

Decision No. 35631

ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the matter of the application of)
PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY COMPANY)
for an order authorizing one-man)
car operation on Echo Park Line.)

Application No. 25128.

In the matter of the application of)
PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY COMPANY)
to abandon evening and Sunday motor)
coach operation on Echo Park Line.)

Application No. 17984
54th Supplemental

BY THE COMMISSION:

OPINION AND ORDER

By the above numbered applications Pacific Electric Railway Company seeks the Commission's authority to make certain changes in the type of service now operated on its so-called Echo Park line. The route of this service is from a terminal at 12th and Hill Streets, along Hill Street, Sunset Boulevard and Echo Park Avenue to Cerro Gordo Street, a distance of 4.54 miles. Of this total length, 1.23 miles lie between Sunset Boulevard and the end of the line at Cerro Gordo Street.

This is one of the shorter lines of applicant's system and while, during the peak periods, the volume of traffic handled is substantial along Hill Street and Sunset Boulevard, the off-peak business is comparatively light. Further than this, it duplicates an existing service of applicant's Hollywood-Vineyard line between those points. The entire line lies within a single fare zone.

At the present time this service is performed by two-man cars of the so-called 600 class throughout the entire day, except from 7:39 P.M. until 12:38 A.M., and on Sundays and holidays, when a

shuttle motor coach service is operated from the intersection of Echo Park Avenue and Sunset Boulevard to Cerro Gordo Street, requiring passengers to transfer from or to the Hollywood-Vineyard line. Applicant has available twelve rail cars of the 100 class, some of which were formerly used in the Long Beach local service, as well as in local service in the City of San Bernardino, and it desires to substitute this type of equipment for the 600 class cars on the Echo Park line, in order to release the larger cars for service on more heavily patronized lines. The 100 class cars were designed for one-man operation and are particularly suitable for that service.

Part of applicant's proposal contemplates the abandonment of the shuttle motor coach service, resulting in the saving of some 21,000 motor coach miles annually and the resultant saving of rubber so essential at the present time. Shuttle rail service will be substituted during the off-peak periods for the shuttle motor coach service proposed to be abandoned.

No objections have been offered to the proposed operation of the one-man cars, but some difference of opinion exists as to the propriety of performing the shuttle service in lieu of operating through schedules to and from the terminal at 12th and Hill Streets. As previously stated, however, the volume of traffic during the off-peak periods and on Sundays is comparatively light and the proposal to eliminate a duplication of service by operating the shuttle service during these periods is in direct conformance with recent orders of the Office of Defense Transportation requiring the elimination of all unnecessary duplication.

No changes in routes or fares or frequency of service are proposed.

The Board of Public Utilities and Transportation of the City of Los Angeles, at its meeting on July 17th, approved the changes as proposed and it does not appear to us that this is a matter in which a public hearing is necessary; therefore, the application will be granted.

O R D E R

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Pacific Electric Railway Company is hereby authorized:

I. To operate one-man cars of the 100 class on its so-called Echo Park Avenue line from 12th and Hill Streets, via Hill Street, Sunset Boulevard and Echo Park Avenue to Cerro Gordo Street. Applicant also is authorized to operate this class of equipment in service over such other of its lines to and from the Vineyard or West Hollywood carhouses, where the equipment may be stored and serviced.

II. To abandon the Echo Park motor coach service previously authorized by Decision No. 32101, dated June 20, 1939, on 37th Supplemental Application No. 17984.

III. To operate shuttle rail service on Echo Park Avenue, from Sunset Boulevard to Cerro Gordo Street, daily during the evening off-peak period and on Sundays and holidays, over substantially the same period as the shuttle motor coach service has been performed.

This entire order is subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The abandonment of the motor coach service authorized herein shall be made concurrently with the establishment of the rail service.

- (2) Applicant shall afford the public not less than five (5) days' notice of the substitution authorized herein, by posting notices in all rail cars and coaches operating on the line and at all stations affected.
- (3) Applicant shall, within thirty (30) days thereafter, notify this Commission in writing of the changes in service authorized herein.
- (4) The authorization herein granted is made necessary primarily because of the existing war emergency and shall be subject to review at any time the Commission may deem such review necessary.

The effective date of this Order shall be the date hereof.

Dated at Los Angeles, California, this 28th day of
July, 1942.

Justice J. Cameron
Ray L. Bailey

Richard Jackson

Commissioners.

A-25128
A-17984 (54th Supplemental)

I dissent.

For the reasons set forth in my dissenting opinion attached to Decision No. 35239 on Application No. 22549 (First Supplemental), dated April 7, 1942, and for the reasons hereinafter advanced, I am unable to concur in the foregoing order.

This order was prepared ex parte and submitted to the Commission without any public hearing on the application, notwithstanding the objections previously made in my dissenting opinion (supra) to such a proceeding in a similar matter. When these objections were again raised and, upon inquiry, it developed that the Railroad Brotherhoods concerned in the street car operations involved desired to enter a protest, the Commission decided to hold an informal conference which representatives of the applicant and the Brotherhoods were invited to attend.

At this conference spokesmen for the Applicant Company stated that the application was primarily based upon the necessity, due to the war emergency, of utilizing all of the cars owned by the Company to their maximum capacity in order to carry the greatest possible number of passengers during the emergency period. They contended that this purpose would be served by placing so-called one man cars on the lines involved on Sundays and holidays, and diverting the larger cars now used on these lines to other runs. It was admitted by the Company spokesmen that the application to use one man operation was not based upon a necessity to conserve revenues, although they asserted that all of the car lines involved were at present operated at a loss. As the Commission has seen fit not to make any official record in this case, these statements by the Company are not supported by present cost records or evidence.

A representative of the Railroad Brotherhoods objected that the so-called one man cars were originally designed for two man operation, and that their rear exits made it desirable to operate them now with two men in order to afford a greater degree of safety to the traveling public.

A Company spokesman replied that the war emergency had made it extremely difficult to obtain capable street car operators. The attorney for the Railroad Brotherhoods asserted that operators are available at the present time and that if shortage of male labor later becomes acute women might be employed as operators.

It is obvious that the crowded condition of street cars which already exists, due to war-time transportation problems, and which will undoubtedly increase as the war continues, has created a greater accident hazard for street car riders than might occur in more normal times. When one man cars are filled with standees it is frequently impossible for the single operator at the front end to see the side or rear exits and the risk of injury to passengers alighting is much greater than if a second operator were on duty to supervise unloading.

While I am in agreement with the expressed purpose of the Company to provide a maximum amount of service with its available equipment, I believe that a proper consideration of the public safety requires that two operators should be placed on all street cars with side or rear exits, particularly if standees are to be carried.

Frank L. Havener

Commissioner.