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Decision No. 77737

ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

APPLICATION OF THE ATCHISON, TOPEKA
AND SANTA FE RAILWAY COMPANY, a Cor-
poration, for authority to reduce to
non-agency status its station at
Placentia, County of Orange, State of
California.

Application No. 51918
(Filed May 25, 1970)

R. D. Hayes, for The Atchison, Topeka & Santa
Fe Railway Company, applicant.
James H. Hicks, for Transportation-Communication
Employees Union; Frederic P. Lamb, for City
of Placentia; and James L. Foote, for
Anaheim Poultry, Inc., protestants.
Florence K. Robinson, in propria persona;
Gordon George and Norman DE Vilbiss, for
Placentia Chamber of Commerce; and
Rick Williams, for News Tribune, interested
parties.
John de Brauwere, for the Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

Applicant, The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway
Company (applicant) seeks authority to discontinue its agency at
Placentia, Orange County, California. Freight only is handled at
the station. Applicant alleges that public convenience and
necessity no longer require the maintenance of an agency service
thereat.

Public hearing on the application was held in Placentia on July 7, 1970 before Examiner Rogers. Notice of the hearing was posted and published as required by this Commission. Prior to the filing of the application, applicant had given notice of the proposed discontinuance in accordance with the provisions of General Order No. 36-B; however, due to protests, the action was suspended by the Commission.

On the evidence presented at the hearing the Commission finds as follows.

The Placentia station is on applicant's 2B main line between Fullerton, on the west, and San Bernardino, on the east. The nearest agency station to the west is Fullerton, distant 3 miles, and to the east is Corona, distant 18.9 miles.

The station agent is the only employee. His hours are 9AM to 6PM with one hour off for lunch. The station is completely closed from 6PM to 9AM and on Saturdays and Sundays.

There are no passenger trains through the station. In 1968 and prior years the agent sold passenger tickets at the station. Passenger tickets are no longer sold at the station.

Carload and less-than-carload freight is received and forwarded at the station. No Western Union or Railway Express business is handled thereat. The LCL shipments are all handled by the Santa Fe Transportation Company, the applicant's affiliated truck company which carries the less than carload shipments for the applicant.

The carload shipments handled through the station are to or from industries, cattle ranches and citrus growers in the vicinity of Placentia, and most originate at or are destined to spurs serving the shippers and/or receivers. The majority of the outbound shipments consist of citrus products, and the majority of the inbound shipments consist of cartons and cattle food supplements.

The station agent makes the freight bills for the outbound freight. He checks the cars for damage and shipments for damage. When a shipper orders a car, the shipper calls the agent, who, in turn, calls San Bernardino for the car. If there were no agent in Placentia, the shipper would place a toll free telephone call to Fullerton to order a car, and the Fullerton agent would place the call to San Bernardino.

When a car is filled, the shipper seals it, prepares a bill of lading and calls the Placentia agent for pick up. If the agent is removed, the applicant will place a way bill box at the station. The applicant stipulated that if this procedure is followed, when the bill is placed in the way bill box, the applicant will be responsible for the shipment.

If the application is granted the only changes in carload service will be that cars will be ordered through the Fullerton agent instead of the Placentia agent; there will be no change in less than carload service, and car and damage inspection will be switched from the Placentia agent to the Fullerton agent.

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Sale of passenger tickets at Placentia was discontinued in 1969.

The operating expenses of the station for the years 1968 and 1969 were as follows:

	<u>Labor</u>	<u>Hospital Health and Welfare Benefits, Payroll Taxes</u>	<u>Total</u>
1968	\$17,845.35	\$2,715.34	\$20,560.69
1969	10,840.28	1,476.94	12,317.22

Applicant also attempts to charge to the station as items which could be saved if the station were closed, \$219,930.27 in 1968 and \$288,479.17 in 1969. These costs, applicant states include a percent of system wide operation expenses, rents and taxes, excluding station expenses. It is difficult to see how simply moving the agent and boarding up the station could, except very minutely, affect system wide costs. We are satisfied that the only substantial changes in expenses are those caused by changing the location of the agent as reflected above.

If the agent is removed, the applicant will have a net saving in station expenses of the amount of the station agent's salary and the taxes and related items referred to above.

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The station agent is on duty five days per week from 9AM to 6PM. A check made on June 26, 1969 (Friday) showed that approximately 1 hour and 39 minutes of this period, excluding one hour for lunch, was idle time. A similar check on June 29, 1970 (Monday) showed approximately 1 hour and 22 minutes idle time (Exhibit No. 2). Approximately two hours on each of the days checked was excessive work time.

The applicant proposes to add a spur to serve an additional industry in the City of Placentia. This addition to applicant's business will neither be helped nor hindered by the removal of the agency. The City and the Placentia Chamber of Commerce oppose the abandonment of the agency.

There is no need for an agent at the station. Public convenience and necessity no longer require the maintenance by applicant of an agency at the Placentia station.

We conclude that the application to discontinue the agency at the Placentia station should be granted.

