

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON STATE	)	DOCKET TR-132278
DEPARTMENT OF	)	
TRANSPORTATION,	)	ORDER 01
	)	
Petitioner,	)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
	)	UPGRADE PUBLIC HIGHWAY-RAIL
	)	GRADE ACTIVE WARNING DEVICES
YAKIMA COUNTY and YAKIMA	)	AT STATE ROUTE 97
CENTRAL RAILWAY,	)	
	)	
Respondent.	)	USDOT: 099199T
	)	
.....	)	

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On December 16, 2013, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission), a petition seeking approval to upgrade active warning devices. The crossing is identified as USDOT 099199T and is located at the intersection of State Route 97 (SR-97) and Yakima Central Railway’s (Yakima Central) tracks in Yakima County.
  
- 2 Respondents Yakima County, owner of the rail line, and Yakima Central, operator, consented to entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
  
- 3 Current railroad warning devices at the crossing consist of crossbucks, cantilever mounted lights and pavement markings. In addition, active advance warning signs are installed on both approaches to the crossing.
  
- 4 SR-97 is a five-lane roadway with a posted vehicle speed limit of 55 miles per hour. Average annual daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 11,845 vehicles, including 14.7 percent commercial motor vehicles. Six school buses use this crossing on a daily basis.
  
- 5 Yakima Central operates one freight train at up to 10 miles per hour over the single main line crossing. The authorized train speed is 25 mile per hour. No passenger trains operate over the crossing.

- 6 WSDOT proposes to upgrade the train detection from AC/DC to constant warning, replace all incandescent lights with LED lights, including the railroad flashers and active advance warning sign beacons.
- 7 The proposed upgrades of the SR-97 crossing will improve the overall safety at the crossing because the LED lights will improve visibility for crossing users and the upgraded train detection will provide consistent warning of a train approaching the crossing.

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington. *Chapter 81.53 RCW.*
- 9 (2) The SR-97 grade crossing, identified as USDOT #099199T, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 10 (3) RCW 81.53.261 and WAC 480-62-150 require that the Commission grant approval prior to modifying a public railroad-highway grade crossing or upgrading active crossing warning signals or devices within the state of Washington.
- 11 (4) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted with conditions.
- 12 (5) After examination of the petition filed by WSDOT on December 16, 2013, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

### ORDER

#### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 13 The petition of WSDOT to modify a railroad-highway grade crossing and upgrade warning devices at the intersection of SR-97 and Yakima Central Railway's tracks in Yakima County is granted. Approval of the petition is subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The modifications must conform to those described and attached to the petition.
- (2) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the 2009 U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

The Secretary of the Commission has delegated authority over this matter pursuant to Order 03 in Docket A-090485. The Secretary finds this Order to be consistent with the public interest.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective January 29, 2014.

**WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

**STEVEN V. KING, Executive Director and Secretary**

**NOTICE:** This is an order delegated to the Secretary for decision. In addition to serving you a copy of the decision, the Commission will post on its Internet Web site for at least fourteen (14) days a listing of all matters delegated to the Secretary for decision. You may seek Commission review of this decision. You must file a request for Commission review of this order no later than fourteen (14) days after the date the decision is posted on the Commission's Web site. The Commission will schedule your request for review for consideration at a regularly scheduled open meeting. The Commission will notify you of the time and place of the open meeting at which the Commission will review the order.

The Commission will grant a late-filed request for review only on a showing of good cause, including a satisfactory explanation of why the person did not timely file the request. A form for late-filed requests is available on the Commission's Web site.

This notice and review process is pursuant to the provisions of RCW 80.01.030 and WAC 480-07-904(2) and (3).