

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

180 PROMENADE CIRCLE, SUITE 115
SACRAMENTO, CA 95834



April 6, 2012

File Number: G.12-03-011
Visalia, County of Tulare

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 West Visalia / State Route 99 Overhead Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 001B-241.56-A, DOT No. 757234W in the City of Visalia, Tulare County.**

Dear Ms. Toles:

This refers to your letter, dated March 30, 2012 (received March 30, 2012), requesting authorization, pursuant to Commission General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the grade-separated crossing of the Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) mainline B tracks and State Route 99 (also referred to as West Visalia Overhead) in the City of Visalia (City), Tulare County. The crossing is identified by CPUC Crossing No. 001B-241.56-A, DOT No. 757234W.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to widen State Route 99 from mile post 37.3 to 41.3, south of the State Route 99 and the State Route 198 junction in the City. The West Visalia State Route 99 Overhead structure is within the project limits and will be widened from four lanes to six lanes by filling in the median gap between the left and right bridge structures over the UPRR tracks. The proposed widening will maintain the existing clearances for both the vertical and horizontal distances. Slope protection and an inside fence will be provided per the UPRR's requirement.

The project proposes a temporary impaired vertical clearance during construction of 21 feet and a permanent vertical clearance of 22 feet 10 inches, which is the current vertical clearance of the existing bridge structure. San Joaquin Valley Railroad (SJVR) and 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 and UPRR 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 March 30, 2012 and summarized above are authorized.

Traffic will not be detoured for the bridge structure widening. During construction, temporary railing (Type-K) will be placed on the inside State Route 99 shoulder. Temporary lane closures may be required during different stages of construction, but traffic will stay on the existing lanes during the bridge structure widening.

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 West Visalia / SR 99 Overhead structure, CPUC Crossing Number 001B-241.56-A, DOT No. 757234W.

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.

At the conclusion of the project, UPRR should 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daren Gilbert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "D" and "G".

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

C: Ken Tom, UPRR
Randy Perry, SJVR
Marc Bader, SJVR
Victor Castillo, SJVR