

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Petition of	)	
	)	
AMTRAK	)	DOCKET NO. TR-000062
	)	
for Exemption from Close Clearance Rule	)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION
	)	FOR EXEMPTION FROM
	)	CLEARANCE RULES
	)	
.....)	)	

BACKGROUND

On January 1, 2000, AMTRAK filed a petition requesting an exemption from the height clearance rules in WAC 480-60-040 and the side clearance rules in WAC 480-60-050 for spray arches on tracks at the King Street coach yard owned by The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company located in Seattle, Washington. The spray arches are used to clean Amtrak trains.

DISCUSSION

Staff investigated this petition. Spray arches have existed in this location for many years. It appears that an exemption from side and height clearance rules was never granted for this installation. Amtrak petitioned the commission for an exemption when it decided to replace the spray arches with a newer model. The new spray arches are no more restrictive than the arches they will replace. Railroad employees do not ride the sides of trains on the tracks where the spray arches are located. Double stack trains are not operated on these tracks. The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Co. does not object to the exemption. There is no safety reason for enforcing clearance rules at the specified location so long as the railroad continues to mark the area with signs and include notice of lack of clearance in its timetable.

Staff recommends the petition be approved.

FINDINGS

The Commissioners have reviewed the petition and have been fully advised in the matter. They believe that granting the petition, subject to the conditions set forth below, is in the public interest, and direct the Secretary to issue the Order.

ORDER

The Commission grants the petition of the railroad for an exemption from height and side clearance rules set forth in WAC 480-60-040 and 480-60-050 for spray arches installed at track 11 in the King Street coach yard located in Seattle, Washington and owned by The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Co. on the following conditions:

1. Signs warning employees of the close side clearance must be maintained at the spray arches.
2. The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Co. timetable or Superintendent's bulletin must include notice of the close side and height clearance.

Dated at Olympia, Washington, and effective this        day of April, 2001.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary