

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94106

March 27, 2018

Agenda ID# 16374

TO PARTIES TO RESOLUTION SX-126

This is the Resolution of the Safety and Enforcement Division. It will be on the April 26, 2018 Commission Meeting agenda. The Commission may act then, or it may postpone action until later.

When the Commission acts on the Resolution, it may adopt all or part of it as written, amend or modify it, or set it aside and prepare its own decision. Only when the Commission acts does the resolution become binding on the parties.

Parties may file comments on the Resolution as provided in Article 14 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (Rules), accessible on the Commission's website at www.cpuc.ca.gov. Pursuant to Rule 14.3, opening comments shall not exceed 15 pages. Late-submitted comments or reply comments will not be considered.

An electronic copy of the comments should be submitted to Felix Ko (email: felix.ko@cpuc.ca.gov.)

/s/ ELIZAVETA MALASHENKO
ELIZAVETA MALASHENKO, Director
Safety and Enforcement Division

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Attachment

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Safety and Enforcement Division
Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch

RESOLUTION SX-126
April 26, 2018

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION SX-126 GRANTING AUTHORIZATION TO DEVIATE FROM THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 2.1 OF GENERAL ORDER 26-D REQUIRING A MINIMUM OVERHEAD CLEARANCE OF 22 FEET - 6 INCHES ABOVE RAILROAD TRACKS AT THE STATE ROUTE 156 GRADE-SEPARATED HIGHWAY-RAIL CROSSING THE CITY OF CASTROVILLE IN MONTEREY COUNTY.

SUMMARY

By letter dated May 4, 2017, received on November 6, 2017, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requests an exemption from the provisions of Section 2, Overhead Clearances, of General Order 26-D for not meeting the required 22 feet - 6 inches track overhead clearance at the State Route 156 grade-separated highway-rail crossing in the City of Castroville, Monterey County. Caltrans has a project to widen the northern roadway bridge, install concrete barriers and chain link fencing, and install bridge pier protection. Caltrans will maintain the existing track overhead clearance of 21 feet - 7 inches.

BACKGROUND

The historical State Route (SR) 156 grade-separated highway-rail crossing (crossing) in the City of Castroville does not meet the General Order (GO) 26-D minimum track overhead clearance requirement of 22 feet - 6 inches. The crossing is identified as California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC/Commission) Number (No.) 001E-106.65-A and United States Department of Transportation (DOT) No. 752332V

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The crossing consists of two bridges that carry eastbound and westbound vehicular traffic over a single Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) track. The northern bridge track overhead clearance of 21 feet – 7 inches does not meet the GO 26-D requirement of 22 feet – 6 inches.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is proposing to widen the northern bridge to install Concrete Barrier 836/836R, Chain Link Fence Type 7, and bridge pier protection. The proposed alterations will maintain the existing track overhead clearance of 21 feet – 7 inches. The CPUC does not have any records of an incident occurring at this crossing.

Although the track overhead clearance will not meet the requirements of GO 26-D, the proposed alterations will increase safety for motorists over existing conditions.

DISCUSSION

Amtrak operates two passenger trains per day at the crossing with a maximum speed limit of 70 miles per hour (MPH). UPRR operates approximately three freight trains per day at the crossing with a maximum speed limit of 60 MPH. Section 2.1 of GO 26-D requires a minimum clearance of 22 feet – 6 inches for structures above railroad tracks.

In its letter dated May 4, 2017, Caltrans requested an exemption from the minimum track overhead clearance requirements for the SR 156 crossing.

The northern bridge at SR 156 crossing will be widened with up to date concrete barriers and fencing to provide increased safety to motorists, but will not be modified to meet the required GO 26-D minimum track overhead clearance. Caltrans states in its request letter “[e]very effort is being made to maintain vertical roadway in compliance with General Order 26-D. The proposed clearance at the structure is the maximum achievable given the physical constraints of the railroad property without reconstructing the north structure of State Route 156 Castroville Overhead. Replacement of the structure would require raising the profile of the approach and departure roadway, bridge reconstruction, and retaining walls along much of the northern right of way which cannot be met due to excessive cost.” The proposed project results in an improvement over existing

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conditions by updating the guardrails to the latest Caltrans design standard and installing bridge pier protection.

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Caltrans has served UPRR a copy of this request. UPRR does not object to the requested exemption.

NOTICE

On March 27, 2018, Caltrans' request was published in the Commission's Daily Calendar.

COMMENTS

The draft Resolution regarding this matter was mailed in accordance with Section 311 of the Public Utilities Code and Rule 14.2 (c) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

FINDINGS

1. Caltrans requested, by letter dated November 6, 2017, exemption from the GO 26-D required minimum overhead clearance of 22 feet – 6 inches for northern roadway bridge structure over the UPRR track at the SR 156 crossing identified as CPUC No. 001E-106.65-A and DOT No. 752332V, in the City of Castroville.
2. The two SR 156 crossing roadway bridges carry eastbound and westbound vehicular traffic.
3. Raising the roadway bridge at SR 156 would require constructing a new bridge structure and raising the profile of the approach and departure roadway.
4. Caltrans will maintain the existing track overhead clearance of 21 feet – 7 inches at the SR 156 grade-separated highway-rail crossing
5. The Safety and Enforcement Division's Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch staff has reviewed the proposal and finds that the request has merit and should be granted.

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THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. The California Department of Transportation is authorized to deviate from the provisions of Section 2.1 of General Order 26-D requiring a minimum overhead clearance of 22 feet – 6 inches over the track at the grade separated highway-rail State Route 156 crossing, identified as California Public Utilities Commission Number 001E-106.65-A and United States Department of Transportation Number in the City of Castroville, as specifically described in its request and outlined herein.
2. The California Department of Transportation shall maintain the current clearance , at a minimum, of 21-feet- 7 inches at the State Route 156 grade-separated crossing
3. This resolution is effective today.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, passed, and adopted by the California Public Utilities Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on April 26, 2018. The following Commissioners voted favorably thereon:

ALICE STEBBINS
Executive Director

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that I have by mail this day served a true copy of Draft Resolution SX-126 on all identified parties in this matter as shown on the attached Service List.

Dated March 27, 2018, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ FELIX KO
Felix Ko

NOTICE

Parties should notify the Safety and Enforcement Division, California Public Utilities Commission, 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102, of any change of address to ensure that they continue to receive documents. You must indicate the Resolution number on which your name appears.

SERVICE LIST
Resolution SX-126

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