experienced in receiving and delivering freight

at King Street by which it was shown that the sheds were in a highly congested condition during the busy period of 1917 lasting approximately from March to September, inclusive, and that at the time of this hearing (January 1918) much time is lost in obtaining freight from the inbound shed. The concensus of opinion of draymen appearing at this proceeding is that handling freight through the King Street sheds is exceedingly difficult and that this condition will be strongly manifested with the approaching recurrence of the busy season. They contend that if the less than carload dead freight, now handled at Drumm Street is removed to Fourth and King Street station, the congestion there will be seriously aggravated and in such event it will be necessary to make a charge against their patrons for detention to drays in addition to the regular haulage rate.

In controversion of protestants' charges, applicant asserts that the congestion of 1917 was due to labor troubles on the water front and strike of its stevedores, therefore an abnormal situation.

It furthermore alleges that the prevailing conditions at the inbound shed are of a transitory nature due to the employment of inexperienced help in consequence of severe inroads made on its warehouse forces by the drafting process of the U.S. Government and that this trouble will be remedied as these employes become more proficient.

Counsel for defendant also gave out the statement that an appropriation had been made for the purpose of constructing an additional shed at King Street, 50 feet wide by 825 feet in length.

The principal reasons advanced by applicant in support of its request are conservation of equipment, more expeditious delivery of less than carload freight, reduction in less than

carload freight handled at way stations, saving in station expense, and acquisition of additional team track space at Drumm Street.

It has already been shown that the saving in equipment will amount to the four cars in transfer service between Drumm and King Streets and that the feasibility of converting the house track at Drumm Street into a team track is seriously questioned.

Opposed to the benefit to be obtained by proposed change should be balanced the inconvenience to the shipping public now availing itself of the Drumm Street facilities.

After taking into careful consideration both the advantages and inconveniences that will result in consequence of such change, I am of the opinion that until such time as a marked amelioration of the troublesome conditions at King Street is shown the best interests of the public would not be served by permitting this change to become effective and accordingly recommend a dismissal of the application without prejudice to subsequent presentation in the event of improved conditions at the King Street station.

The following form of order is submitted:

O R D E R

The Southern Pacific Company having applied, under Section 63 of the Public Utilities Act, for permission to discontinue handling of less than carload nonperishable freight at its Drumm Street station, San Francisco, a public hearing having been held and the Commission being fully apprised in the premises, for the reasons stated in the foregoing opinion,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that said application be and the same is hereby denied without prejudice.

The foregoing opinion and order are hereby approved and ordered filed as the opinion and order of the Railroad Commission of the State of California.

Dated at San Francisco this 15th day of March, 1918.

Max Thelen

J. D. Leonard

Edwin O. Edgerton

Francis R. Peck

Commissioners.