

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Consumer Protection and Safety Division
Rail Transit Safety Section

Resolution ST-101
March 26, 2009

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION ST-101 GRANTING LOS ANGELES COUNTY
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (LACMTA)
PERMANENT VARIANCE FROM GENERAL ORDER 143-B, SECTION
9.06 c (1) CLEARANCES.

SUMMARY

This resolution grants Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (LACMTA) request for a permanent variance to General Order (GO) 143-B, Section No. 9.06 c (1) Side Clearance requirements for the light-rail station platforms. This resolution allows LACMTA to install Between-Car-Barriers (BCB) on the station platform edges. This resolution will also supersede Resolution ST-100 ending the six-month temporary demonstration granted to assess the BCB-related hazards.

The Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12131 et seq.) and the Federal Transit Administration (49 CFR Parts 38.63 & 38.85) require transit agencies to take steps to ensure that visually impaired patrons do not fall from the elevated platform to the trackway below in the space between the train's coupled vehicles.

This resolution grants LACMTA a variance from GO 143-B for BCB installation in order to comply with 49 CFR Parts 38.63 & 38.85.

BACKGROUND

Resolution ST-100, approved by the Commission on November 6, 2008, (Agenda ID # 7944), granted LACMTA a six-month variance to GO 143-B, Section No. 9.06 c (1) Side Clearance requirements for the Pasadena Gold Line (Goldline) station platforms. As requested in Resolution ST-100, LACMTA evaluated and confirmed the BCB safety and supplied a summary report to the Rail Transit & Crossings Branch Staff (staff).

By a letter dated January 28, 2009, LACMTA requests a permanent variance to GO 143-B, Section 9.06 c (1), from the minimum thirty (30) inch side clearance requirements, to install BCB at the Blueline, Greenline and Goldline light-rail stations. LACMTA's letter also requests concluding the temporary GO 143-B variance period for BCB demonstration specified in Resolution ST-100.

Title 49 CFR Part 38.85 provides in pertinent part:

Where vehicles operate in a high-platform, level-boarding mode, devices or systems shall be provided to prevent, deter or warn individuals from inadvertently stepping off the platform between cars. Appropriate devices include, but are not limited to, pantograph gates, chains, motion detectors or other suitable devices.

LACMTA intends to install the BCB at the edge of the station platforms to prevent patrons from falling from the elevated platform between the train's coupled vehicles during station stops.

GO 143-B, Safety Rules and Regulations Governing Light-Rail Transit, Section 9.06 states:

CLEARANCES. c. The minimum side clearance to obstructions higher than eight (8) inches above top-of-rail and the clearances between LRVs and streetcars located on parallel tracks used exclusively for light rail

transit operations shall be governed by the following requirements:

(1) on station platforms, in yards and along shop aisles, and other locations, including emergency walkways, where passengers, employees, or other persons are permitted or required to be while trains are in motion, the minimum clearances shall be thirty (30) inches...

DISCUSSION

LACMTA rail operations consist of the LACMTA Redline, Blueline, Greenline, and Goldline. The LACMTA rail system carries an average of 310,000 passengers per day. To comply with 49 CFR Part 38, LACMTA requests authorization to install BCBs at the Blueline, Greenline and Goldline light-rail stations. These BCBs are designed to prevent station patrons from falling to the trackway below in the spaces between the train's coupled vehicles. The proposed BCBs will obstruct the 30-inch side clearance required by Section 9.06 (c) (1) of GO 143-B.

LACMTA's request letter, dated January 28, 2009, specified that the BCB project will be implemented system-wide for light-rail stations. Staff has reviewed LACMTA's request and believes that granting the permanent variance will not have an adverse effect on system safety.

Staff requests that the resolution should be granted with the following conditions:

1. The BCB installation shall be limited to Blueline, Greenline and Goldline light-rail stations.
2. Staff shall approve BCB designs prior to installation.
3. Staff shall approve the light-rail operating and maintenance procedures associated with BCB prior to implementation.

4. Staff shall approve LACMTA's BCB monitoring plan prior to implementation.
5. LACMTA shall send staff monthly monitoring reports targeting 100-train observations per month, during the first year of BCB installation.
6. LACMTA shall notify staff within two hours of any serious or near-miss incidents associated with the BCB.

NOTICE

On February 10, 2009, LACMTA's request for permanent GO 143-B variance was published on the Commission's Daily Calendar.

PROTESTS

On February 10, 2009, LACMTA's variance request was published on the Commission's Daily Calendar for a subsequent 30-day period. No protest of the variance request has been filed with the Commission.

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.

FINDINGS

1. LACMTA proposes to install BCBs along its light-rail station platforms in an attempt to comply with Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12131 et seq.) and 49 CFR 38.85 requirements imposed on transit systems.

2. LACMTA contends that its BCBs will significantly mitigate the hazard of visually impaired patrons falling off the station platform into the space between train's coupled vehicles.
3. As requested in Resolution ST-100, LACMTA confirmed the BCB safety and gave staff a summary report.
4. By a letter dated January 28, 2009, LACMTA requests a permanent variance to the 30-inch side clearance requirement of GO 143-B, Section 9.06 c (1) for installation of platform mounted BCBs on the light-rail stations.
5. LACMTA will submit additional information for staff approval including BCB designs, BCB maintenance plans, light-rail Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), and BCB training and monthly monitoring reports.
6. Granting the permanent variance from GO 143-B will not have a significant adverse effect on system safety.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (LACMTA) request, dated January 28, 2009, for a permanent variance to General Order (GO) 143-B, Section No. 9.06 c (1) Side Clearance requirements at the Blueline, Greenline and Goldline light-rail station platforms for the installation of Between-Car-Barrier (BCB) units to meet the requirements of 49 CFR Part 38, is granted.
2. This resolution will supersede Resolution ST-100, ending the temporary GO 143-B variance for BCB demonstration.
3. The BCB installation shall be limited to the Blueline, Greenline and Goldline light-rail stations.
4. Staff shall approve the BCB designs prior to installation.

5. Staff shall approve the light-rail operating and maintenance procedures associated with BCBs prior to implementation.
6. Staff shall approve LACMTA's monitoring plan for BCBs prior to implementation.
7. LACMTA shall supply staff with monthly monitoring reports targeting 100-train observations per month, during the first year of BCB implementation.
8. LACMTA shall notify staff within two hours of any serious or near-miss incidents associated with the BCB installations.

9. This Resolution is effective today.

I certify that this resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting held on March 26, 2009. 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