

## PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SAFETY DIVISION  
UTILITIES SAFETY BRANCHRESOLUTION SU-4  
Date April 11, 1990R E S O L U T I O N

ORDER AUTHORIZING A DEVIATION TO GENERAL ORDER NO. 95,  
RULES 57.4-F AND 87.4-C3 RELATING TO PLACEMENT OF  
GROUNDED MESSENGER NO LESS THAN FOUR FEET BELOW  
UNPROTECTED SUPPLY CONDUCTORS WITHOUT USE OF GUARD ARM

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SUMMARY

1. By letter dated November 2, 1989, from Pacific Bell on behalf of itself and the City of San Francisco, request is made that the Commission authorize a deviation to General Order No. 95 (G.O. 95) Rules 57.4-F and 87.4-C3 that will allow placement of a grounded messenger on poles four feet below unprotected electrical supply conductors without a guard arm above the grounded messenger. The poles will be installed and owned by San Francisco Municipal Railway (S.F. Muni) to support trolley lines on Balboa Street a distance of three miles from Arguello to La Playa Streets. The poles will also support service drops of power, telephone and CATV. By letters dated November 10, and December 20, 1989, Viacom Cablevision and PG&E respectively, have concurred in Pacific Bell's request.
2. This request comes because the poles supporting the supply conductors and messengers are nonclimbable steel poles and all work performed on the facilities will be done from aerial lifts. The messengers may be installed four feet below supply conductors. The guard arms specified in G.O. 95 are not needed.
3. A deviation to Rules 57.4-F and 87.4-C3 to omit guard arms when vertical clearance is less than six and no less than four feet between unprotected supply conductors and grounded messengers is authorized for this line.

BACKGROUND

1. S.F. Muni will be converting the 31 Balboa diesel coach line to overhead trolley coaches. It will encompass three miles of Balboa Street from Arguello to La Playa Streets. Steel poles will be placed along the south side of Balboa Street to support the trolley wires and also provide clearance support for service drops of power, telephone and CATV crossing from the north side of Balboa Street.

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2. S.F. Muni desires that the poles be no taller than necessary for safety, thus reducing structural stresses and the working heights of facilities on the upper section of the poles.

DISCUSSION

1. G.O. 95, Rules 57.4-F and 87.4-C3 require six feet vertical clearance between unprotected supply conductors and grounded messengers on poles, or four feet of clearance if a guard arm is placed above the messenger.

2. The clearance requirements of six feet and four feet (with guard arm) generally applies to climbable wood poles where workers need to avoid contact with the grounded messenger while using climbers and working on energized circuits.

3. The poles in this instance are nonclimbable steel and all work on the poles will be performed from aerial lifts.

FINDINGS

1. Pacific Bell's request has been reviewed by the Commission's Safety Division staff. S.F. Muni's poles can be shorter because of this deviation and some working heights reduced. Viacom Cablevision and PG&E, the other two line operators concur.

2. We find that the request is reasonable. Work on the facilities on these poles will be from aerial lifts.

3. We find that safety to line workers and the general public will not be reduced.


**THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:**

1. A deviation to G.O. 95, Rules 57.4-F and 87.4-C3 is authorized permitting a vertical clearance of no less than four feet between a grounded messenger without guard arms and unprotected supply conductors on S.F. Muni's non-climbable steel poles on the south side of Balboa Street between Arguello and La Playa Streets.

2. This Resolution is effective today.

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on April 11, 1990. The following Commissioners approved it:

G. MITCHELL WILK  
President  
FREDERICK R. D'UDA  
STANLEY W. HULETT  
JOHN B. OHANIAN  
PATRICIA M. ECKERT  
Commissioners

  
Executive Director