

ORIGINALDecision No. 56689

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of
 PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY COMPANY
 for authority to discontinue agency
 at its Watts Station in the City of
 Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles,
 State of California, and to maintain
 said station as a non-agency.

Application No. 39728

James W. O'Brien for applicant.

Paul L. Garver for T. M. Chubb, Chief Engineer
 and General Manager, Department of Public
 Utilities and Transportation, City of
 Los Angeles, interested party.

O P I N I O N

The applicant herein requests authority to discontinue an agency station known as Watts in the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, State of California. Public hearing was held before Examiner Grant E. Syphers at Watts on March 13, 1958, at which time evidence was adduced and the matter submitted.

The station herein concerned consists of an office and a warehouse, with two employees who are on duty between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays. One of the employees, a general clerk, remains at the station during working hours, and the second employee, an agent, spends part of his time contacting shippers and receivers of freight. There is no one on duty during Saturdays and Sundays.

There are three nonagency stations which are served from the Watts station. These include stations at Lynwood which is two

miles from Watts, South Park which is one mile from Watts, and South Los Angeles which is two miles from Watts.

Testimony was presented showing the tonnage handled and the revenue received from these three nonagency stations and from the Watts agency station. Likewise testimony was presented showing the station costs under the present conditions and the estimated costs if this application is granted. It was estimated that there would be a resultant monthly saving of approximately \$426 per month. This saving will result completely from the fact that one less employee will be required. Under the proposal it is contemplated that there will be an assistant agent at the Compton station who will handle the duties now performed by the agent at Watts, and there will be no need for the present clerk at the Watts station.

Additionally, testimony disclosed that the number of carloads handled through the Watts freight agency station increased by 8.8 percent in 1957 over 1955. However, the tons of l.c.l. freight handled decreased during the same period by 30.5 percent.

If the Watts agency is closed it is proposed by the railway to deliver cars to industries having private spurs in the same manner as they are now handled. Additionally, for those shippers who have credit arrangements with the railway they will continue to spot cars on team tracks as at present. For those receivers who have no credit arrangements, the cars will be held at Graham Yard which is about one mile north of Watts. This is the same as the present procedure.

The principal differences which would result if the Watts agency were closed include the fact that there would be no one on

duty at the station to receive cars or to aid in the movement of cars, and while the functions of the present Agent at Watts would be performed by an assistant agent at Compton, yet for those shippers who picked up or delivered at the station it would present the problem of going to Compton which is more than 3½ miles away from Watts.

So far as the telephone arrangements are concerned, the railway proposes to maintain toll free telephone service at Compton and also at Los Angeles. In other words, the present telephone service at Watts would be discontinued and the calls would be handled through the Compton station.

The evidence shows that the l.c.l. traffic is now handled by the Pacific Motor Trucking Company. This service would continue to be the same with the exception that the trucks which now pick up and deliver at the Watts station would go to the Compton station.

Protests were voiced by four shippers in the area. Each of these shippers testified as to the convenience of the present arrangement and each was concerned with the possibility that if the agency station is discontinued they may experience greater delays in the handling of their cars. Additionally, concern was expressed as to the loss of space at Watts. Under present arrangements some shippers deliver freight to the Watts station where it is held until it can be loaded into a car. This station space would no longer be available under the proposal.

A consideration of all of the evidence adduced herein leads us to conclude and we now find that it would be adverse to the public interest if the agency station at Watts is closed. This record discloses that this station is now handling about 1,148 cars per year, and according to the testimony this may be increased. It is also

apparent from this record that the available dock space at Compton does not compensate for the loss of similar space at Watts.

ORDER

Application as above entitled having been filed, public hearing having been held thereon, the Commission having been fully advised in the premises and hereby finding it to be adverse to the public interest,

IT IS ORDERED that the application of Pacific Electric Railway Company to discontinue its agency station at Watts be and it hereby is denied.

The effective date of this order shall be twenty days from the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 13th day of May, 1958.

[Signature] President
[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]
Commissioners

Commissioner C. Lynn Fox being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.