

Decision No. 47109**ORIGINAL**

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of RAILWAY EXPRESS AGENCY. )INCORPORATED, to close its express )

offices and discontinue express service )

at Campo, Jacumba and Plaster City. )

Application No. 32829

Eugene M. Prince and Noel Dyer, for Railway Express Agency, Inc., applicant. Clarence Wood, Mary G. Hutchinson, E. W. Roberts for Roberts Manufacturing Company, C. E. Knight for Order of Railway Trainmen, San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway Company, and G. Martinez for Tecate Brewing Company, protestants.

O P I N I O N

By the above-numbered application Railway Express Agency, Inc., seeks the Commission's authority to close its offices and discontinue express service in the communities of Campo, Jacumba, and Plaster City, all of which are located on the line of San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway Company between San Diego, California, and El Centro, California.

A public hearing was held in the Community Center Building at Campo, California, on February 11, 1952, at which time evidence, both oral and documentary, was received, and the matter is now under submission for determination.

The record shows that printed notices were conspicuously posted and continuously maintained at each of the three locations for seven days prior to the date of the hearing, and that notices

of the hearing were also published in newspapers of general circulation in the cities of San Diego and El Centro. Despite this publicity, the only opposition to the proposal was expressed by a few persons residing in and in the vicinity of the station of Campo.

The record shows that on January 11, 1951, all passenger service between San Diego and El Centro over the rail line of San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway Company was discontinued, pursuant to the authority granted by this Commission in Decision No. 45156, dated December 19, 1950, in Application No. 31577. Since that date, applicant has been unable to render express service by passenger train but has attempted to continue the service by routing its shipments on freight trains operating between the two termini.

Exhibit No. 8 is a statement of revenues and expenses at the three stations involved, for the years 1950 and 1951 and for the month of January, 1952. This statement shows that the intrastate revenue at Campo averaged \$27.23 per month during the year 1950, \$27.38 per month during 1951, and was \$14.87 for the month of January, 1952. Corresponding amounts for Jacumba are shown as \$8.57, \$10.74, and \$22.24. The Plaster City office was closed during the period from January 1, 1950, through July 15, 1950, and intrastate revenues for the remainder of the year were not available. For 1951, however, the average monthly revenue was \$15.39 and for the month of January, 1952, \$4.09. Each of these agencies is operated on a commission basis, so the agency expense attributable to the intrastate operations can be easily calculated by taking 10 per cent of the revenue.

Where express matter is being placed aboard or delivered from trains along the route, a messenger is required aboard the train for the purpose of insuring proper distribution of the individual shipments which are placed under his custody. When passenger trains were operated, the messengers were employed jointly for the handling of mail, baggage, and express, with 50 per cent of their salaries charged to San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway Company.

Since discontinuance of passenger service, neither baggage nor mail has been handled, and the messenger has become an exclusive express employee, with Railway Express Agency required to assume full cost of this employee's salary.

Messenger service has been curtailed to one round trip per week between San Diego and El Centro, operated eastbound on Mondays and westbound on Tuesdays. Two additional round trips per week are provided between San Diego and Campo, however, one each on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Exhibit No. 8 shows that Railway Express Company's proportion of the messenger-service cost for handling express amounted to a monthly average of \$523.23 for the year 1950, \$498.05 for the year 1951, and \$513.69 for January, 1952.

Exhibit No. 9 shows that an average of nine intrastate shipments per month were handled at Campo during 1950, and seven intrastate shipments during the year 1951. At Jacumba, an average of five shipments per month was handled intrastate during 1950 but for the year 1951 the average number of shipments per month handled intrastate was three.

A number of witnesses appeared in protest of the closing of the Campo agency, but other than the representative of the Order of Railway Trainmen, who appeared in behalf of the express agents at these stations, there were none who expressed any opposition to the proposal that the agencies at the other two locations be closed. The principal protest was registered by Roberts Manufacturing Company, which has a plant at Campo engaged in the manufacture of women's apparel. Mr. E. W. Roberts, appearing as spokesman for this company, indicated that while no great number of shipments by Railway Express Agency had been made in the past there was every reason to believe that within the relatively near future substantial shipments would be offered. Roberts Manufacturing Company is a relatively new industry in the Campo area, but it appears that if there were reasonable expectation that Railway Express Agency service would be of any material benefit to the company it would have used the service to a greater degree in the past. The testimony shows that most of the products of this plant have been shipped by truck to Los Angeles, from which point it is consigned to its ultimate destination.

The communities involved will not be left entirely without service, because Pacific Greyhound Lines serves Jacumba and Plaster City and Southern California Freight Lines serves Jacumba, Plaster City, and Campo. Either of these carriers will handle express shipments and provide service on a daily schedule.

We are not convinced by the record that the revenues, either present or potential, provide any justification for the retention of Railway Express Agency service at Campo, and the

application for abandonment will be granted. As previously indicated herein, no opposition was expressed, either at the hearing or through correspondence, to the proposal to discontinue service at the Jacumba and Plaster City agencies, and the request for discontinuance at those points will likewise be granted.

ORDER

A public hearing having been held and the matter being under submission,

IT IS ORDERED that Railway Express Agency, Inc., is authorized to close its agency offices and discontinue express service in the communities of Campo, Jacumba, and Plaster City, in San Diego and Imperial Counties, and to amend its tariffs in accordance with the rules of this Commission, subject to the condition that the abandonments shall be made only after ten (10) days' notice to this Commission and to the public.

The authority herein granted shall lapse and become void if not exercised within one (1) year after the effective date of this order.

The effective date of this order shall be twenty (20) days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May, 1952.

A. J. [Signature] President  
Justin F. Cooney  
Harold P. Kule  
[Signature]  
[Signature] Commissioners