

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Consumer Protection and Safety Division
Rail Transit and Crossings Branch
Rail Transit Safety Section

Resolution ST-97
April 10, 2008

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION ST-97 GRANTING THE SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AIRTRAIN'S REQUEST TO DEVIATE FROM GENERAL ORDER 95, RULE 79.5.

Summary

This Resolution grants the San Francisco International Airport AirTrain's request to deviate from General Order (GO) 95 requirements for third rail warning signs.

Background

On November 1, 2007, Commission approved Resolution ST-91, granting approval of the final report on the 2007 safety review of the San Francisco International Airport AirTrain. Resolution ST-91 ordered AirTrain to complete and implement all recommended corrective actions in the final report. One of the recommended corrective actions required AirTrain to install a sign bearing the words "Danger," "Electric Third Rail," and "Keep Away" in letters at least 3 inches in height, in accordance with GO 95, Rule 79.5, at all the locked emergency egress/maintenance access doors of each station.

By letter dated February 21, 2008, AirTrain requested to deviate from GO 95, Rule 79.5 by eliminating "Third" from the warning sign. The letter stated that the power distribution system for the Automated People Movers (APM) is known as a "power rail," rather than the term "electric third rail" commonly used in subway systems. The letter continued to justify the request by stating that the term "electric rail" would convey the potential hazard to passengers and employees.

April 10, 2008

Notice

AirTrain states that all potentially affected parties have been informed.

Protests

No protest of the variance application has been filed with the Commission

Discussion

AirTrain is an APM system operating vehicles guided by horizontally running guide wheels on a guide beam located below the center of the vehicle. The vehicles are powered by power rail assembly located on top of the same guide beam. The power supply system differs from that of a rapid transit system, which is guided by railway track and powered by the third rail.

GO 95, Rule 79.5 states:

At every gate, at each station or passenger loading platform, and at intervals of not more than 500 feet along each fence enclosing the rights-of-way, a sign or signs bearing the words "Danger", "Electric Third Rail" and "Keep Away" in letters at least 3 inches in height, shall be installed. The sign or signs may carry other information relative to the hazard present, but these three items shall be in type of larger size than the type of the additional items.

GO 95, Rule 79.5 was amended by Decision No. 72681 on June 27, 1967. GO 95, Rule 79.5 was modified at the request of the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit. It is Staff's understanding that although the basic principle of GO 95, Rule 79.5 applies to APM systems, it was not originally intended for the APM system.

All of AirTrain's stations are fully enclosed with no public access onto the guideway under normal operations. Therefore, the warning signage recommended by Staff from Resolution ST-91 is intended for employees accessing the system. Staff recommends granting AirTrain's request to deviate from GO 95 requirements for third rail warning signs.

Comments

This is an uncontested matter in which the resolution grants the relief requested. Accordingly, pursuant to Section 311 (g)(2) of the Public Utilities Code and Rule 14.6 (c)(2) of the Commission’s Rules of Practice and Procedure, the otherwise applicable 30-day period for public review and comment is waived.

Therefore, IT IS ORDERED that:

1. San Francisco International Airport AirTrain’s request to deviate from General Order 95, Rule 79.5 is granted. AirTrain shall install a sign bearing the words “Danger,” “Electric Rail,” and “Keep Away” in letters at least 3 inches in height, in accordance with GO 95, Rule 79.5, at all the locked emergency egress/maintenance access doors of each station.
2. This resolution is effective today.

I certify that this resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting held on April 10, 2008. The following Commissioners voting favorably thereon:

/s/ PAUL CLANON
 PAUL CLANON
 Executive Director

MICHAEL R. PEEVEY
 President
 DIAN M. GRUENEICH
 JOHN A. BOHN
 RACHELLE B. CHONG
 TIMOTHY ALAN SIMON
 Commissioners