

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RAIL SAFETY DIVISION
RAIL CROSSINGS AND ENGINEERING BRANCH

Resolution SX-157
May 30, 2024

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION SX-157 GRANTING LOS ANGELES COUNTY
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
A DEVIATION FROM SECTION 9.5 OF GENERAL ORDER 75-D,
AND PERMISSION TO REMOVE BELLS FROM THE FOUR
VEHICULAR WARNING DEVICE ASSEMBLIES AND ADD BELLS
TO THE FOUR PEDESTRIAN WARNING DEVICE ASSEMBLIES AT
THE ARBOR VITAE STREET GRADE CROSSING IN
THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SUMMARY

By letter dated February 7, 2024, and pursuant to Section 13.1 of California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC/Commission) General Order (GO) 75-D, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA), requests authority to deviate from Section 9.5 of GO 75-D, which requires bells or other audible warning devices to be included in all automatic warning device assemblies, with an exception.

LACMTA proposes to remove the bells from eight vehicular Commission Standard 9 and 9E (Flashing Light Signal Assembly with Automatic Gate Arm) warning Devices and instead install bells in four Commission Standard 9 (pedestrian gate) warning devices to directly focus the audible warning toward pedestrians. This resolution authorizes a deviation for the installation of bells only in the four Commission Standard 9 (pedestrian gate) warning devices at the Arbor Vitae Street highway-light rail crossing.

BACKGROUND

LACMTA, in coordination with Los Angeles World Airports, is widening Arbor Vitae Street between Bellanca Avenue and La Cienega Boulevard to accommodate an additional vehicular lane in each direction. The roadway widening also requires modification of the LACMTA crossing of Arbor Vitae Street (CPUC Crossing Number 084A-1.62) located within the project limits. The Commission's Rail Safety Division (RSD) Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) authorized LACMTA to perform this crossing modification work through GO 88-B authorization XREQ 2021110003, issued on December 23, 2021.

DISCUSSION

Community concerns regarding noise from the sounding of bells and other audible warning devices at grade crossings are not new. The issue has been previously addressed by the Commission and several light rail transit (LRT) agencies in the State. The development and expansion of LRT systems has increased this concern and the Commission's RSD is working with California's LRT agencies to address the concern without degrading safety at grade crossings.

Widening of the Arbor Vitae Street crossing requires the installation of two Commission Standard 9 warning devices at each crossing approach side to cover three vehicular lanes for a total of four Commission Standard 9 warning devices, known as entrance gates; two of which are curb-mounted and two are median-mounted. Similarly, LACMTA will install two Commission Standard 9E warning devices, known as exit gates, on each departure side to cover three vehicle lanes for a total of four exit gates; two of which are curb-mounted and two are median-mounted. In addition, LACMTA will install Commission Standard 9 (pedestrian gate) warning devices on each sidewalk approach to the crossing for a total of four Commission Standard 9 (pedestrian gate) warning devices. The final crossing configuration contains twelve warning devices, each with its own bell.

LACMTA requests an exemption from CPUC GO 75-D, Section 9.5, which requires bells or other audible warning devices to be included in all curb-

mounted automatic warning device assemblies. LACMTA's proposal to install bells only on the Commission Standard 9 (pedestrian gate) warning devices is an attempt to mitigate the expected noise impact from twelve bells on the community. LACMTA states that placing the bells on the Commission Standard 9 (pedestrian gate) warning devices will effectively direct the audible warning to pedestrians. LACMTA has served the City of Los Angeles with a copy of this request. The City of Los Angeles has provided concurrence with LACMTA's request.

RSD's RCEB has reviewed and analyzed LACMTA's request. Section 10 of CPUC GO75-D exempts warning devices on medians to be installed without any audible warning devices, therefore median-mounted warning devices do not need a deviation from CPUC GO 75-D as originally requested by LACMTA. RCEB recommends that the requested exemption from the requirements of CPUC GO 75-D, Section 9.5 be granted, allowing LACMTA to install bells on only the four Commission Standard 9 (pedestrian gate) warning devices.

NOTICE

On April 12, 2024, this Resolution was published on the Commission's Daily Calendar.

COMMENTS

The draft resolution of the Rail Safety Division in this matter was mailed in accordance with Section 311 of the Public Utilities Code and Rule 14.2(d)(1) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

_____ comments were received.

FINDINGS

Community concerns regarding noise from the sounding of bells and other audible warning devices at grade crossings are not new. The issue has been previously addressed by the Commission and several light rail transit (LRT)

agencies in the State. The development and expansion of LRT systems has increased this concern and the Commission's RSD is working with California's LRT agencies to address the concern without degrading safety at grade crossings.

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LACMTA requests an exemption from CPUC GO 75-D, Section 9.5, which requires bells or other audible warning devices to be included in all curb-mounted automatic warning device assemblies. LACMTA's proposal to install bells only on the Commission Standard 9 (pedestrian gate) warning devices is an attempt to mitigate the expected noise impact from twelve bells on the community. LACMTA states that placing the bells on the Commission Standard 9 (pedestrian gate) warning devices will effectively direct the audible warning to pedestrians.

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RSD's RCEB has reviewed and analyzed LACMTA's request. Section 10 of CPUC GO75-D exempts warning devices on medians to be installed without any audible warning devices, therefore median-mounted warning devices do not need a deviation from CPUC GO 75-D as originally requested by LACMTA. RCEB recommends that the requested exemption from the requirements of CPUC GO 75-D, Section 9.5 be granted, allowing LACMTA to install bells on only the four Commission Standard 9 (pedestrian gate) warning devices.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority is authorized to deviate from Section 9.5 of California Public Utilities Commission General Order 75-D, by installing bells only on the Commission Standard 9 (pedestrian gate) warning devices, and not on the curb-mounted vehicular warning device assemblies at the Arbor Vitae Street crossing, identified as California Public Utilities Commission Crossing 084A-1.62 in the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County.
2. In keeping with the provisions of General Order 88-B authorization XREQ 2021110003, issued December 23, 2021, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority shall notify the California Public Utilities Commission's Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch that the authorized work is completed within 30 days of project completion.

This resolution is effective today.

I certify that this resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting held on May 30, 2024. The following Commissioners voting favorably thereon:

RACHEL PETERSON
Executive Director