

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

COLUMBIA AND COWLITZ)	DOCKET NO. TR-011643
RAILROAD COMPANY)	
)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION
Petitioner,)	TO UPGRADE WARNING
)	DEVICES AT COLUMBIA
v.)	HEIGHTS ROAD
)	
THE CITY OF KELSO)	D.O.T. 840544R
)	
Respondent)	W.U.T.C. 11A 4.00
.....)	

BACKGROUND

- 1 On December 10, 2001, the Columbia and Cowlitz Railroad Company filed a petition with the Commission, seeking authority to upgrade warning devices at a grade crossing. The crossing is located at the intersection of Columbia Heights Road and the petitioner's tracks, in Kelso, Washington. Sixty percent of the cost of the proposed upgrades is to be paid from the grade crossing protection fund, pursuant to RCW 81.53.271. The remainder of the cost is pursuant to an agreement between the parties.
- 2 Respondent has consented to an entry of an order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.

DISCUSSION

- 3 In the vicinity of the crossing, Columbia Heights Road is classified as an urban collector road, with one lane for each direction of traffic and a speed limit of 35 mph. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 7,000 vehicles.
- 4 The Columbia and Cowlitz Railroad Company maintains one main track through the crossing. Daily train traffic averages 8 trains, traveling at a maximum timetable speed of 15 mph.
- 5 Warning devices at the crossing consist of cantilever-mounted flashing light signals. The existing flashing light signals are eight inch (diameter) signals that are typical of older installations. Petitioner proposes to upgrade the warning devices by replacing the existing flashing light signals with 12 inch (diameter) signals. The new signals represent the current industry standard for warning signals and will improve visibility of the lights for motorists. The upgrades are proposed in the interest of improving safety for motorists.

6 Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted,
subject to specified conditions.

7 This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled open
meeting on January 9, 2002. The Commissioners have reviewed the petition and
have been 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

8 THE COMMISSION GRANTS the petition of the Columbia and Cowlitz Railroad
Company to upgrade warning devices at the highway-rail grade crossing, located at
the intersection of Columbia Heights Road and the petitioner's tracks, in Kelso,
Washington, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The upgrades must conform to the plans filed in this proceeding.
- (2) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
- (3) All devices must be installed in such a manner, as to provide the required clearances for both rail and vehicular traffic.
- (4) Upon completion of the upgrades authorized herein, petitioner must notify the Commission. Acceptance of the installations is subject to inspection and report by Commission Staff, verifying that the changes are in full compliance with law, regulation, and the conditions specified herein.

DATED at Olympia, Washington and effective this 9th of January, 2002.

THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary