

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SAFETY AND ENFORCEMENT DIVISION
Rail Transit Safety Section

RESOLUTION ST-18
Date: Jan. 24, 1995

R E S O L U T I O N

RESOLUTION ST-18. Resolution granting Metropolitan Transit Development Board a variance from the overhead clearance requirements of General Order 26-D, Section 2.1, General Order 95, Rule 37, Case 1, Column C, Rule 74.4b, and Decisions D.90457 and '83-11-086, to operate under a reduced overhead clearance to 21 feet, 9 inches above top of rail at Mile Post 3.4, I-15 Overpass in the City of San Diego.

BACKGROUND

BY letter dated September 16, 1994, the Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB) requests a reduction of its overhead catenary lines to a height of 21 feet, 9 inches, above top of rail. The California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) is in the process of widening the grade separation of I-15 over the right-of-way of the MTDB and Imperial Avenue in San Diego. The construction necessitates that the overhead clearance be permanently reduced. The Commission has previously granted a variance to 22 feet 0 inches under Decisions D. 90457 and 83-11-086.

SUMMARY

General Order 26-D, Section 2.1, requires a minimum overhead clearance of 22 feet, 6 inches above the top of rail. This is to provide for adequate clearance for workers who may be required to work on top of freight cars. General Order 95, Rule 37.0 specifies the minimum clearances of wires above railroads, thoroughfares, buildings, etc.. Table 1, Case 1, Column C, requires an overhead clearance of twenty two (22) feet, six (6) inches above top of rail. General Order 95, Rule 74.4 (B) specifies clearances above railways. It states that the vertical clearance of 19 feet above rails for trolley contact, feeder and span wires applies to those railways which do not transport or propose to transport freight cars. It continues to state that this value shall be increased to 22-1/2 feet where the railway involved does transport or proposes to transport freight cars. Decisions 83-11-086 and D. 90457 granted permanent variances to the overhead clearance along tracks of the MTDB which are used by both the San Diego and Imperial Valley Railroad and the San Diego Trolley. This reduction is to 22 feet.

DISCUSSION

The MTDB operates both the San Diego Trolley and the San Diego & Imperial Valley Railway Company. Both operate on the same tracks and, therefore, the regulations for freight railroads would take precedence over regulations for tracks used exclusively for light rail operation. By Decisions 83-11-086 and D.90457, the Commission recognized a need to permanently reduce the required overhead clearance to 22 feet.

Riding on top of either freight cars or light rail vehicles is strictly prohibited by operating rules, thus reducing the hazard of coming into contact with the Overhead Catenary System.

PROTESTS

Neither the San Diego and Imperial Valley Railroad nor the San Diego Trolley object to this request. There are no known other interested parties to this request.

FINDINGS

There have been no known accidents involving the already reduced catenary height above top of rail.

Operating Rules of both the San Diego and Imperial Valley Railroad and the San Diego Trolley, Inc. preclude the riding on top of any rail vehicle.

The catenary height will transition to the authorized clearance on either side of the requested reduction.

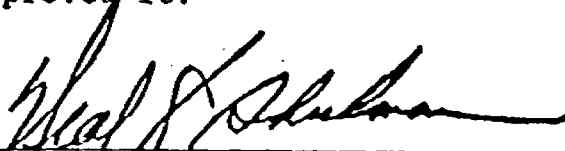
This construction is necessary to maintain the Interstate Highway System in the San Diego Area.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:

This request be granted provided that:

1. Metropolitan Transit Development Board is authorized to install an overhead catenary contact wire system at a height of 21 feet 9 inches above top of rail of San Diego & Imperial Valley Railroad at milepost 3.4.
2. San Diego and Imperial Valley Railroad is authorized to operate freight trains with the reduced overhead clearance.

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on January 24, 1995. The following Commissioners approved it:



Executive Director

NORMAN D. SHUMWAY
P. GREGORY CONLON
JESSIE J. KNIGHT, JR.
Commissioners

President Daniel Wm. Fessler,
being necessarily absent, did
not participate.