

Decision No. 69180**ORIGINAL**

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Investigation into the status, safety,
 maintenance, use and protection or closing
 of the crossing at grade of the lines of
 the SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY in the City
 of Brawley, California, with "K" Street;
 Crossing No. BN-686.7.

Case No. 8108
 (Filed January 12, 1965)

Randolph Karr and Walt A. Steiger, by
Walt A. Steiger, for Southern Pacific
 Company, and Joseph Schmitt, for the
 City of Brawley, respondents.
Robert C. Marks, for the Commission
 staff.

O P I N I O N

Public hearing on the above-entitled matter was held
 before Examiner Rogers in Brawley, California, on April 15, 1965,
 and the matter was submitted.

The investigation concerns the crossing at grade of
 K Street (Crossing No. BN-686.7) by one main and two drill tracks
 of the Southern Pacific Company (Railway) in the City of Brawley
 (City). The investigation was to determine, among other things,
 whether or not public health, safety and welfare require the
 installation and maintenance of additional or improved protective
 devices at said crossing or whether or not public health, safety
 and welfare require the relocation, widening, closing or other
 alteration of said crossing.

The crossing involved is one of five in the City. The nearest adjacent crossings are at Malan Street, which is approximately one-fourth of a mile south, and at G Street, approximately three-eighths of a mile north. The rail line involved is Railway's Calxico Branch. The traffic is seasonal, and most movements are between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. The area in the vicinity of the crossing is used for industrial purposes and the area to the east and west thereof is residential.

The physical characteristics, protection, traffic, and accident records at the crossing are as follows:

K Street (Crossing No. BN-686.7)

Number of Tracks:	1 Main Track, 2 Drill Tracks
Width of Crossing:	Main Track and Westerly Drill Track - 50 feet Easterly Drill Track and Balance of Crossing - 20 feet

Note: The Railway presently plans to rehabilitate the easterly drill track crossing and widen to 50 feet. The City desires to widen the balance of the crossing to 50 feet.

Width of Approaches:	50 feet west of crossing 56 feet east of crossing
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Type of Crossing and Approaches:

Main Track and Westerly Drill Track:	Creosoted timber
Easterly Drill Track:	Asphalt
Area Between Tracks:	Concrete
Approaches:	Asphalt

Grade of Approach:	From east 5% ascending From west 4% ascending
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Angle of Crossing:	75 degrees
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View Conditions of Track at point 100 feet distant
from center line near drill, by quadrants:

	<u>NE</u>	<u>NW</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>SW</u>
Drill Track (near side)	44'	60'	90'	52'
Main Track	76'	106'	166'	104'
Drill Track (far side)	116'	154'	240'	144'

Present Crossing Protection:

- 2 Standard No. 1 crossing signs (reflectorized)
- 2 Reflectorized advance warning signs

Illumination:

1 Mercury vapor light

Authorized Speed Limits:

Freight Trains - 25 MPH
Motor Vehicles - 25 MPH

Traffic:

Vehicles - 2,432 per day
Trains, Freight - 10 movements (peak season)
6 movements (off season)
plus switching daily

Accident Record since January 1, 1960:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number Killed</u>	<u>Number Injured</u>
5-20-62	0	1
1-11-63	0	0

The staff transportation engineer who investigated the crossing concluded that based on the volume and character of vehicular traffic, train traffic, restricted visibility and accident record, there is a need for automatic protection. He recommended that two No. 8 flashing light signals supplemented with automatic crossing gates, with adequate warning time for vehicles to clear the crossing, be installed and that the costs be shared equally between the City and the Railway. He also recommended that double clearance lines and RKR's be painted on the pavement, and that these costs be paid by the City.

An assistant trainmaster for the Railway testified that the use of this crossing is seasonal; that there are long trains on the line; that 75 per cent of the movements are at night; that all switching movements in the area are at night; and that there are 25 spur tracks in the area serving 31 industries.

The assistant engineer for the Los Angeles Division of the Railway, which division includes the Brawley operations, testified that the City has requested the rehabilitation of the K Street crossing; that K Street is to be widened to 50 feet across the tracks; that he concurs in the staff engineer's recommendation relative to the crossing and the type of protection to be installed; and that the Railway will cooperate with the City in improving the crossing. This witness testified further that the total cost of improving the crossing protection would be \$21,250, which should be divided equally between the Railway and the City; and that the K Street widening would cost \$1,210, which will be paid by the City. The automatic protection recommended by the assistant engineer includes predictors and timeout circuits and the design of the proposed circuitry is shown on Exhibit No. 3 herein.

Findings

Upon the record herein the Commission finds that:

1. The Railway has a main line extending from and north of Indio and a branch line to the Imperial Valley through the City of Brawley. In the City of Brawley there are five crossings including K Street. At the K Street crossing there are the main track and two drill tracks; also a disconnected siding track which is to be removed.

2. The traffic on the Railway consists of 10 movements plus switch movements in peak season, and six movements plus switching movements in off season. The authorized speed at the crossing is 25 MPH for trains and 25 MPH for vehicles on each side of the crossing. Approximately 2,432 vehicles per day use the crossing. Since May 20, 1962, there have been two accidents at the crossing, in which accidents there were no deaths and one person was injured.

3. The crossing is protected with two Standard No. 1 crossing signs (reflectorized) and two reflectorized advance warning signs.

4. The crossing is hazardous to trainmen and the public using the crossing.

5. The Railway will voluntarily contribute 50 per cent of the cost of installation of automatic protection devices. The City will not voluntarily contribute to costs of automatic protection.

6. Public health, safety and welfare require that the crossing be protected as stated in the order herein.

7. The cost of installation of automatic protection should be divided 50 per cent to the Railway and 50 per cent to the City.

8. The allocation of the cost of maintaining protective devices at the crossing herein considered should be deferred until further order of the Commission.

Conclusion

The Commission concludes that the crossing herein considered should be protected and that the cost of the installation thereof should be apportioned as set forth in the ensuing order; and that the allocation of maintenance cost of such protection should be deferred.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The Southern Pacific Company shall replace the two existing No. 1 reflectorized crossing protective devices at K Street (Crossing No. BN-686.7) with two Standard No. 8 flashing light signals, supplemented with automatic crossing gates, with adequate warning time to allow all vehicles to clear the track area.

2. The costs of installing said No. 8 flashing light signals, supplemented with automatic crossing gates, shall be apportioned on the basis of 50 per cent to be paid by the Southern Pacific Company and 50 per cent to be paid by the City of Brawley.

3. Allocation of maintenance costs for said protective devices at said crossing is deferred until further order of this Commission.

4. Within thirty days after completion of the work hereinabove authorized, the Southern Pacific Company shall notify the Commission in writing of the compliance with the conditions hereof.

5. The improvements herein provided for are to be completed within one hundred eighty days afrom the effective date of this order.

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 1st day of JUNE, 1965.

Fredrick B. Holschiff
President

George H. Trover

Augustine

Commissioners

*I dissent
C. E. Mitchell
I dissent as to the
deferral of maintenance work.
William L. Bennett*