

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

180 PROMENADE CIRCLE, SUITE 115
SACRAMENTO, CA 95834



November 8, 2011

File Number: G.11-09-004
Unincorporated, County of Kern

Maria Toles
District Rail Coordinator
California Department of Transportation
855 M Street, Suite 200
Fresno, CA 93720

Re: **General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Modify the South Bakersfield State/Route 99 Overhead Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 103BT-319.30-A, DOT No. 750987D in Unincorporated Kern County.**

Dear Ms. Toles:

This refers to your letter, dated August 29, 2011 (received September 30, 2011), requesting authorization, pursuant to Commission General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the grade-separated crossing of the San Joaquin Valley Railroad (SJVR) Buttonwillow Subdivision tracks and State Route 99 (also referred to as South Bakersfield Overhead) in unincorporated Kern County. The crossing is identified by CPUC Crossing No. 103BT-319.30-A, DOT No. 750987D.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to widen State Route 99 between the State Route 119 and the Wilson Road overcrossing in Kern County. The South Bakersfield State/Route 99 Overhead structure is within the project limits and will be widened from six lanes to eight lanes by removing the separation between the two existing structures and building additional lanes in that space. The structure modifications will provide for an additional 12 foot lane, 10 foot shoulder and median concrete barrier to the State Route 99 freeway.

The project proposes a temporary impaired vertical clearance during construction of 21 feet and a permanent vertical clearance of 22 feet 7 inches, which is the current vertical clearance of the existing structure. SJVR and Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRR) operate freight trains on this line and are in agreement with the temporary impaired vertical clearance.

The Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES) investigated the request filed by Caltrans and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As Caltrans, SJVR, UPRR and Kern County are in agreement as to the design and apportionments of the cost under the provisions of GO 88-B, the improvements as described in your request dated August 29, 2011 and summarized above are authorized.

Temporary traffic controls shall be provided in compliance with Section 8A.05, Temporary Traffic Control Zones, of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD), published by the California Department of Transportation. All parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including Commission General Orders and the CA MUTCD.

Pursuant to Commission Resolution SX-76 and Section 16.2 of General Order (GO) 26-D, Caltrans is granted a temporary deviation from GO 26-D, Section 2.1 and is authorized a temporary overhead clearance of not less than 21 feet above the top of the highest rail to the lowest of point on the overhead structure and false work, during the period of widening of the South Bakersfield Overhead structure, CPUC Crossing Number 103BT-319.30-A, DOT No. 750987D, in unincorporated Kern County.

Because the temporary construction clearance still meets the railroad standard of 21 feet, no special conditions are placed upon the railroad as it pertains to the temporary deviation of GO 26-D, Section 2.1.

Relative to the grade separation, this project is statutorily exempt from the requirements of the California Environment Quality Act of 1970, as amended. [California Public Resources Code 21080.13].

This authorization shall expire if the above conditions are not complied with or if the work is not completed within three years of the date of this letter. Upon written request to this office, the time to complete the project may be extended. Any written request for a time extension must include concurrence letters by involved parties in support of the time extension. If an extension is requested, RCES may reevaluate the crossing prior to granting an extension.

Within 30 days after completion of this project, Caltrans shall notify RCES that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G titled *Report of Changes at Highway Grade Crossings and Separations*. Form G requirements and forms can be obtained at the CPUC web site Form G page at <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/formg>. This report may be submitted electronically to rces@cpuc.ca.gov as outlined on the web page.

SJVR should also submit an updated FRA inventory form to the Federal Railroad Administration, reflecting the changes. CPUC requests a concurrent copy of the updated inventory form be submitted to rces@cpuc.ca.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact Sergio Licon at (213) 576-7085 or sal@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Daren Gilbert, Manager
Rail Transit and Crossings Branch
Consumer Protection and Safety Division

C: Barry Nienke, Tulare County
Ken Tom, UPRR

Randy Perry, SJVR
Marc Bader, SJVR
Victor Castillo, SJVR