

Decision No. 55833

**ORIGINAL**

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Commission Investigation into the )  
safety, maintenance, operations, )  
use and protection of crossings )  
at grade with public highways and )  
streets and the lines of the )  
Southern Pacific Company in the )  
City of Santa Barbara, County of )  
Santa Barbara, State of California.)

Case No. 5912

Stanley G. Tomlinson, for the City of Santa Barbara,  
Robert K. Cutler, for the County of Santa Barbara,  
Laselle Thornburgh, Randolph Karr and Harold S. Lentz,  
for Southern Pacific Company, respondents.

G. R. Mitchell, for the Brotherhood of Locomotive  
Engineers, intervenor.

William C. Bricca and James Gibson, for the Commission  
staff.

O P I N I O N

This Commission upon its own motion ordered an investiga-  
tion into the safety, maintenance, operation, use and protection of  
each, all, or any part of the hereinafter enumerated crossings for  
the following purposes:

1. To determine whether or not the public safety and health  
require the abolishment of one or more of the aforesaid crossings.
2. To determine whether or not the public safety and health  
require the reconstruction, relocation, alteration or widening of  
one or more of the aforesaid crossings, or require the installation  
and maintenance of protective devices thereat, or require the in-  
stallation and maintenance of additional protective devices thereat.
3. To prescribe the terms on which any such crossing recon-  
struction, relocation, alteration, widening, installation or mainten-  
ance of protection shall be done; and to apportion the cost thereof  
between the Southern Pacific Company and the City of Santa Barbara.

4. To enter any other order that may be appropriate in the lawful exercise of the Commission's jurisdiction.

The following are the crossings under investigation:

<u>Crossing Number</u>	<u>Street</u>	<u>Crossing Number</u>	<u>Street</u>
E-368.7	Mission Street	E-370.2	Haley St. and Rancheria St.
E-368.8	Pedrogosa Street	E-370.4	Castillo St. and Gutierrez Street
E-368.9	Islay Street	E-370.5	Bath Street
E-369.0	Valerio Street	E-370.6	Montecito Street
E-369.1	Arellago Street	E-370.7	Chapala Street
E-369.2	Micheltorena St.	E-370.75	Yanonali Street
E-369.3	Sola Street	E-370.8	State Street
E-369.38D	Public Alley	E-370.85	Helena Street
E-369.4	Myrtle Avenue	E-370.9	Anacapa Street
E-369.45	Victoria Street	E-370.95	Mason Street
E-369.5	Anapamu Street	E-371.0	Santa Barbara Street
E-369.6	Figueroa Street	E-371.8	Milpas Street
E-369.7	Carillo Street	E-371.9	Punta Gorda Street
E-369.8	Canon Perdido		
E-369.9	De La Guerra St.		
E-370.0	Ortega Street		
E-370.1	Cota Street		

This investigation was originally instituted by order dated March 5, 1957. Upon motion of respondent, Southern Pacific Company, an "Amended Order Instituting Investigation" was issued on September 3, 1957. The order joined, as a respondent, the County of Santa Barbara with the other respondents, Southern Pacific Company and the City of Santa Barbara. This amended order was duly served upon the respondents. Also, they and the public were duly notified of the hearing.

Public hearings were held in Santa Barbara on October 2 and 3, 1957 before Commissioner C. Lyn Fox and Examiner John A. Rowe, Jr. Evidence was adduced by the Commission Staff, by each of the respondents, and on behalf of Seven-Up Bottling Company. On October 3, 1957 the matter was duly submitted for decision.

An investigation of the conditions of the Southern Pacific Company grade crossings in the City of Santa Barbara was made by the Commission Staff.

The staff's investigation revealed that the 20 grade crossings between and including Southern Pacific Company's Crossings Nos. E-368.7, Mission Street, and E-370.5, Bath Street, in the City of Santa Barbara will be closed when the new freeway parallel to and east of the Southern Pacific tracks is constructed in accordance with Freeway Agreement R/W-V-SB-2-SB dated February 7, 1957. Therefore no study was made of these crossings, which will be replaced with four grade separations and three pedestrian overpasses, as enumerated below:

Grade Crossings to be Closed and Eliminated

<u>Crossing Number</u>	<u>Name of Street</u>
E-368.7	Mission Street
E-368.8	Pedregosa Street
E-368.9	Islay Street
E-369.0	Valerio Street
E-369.1	Arrellaga Street
E-369.2	Micheltorena Street
E-369.3	Sola Street
E-369.38-D	Public Alley
E-369.4	Myrtle Avenue
E-369.45	Victoria Street
E-369.5	Anapamu Street
E-369.6	Figueroa Street
E-369.7	Carrillo Street
E-369.8	Canon Perdido Street
E-369.9	De La Guerra Street
E-370.0	Ortega Street
E-370.1	Cota Street
E-370.2	Haley Street
E-370.4	Castillo Street
E-370.5	Bath Street

Proposed Grade Separations

<u>Crossing Number</u>	<u>Name of Street</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
E-368.0-A	Las Positas Road	Being Enlarged
E-368.3-AD	Junipero Street	Pedestrian Overpass
E-368.7A	Mission Street	Overpass
E-369.2-A	Micheltorena Street	Overpass
E-369.5-AD	Anapamu Street	Pedestrian Overpass
E-369.7-A	Carrillo Street	Overpass
E-370.0-AD	Ortega Street	Pedestrian Overpass
E-370.4	Castillo Street	Overpass

It is understood that the Division of Highways expects to complete the freeway construction in 1962.

Consequently, this study includes only the main line grade crossings from Punta Gorda Street to Montecito Street, inclusive. The hazards, the visibility, the adequacy of the present protection and the physical characteristics were considered at each crossing. This study also reviewed 16-hour traffic checks at Punta Gorda Street, Milpas Street, Mason Street and Yanonali Street, as well as delays and train movements at the last three crossings.

As a result of the staff study, its expert witness made the following recommendation:

Crossing No. E-370.6 - Montecito Street

1. Install two Standard No. 8 flashing light signals. The exit from the freeway to Montecito Street (just north of the crossing), which is to be closed when the freeway is completed, should be closed now so that the northwest flashing light can be installed in the correct location for proper visibility.

(Note re all recommendations for signals: All automatic crossing protection should be installed with circuits which will operate the signals for trains proceeding in either direction on any track and should have timing-out devices to eliminate unnecessary and prolonged operation of signals. Wherever short highway circuits are used, they should be of sufficient length to permit the signals to operate before the trains start over the crossing.) ✓

2. Repaint "RXR" on pavement opposite the advance-warning signs.

Crossing No. E-370.7 - Chapala Street

1. Install two Standard No. 8 flashing light signals.
2. Paint "RXR" on the pavement opposite the advance-warning signs.

Crossing No. E-370.75 - Yanonali Street

1. Close this crossing.

There were only 339 vehicles that traversed this crossing in a 24-hour check, and many of these movements were

merely turn-around movements, as shown on traffic-flow diagram on Plate No. 12. This diagram also shows that closing this crossing would not deprive anyone of egress from or ingress to his property and would not inconvenience anyone to any great extent as there are so many other streets in the immediate vicinity that could be used just as well. This crossing is only 190 feet from State Street, 70 feet from Kimerlay Street, and 409 feet from Chapala Street (see Plates Nos. 20 and 22.) The Yanonali Street crossing was blocked by trains for a total of 2 hours (see Plate No. 15); the greatest part of this time was for loading and unloading of passengers, mail and baggage.

The closing of Yanonali Street grade crossing will also provide additional parking space for vehicles meeting trains at the depot.

Crossing No. E-370.8 - State Street

1. No recommendations. (Automatic gates recently installed now provide adequate protection.)

Crossing No. E-370.85 - Helena Street

1. Install a suspended reflectorized overhead sign as shown in Figure 8, Bulletin No. 4 of the Association of American Railroads Standards for Railroad and Highway Grade Crossing Protection. This sign should be installed south of the crossing, over the center of the street. (It is impractical to properly install a No. 1 crossing sign south of the track.)

Crossing No. E-370.9 - Anacapa Street

1. When the new freeway is completed through the City of Santa Barbara, Crossing No. E-369.2, Micheltorena Street, will be closed. The two Standard No. 8 flashing light signals now installed at this crossing can then be removed, and installed at the Anacapa Street crossing.

The visibility is restricted at this crossing and the vehicular traffic is increasing.

Crossing No. E-370.95 - Mason Street

1. Close this crossing.

There were only 196 vehicles observed using this crossing in a 16-hour check. Very few people will be inconvenienced to any extent by the closing of this crossing as there are so many cross streets in the immediate vicinity and as this crossing is only 239 feet from the Anacapa Street crossing and 355 feet from the Santa Barbara Street crossing. No one would be deprived of the right of egress from and ingress to his property if this crossing were closed.

Crossing No. E-371.0 - Santa Barbara Street

1. Paint "RXR" on the pavement in advance of crossing.
2. Install one new reflectorized advance warning sign southeast.
3. When the new freeway is completed through the City of Santa Barbara, Crossing No. E-369.7 at Carillo Street will be closed. The two Standard No. 8 flashing light signals now in place at this crossing can then be installed at the Santa Barbara Street crossing.

The visibility is restricted at this crossing and the traffic is increasing.

Crossing No. E-371.8 - Milpas Street

In addition to suggestions relative to reducing the switching movements over and the blocking of this crossing, the following recommendations are made:

1. Install two Standard No. 8 flashing light signals with circuits on all the tracks (except the three yard tracks farthest south) to operate for all trains in both directions over the crossing.
2. Install a large overhead light, with adequate intensity, just south of the corral track.
3. Install one new reflectorized advance warning sign in the southeast quadrant.
4. Paint "RXR" on the pavement in advance of the crossing in the northwest quadrant.
5. Remove trees and bushes in northeast quadrant, to provide better visibility in this quadrant.
6. Remove bushes in the northwest quadrant, to improve the visibility of trains and the proposed automatic protection in this quadrant.

Crossing No. E-371.9 - Punta Gorda Street

1. Close this crossing for the following reasons:
  - (a) Only 220 vehicles used this crossing in a 24-hour check.
  - (b) The approaches provide unsatisfactory and restricted visibility.
  - (c) This crossing is only 726 feet from the Milpas Street crossing, and it is just as convenient to use the Milpas Street crossing to and from the City of Santa Barbara.
  - (d) Closing this crossing would inconvenience only a very few people.

- (e) No one would be deprived of the right of egress from or ingress to his property if this crossing were closed.
- (f) Our observations in the field revealed that every time that Milpas Street was blocked for any length of time the Punta Gorda Street crossing was also blocked at the same time for approximately the same length of time by the same train. This fact destroys the possible usefulness of the Punta Gorda Street crossing as an emergency crossing for use when Milpas Street crossing is blocked.

The Commission expert indicated that, in his opinion, the priority for the improvement of the protection of Anacapa, Santa Barbara, Milpas, Chapala and Montecito Streets should be Milpas, Chapala, Montecito, Anacapa followed by Santa Barbara. However, he agreed with the witness for the city that the public safety and interest required all five of these crossings to be protected at once. There was no substantial evidence contrary to the staff's recommendation on closing Punta Gorda Street, provided some means can be devised whereby the city may, in emergencies, cross the Punta Gorda grade crossing and its surface shall remain in good repair.

The county moved that the order of investigation be dismissed as to it. This motion will be granted for although the Commission has authority, upon a proper evidentiary showing, to allocate costs of crossing protection against the county, there is an absence of any justification therefor in this proceeding. As to the cost of protection for Anacapa, Santa Barbara and Milpas Streets, the city and Southern Pacific Company have mutually agreed upon a sharing of costs, fifty per cent to be borne by the city and fifty per cent by the Southern Pacific Company. The order herein shall so provide. The cost of the balance of the protection and the cost of closing the streets are found to be properly chargeable to the Southern Pacific Company and the

following order will so provide. The Commission finds that public safety requires all of the safety protection and the grade crossing closings as recommended by the staff. In view of the improvements recently inaugurated by the Southern Pacific Company in the operation of its freight trains and in the switching operations, no provision will be made therefor in the following order.

O R D E R

An order of investigation having been filed, public hearings having been held, the matter being under submission and the Commission being fully advised,

IT IS ORDERED:

(1) That the motion of the County of Santa Barbara, that the order of investigation as applied to it be dismissed, is granted.

(2) That within six months after the effective date hereof Southern Pacific Company shall acquire, construct and install all the protection specified in the staff recommendation Exhibit No. 2 herein, as applied to Anacapa Street, Crossing No. E-370.9; Santa Barbara Street, Crossing No. E-371.0; Milpas Street, Crossing No. E-371.8; Chapala Street, Crossing No. E-370.7; Helena Street, Crossing No. E-370.85; and Montecito Street, Crossing No. E-370.6, in the City of Santa Barbara.

(3) That within ninety days after the effective date hereof Southern Pacific Company shall abolish, by physical closing, the crossings at grades over its tracks in the City of Santa Barbara at Yanonali Street, Crossing No. E-370.75; Mason Street, Crossing No. E-370.95; and Punta Gorda Street, Crossing No. E-371.9.

(4) That in abolishing said crossing at Punta Gorda Street, Southern Pacific Company shall proceed in accordance with the



directions of ordering paragraph (3) hereof, except that the City of Santa Barbara, within sixty days after the effective date hereof, may erect and maintain, at its sole cost, appropriate barriers which may be opened by emergency vehicles, and, while such barriers are maintained by the city, Southern Pacific Company shall maintain the paving surface within lines 2 feet outside of the outside rails in a manner suitable for use by such emergency vehicles.

(5) That the cost of the construction to be so performed at said crossings at Anacapa, Santa Barbara and Milpas Streets shall be borne equally by Southern Pacific Company and the City of Santa Barbara in accordance with their agreement of May 20, 1957, Exhibit No. 1 herein.

(6) That the balance of the construction to be performed in compliance with ordering paragraphs (2) and (3) hereof shall be performed at the sole cost of Southern Pacific Company, except as otherwise provided in ordering paragraph (4) hereof.

(7) That the cost of maintaining the protection hereinabove provided for shall be borne by Southern Pacific Company, except that the City of Santa Barbara shall, at its sole cost, maintain any barriers it may construct or erect at the Punta Gorda Street crossing.

(8) That within thirty days after the completion of the construction of the protection herein ordered at each of the

— New  
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above-provided crossings, Southern Pacific Company shall give the Commission written notice of compliance with the terms of this order.

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The effective date of this decision shall be twenty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 19th day of November, 1957.

[Signature]  
 President

[Signature]

[Signature]

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 Commissioners