

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 86160

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of
Southern Pacific Transportation
Company for authority to discontinue
agency at Earlimart, County of Tulare,
State of California.

Application No. 56097
(Filed November 28, 1975)

Harold S. Lentz, Attorney at Law, for applicant.
Paul A. Burket, for the Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

Southern Pacific Transportation Company seeks authority to discontinue its agency at its station at Earlimart, Tulare County, and to maintain it as a nonagency station. The application states that because of the possibility of protests, a formal application was filed in the first instance rather than utilizing the informal procedure permitted by General Order No. 36-D.

A duly noticed public hearing was held in Delano before Examiner Arthur M. Mooney on April 22, 1976, on which date the matter was submitted.

The following evidence was presented by two employee witnesses of applicant: The station at Earlimart is staffed by a single employee who is on duty from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with an hour off for lunch, five days a week. The agent is also responsible for the nearby nonagency stations at Pixley and Tipton. His primary duties are making a yard check and listing freight cars each morning, signing bills of lading for originating shipments and leaving them in a box for a messenger from the Bakersfield agency, keeping demurrage records, and handling telephone calls with customers. A time study showed that his activities require about 30 minutes a day. The Bakersfield agency

now executes all waybills for Earlimart and its two nonagency stations. There is twice daily messenger service, seven days a week, from Bakersfield to the Earlimart area at approximately 6:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. The messenger picks up bills of lading and signs any that were left at the station after it closed and on weekends and leaves the shipper's copies in the bill box at the station. If the agency is discontinued, the same procedure would be followed, and the only difference that would occur is that customers would deal directly with the Bakersfield agency which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and is well staffed. Under the present system, inquiries from shippers are referred by the Earlimart agent to the Bakersfield station which is tied into a computerized system that can answer such inquiries promptly. Shippers in the Earlimart area will be afforded toll-free telephone service to Bakersfield. The preponderance of business at Earlimart is during the grape season from latter July or early August through October. The station does not handle much business during the balance of the year. The number of carloads originating at Earlimart in 1974 and 1975 were 588 and 402, respectively, and the number terminating there were four and five, respectively. Applicant has not handled any less-than-carload shipments at Earlimart for a considerable time. Service at the Pixley and Tipton nonagency stations would continue to be handled as now except that all services would be provided by the Bakersfield office. The annual savings that would be realized if the Earlimart agency is closed is estimated to be \$15,765 which includes the salary of the agent who would be transferred to Bakersfield where his home is and takes into account the additional telephone and other expenses the Bakersfield station would have.

No protestant appeared at the hearing. It is apparent that no substantial inconvenience would be experienced by shippers or receivers of freight at Earlimart or at the nonagency stations at Pixley and Tipton by closing the agency at Earlimart. The application will be granted.

Findings

1. Adequate and convenient service is available for the Earlimart agency customers at the Bakersfield agency which is approximately 40 miles away.
2. Operating the Earlimart facility as a nonagency station will result in a considerable annual savings to the applicant and will not substantially inconvenience the public.
3. All of the work and duties of the present agent at Earlimart, who is also responsible for the nonagency stations at Pixley and Tipton, can be handled at Bakersfield.
4. Public convenience and necessity no longer require applicant to provide an agent at its Earlimart station.

Conclusion

The application should be granted.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:


1. Southern Pacific Transportation Company is authorized to discontinue its agency at Earlimart, Tulare County, subject to the following conditions:
 - (a) Applicant shall maintain the station in a nonagency status for the receipt or delivery of freight in carload lots only.
 - (b) Within one hundred twenty days after the effective date of this order and not less than ten days prior to the discontinuance of the agency at Earlimart, applicant shall post a notice of such discontinuance at the station and, within one hundred twenty days after the effective date of this order and on not less than ten days' notice to the Commission and to the public, applicant shall file in

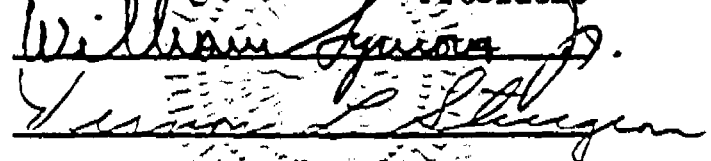
duplicate amendments to its tariffs showing the change authorized and shall make reference in such notice and tariffs to this decision as authority for the change. In no event shall the agent be removed earlier than the effective date of the tariff filings.

- (c) Within thirty days after discontinuance of service applicant shall give written notice to the Commission that it has complied with this order.
- (d) Applicant shall provide toll-free telephone service to its Bakersfield station from Earlimart, Pixley, and Tipton.

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 27th day of JULY, 1976.



President


Commissioners

Commissioner Leonard R. Sturgeon, being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.

Commissioner Robert Batimovich, being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.