

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 62158

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Commission investigation into the safety, maintenance, operations at, use and protection of, crossings at grade of public streets located in the City and County of San Francisco, more particularly described as 16th Street and 17th Street, and the tracks of Southern Pacific Company, being Crossings E-2.05-C and E-2.12-C.

Case No. 6404

In the Matter of the Application of SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY for authority to partially discontinue crossing watchmen at 16th and Harrison and 17th and Harrison Streets in the City and County of San Francisco.

Application No. 40736

Randolph Karr and H. S. Lentz, for Southern Pacific Company.
Dion R. Holm, Orville Wright, Robert R. Laughead and Bernard C. Johnson, for City and County of San Francisco.
William C. Bricca and Charles J. Astrue, for the Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

On November 21, 1957, Southern Pacific Company, in a letter to the Commission, requested authority to eliminate watchmen on Saturdays and Sundays at Crossings Nos. E-2.05-C and E-2.12-C, intersections of 16th and 17th Streets with industrial switching trackage along Harrison Street, in San Francisco, due to infrequent switching operations on those days.

Informal discussions thereafter between representatives of the company and the city, in which Commission staff members participated with the object of developing a satisfactory plan for protection of the crossings in the absence of flagmen, failed to

achieve concrete results. Consequently, the company, on January 9, 1959, filed a formal application (No. 40736) for authority to put its proposal into effect.

Further discussions and an informal on-the-ground meeting of the parties took place during 1959, in an effort to resolve conflicting views on methods and costs of protection, including increased overhead illumination considered desirable because of hazardous nighttime conditions at the crossings revealed by Commission accident records. Finally, the Commission, on January 12, 1960, instituted an investigation on its own motion into the adequacy of protection at the two crossings (Case No. 6404).

Partial hearings during the past year (March 7, October 4, December 7, 1960; February 27, April 28, 1961), on a consolidated record before Examiner John M. Gregory, at San Francisco, enabled the parties and members of the Commission's transportation engineering staff to reach agreement on a feasible plan, including a method of allocation of costs of installation and maintenance, for 24-hour protection of the two crossings and control of railroad switching movements that will obviate the need for watchmen.

The agreement (Exhibit 6), execution of which on behalf of the City and County of San Francisco has been authorized by its Board of Supervisors (Resolution No. 217-61, adopted April 10, 1961 - Exhibit 5), is dated April 25, 1961, has been executed by officials of the company and the city and is stated to become effective upon authorization by the Commission. All parties request such authorization.

In substance, the agreement calls for installation of conventional city-type traffic control signals with auxiliary signals for rail movements, including provision for pre-emption of traffic control signals at the 17th Street location by rail employee operated

push button controllers in order to avoid excessive operation of traffic control signals due to rail movements in or out of a small railroad storage yard near that intersection. The railroad will bear all costs of traffic control and track circuit installations, while the city undertakes to include the traffic control signals as part of its general traffic control system and thereafter to bear the entire cost of maintaining and replacing the traffic control signals and associated controllers. The company agrees to maintain, at its sole expense, all track circuits and an associated instrument case. Upon completion of the installations, the human flagmen at 16th and 17th and Harrison Streets and one wig-wag signal at 17th and Harrison Streets will be discontinued.

We find that the method provided by said agreement, dated April 25, 1961, for protection of traffic and control of rail movements at and in the vicinity of 16th and Harrison and 17th and Harrison Streets, in San Francisco, as supplemented by the description of said installations, Exhibit 4 herein, is reasonable and is also compatible with the public interest and safety. The agreement should and will be authorized in accordance with the provisions of the order which follows.

The disposition made herein of this consolidated proceeding renders unnecessary the consideration or decision of certain issues raised in earlier portions of the record by Southern Pacific's motion to dismiss the Commission's investigation and its proposal to amend its application.

O R D E R

Public hearing having been held herein, the proceeding having been submitted, the Commission now being fully advised and

basing its order upon the findings and conclusions contained in the foregoing opinion,

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. Southern Pacific Company and the City and County of San Francisco are hereby authorized and directed to carry out the terms and conditions of the agreement executed by said parties on April 25, 1961, Exhibit 6 herein, and to construct and operate the signals, circuits and appurtenant installations provided for by said agreement substantially in accordance therewith and in substantial accordance with the "Description of Proposed Signal Installation at 16th and ~~Harrison~~ **Harrison** Streets and 17th and Harrison Streets, San Francisco", Exhibit 4 herein.

2. Southern Pacific Company, prior to the placing in operation of said traffic signals and rail circuits, shall issue written instructions to its operating personnel, with a copy thereof to the Commission, substantially as follows: (a) a rail movement on Harrison Street approaching either 16th or 17th Street must enter the short track control circuit (described in said Exhibit 4) and stop until the red cross changes to a green cross, after which the rail movement may proceed across the intersecting street; (b) a rail movement wishing to enter or leave the rail storage yard adjacent to the intersection of 17th and Harrison Streets will initiate pre-emption of the traffic control signals by operating the appropriate push button and will proceed across 17th Street on receiving the green cross after normal cycling of traffic control signals has been so pre-empted.

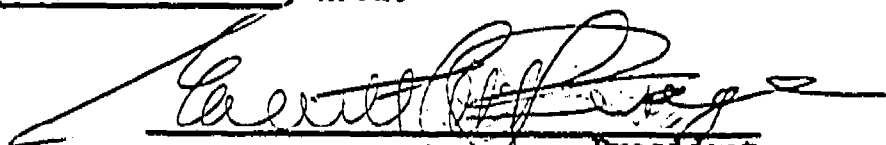
3. Upon completion but not before commencement of operation of the signal and control installations hereinabove referred to, Southern Pacific Company may discontinue the existing crossing

protection at said Crossings Nos. E-2.05-C and E-2.12-C by means of human flagmen at each of said crossings and one wig-wag signal at Crossing No. E-2.12-C, 17th and Harrison Streets, in San Francisco.

4. Except as authorized herein, the authority requested by Application No. 40736 is denied and the investigation in Case No. 6404 is discontinued.

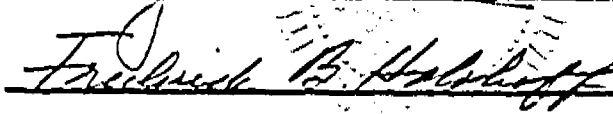
Because this matter involves public safety, this decision will be effective when issued.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 20th day of JUNE, 1961.



President





Commissioners

C. Lyn Fox
Commissioner S. Peter E. Mitchell, being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.