

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



PILOT/ESCORT ESCORT VEHICLE OPERATOR HANDBOOK

OCTOBER 2018

PRESENTED BY:
Georgia Department of Public Safety



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GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

CHAPTER 1

- Program Basics
- Required Equipment
- Optional Equipment

CHAPTER ONE

STATE OF GEORGIA ESCORT VEHICLE OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

PROGRAM BASICS

Escort car services benefit all parties involved in the transportation of over-dimensional loads: the manufacturers themselves, the trucking companies transporting the load, the general motoring public, and all other drivers and pedestrians on our highways. The following industry best practices are recommended, and this is accomplished by, among other ways:

1. Increasing overall safety of the traveling public;
2. Increasing the safety of the people involved in the movement of the Overdimensional load.
3. Preventing damage to the highway system;
4. Preventing damage to the load being transported;
5. Preventing or minimizing delays to the normal traffic flow; 6. Reducing accident/loss rates thereby holding down insurance costs; 7. Encouraging uniform escort operations.

Above all else, we must remember that:

"Your safety, the safety of your crew, and the safety of the motoring public are more important than any transporting operation being performed."

General Requirements

The Georgia Department of Public Safety administers a program to certify Oversize-Overweight load escort vehicle drivers as required by O.C. G.A. §32-6-28(a)(8), effective July 1, 2010. The program is also described in GDOT Board Rules 672-2-.06 to include instruction in safe and effective escort skills, examination that documents course comprehension, and a system of recognizing drivers certified by this or another state. General requirements are that an escort driver must be:

- 1) Certified by another state's approved program, or
- 2) A Georgia law enforcement officer, or
- 3) A person who meets one of the following requirements:
 - a) Is at least 21 years of age, or
 - b) Is at least 18 years of age with a Class A commercial driver's license, or
 - c) Is at least 18 years of age, has been employed as an escort driver for at least one year, and is sponsored by his/her employer for entry into the certification program and completes all certification requirements prior to July 1, 2011; and
4. Possesses a valid driver's license without restrictions other than for use of corrective lens and has a driving history without conviction of driving while impaired or reckless driving in the previous 12 months. Certified pilot/escort drivers must have a valid driver's license from the state or jurisdiction where the driver is a resident; and
5. Possesses documentation of completion of a defensive driving course approved by the National Safety Council or an equivalent course.

6. Has successfully completed eight classroom hours of a GDOT oversize-overweight escort vehicle operator course with certification exam score of at least 80 percent (80%) correct and has received consequent certification by the Department

Revocation of Certification

Certification shall be revoked during its effective period for any of the following:

1. Failure to satisfy requirements or failure to give required or correct information on the application.
2. Violation of rules established by the certifying state. Failure to operate a motor vehicle safely. Evidence of performing the duties of an escort driver in a manner with the potential to cause an accident, personal injury, or damage to property.
3. Suspension, revocation, cancellation, or denial of driver's license. The certified operator must notify Public Safety, Oversize Permit Unit, in writing within 5 days of suspension, revocation, cancellation, or denial.
4. Accumulation of 15 points against the driver's license of the certified vehicle operator within 24 months (combined in any of the 50 states).

If certificate is revoked under this section, subsequent certification as an oversize-overweight load escort vehicle operator shall require reapplication, satisfaction of program prerequisites, and requalification through the training program.

Revocation of Certification - appeal process

An individual whose certificate is revoked may within 15 days following notification of the adverse action make a written appeal to the Public Safety Administrator of the Oversize Permit Unit for review of the revocation. The Administrator shall review circumstances surrounding the revocation and make a recommendation. The Administrator may set aside or affirm the loss of the oversize-overweight load escort vehicle certification. The individual appealing will be advised of the final disposition of the action within 21 days following the receipt of the appeal.

How to Become Certified

For information review the requirements provided on the Public Safety website:

<http://gamccd.net>

Additional information or questions, contact the Georgia Department of Public Safety Oversize/Overweight Permit Unit: Georgia Department of Public Safety

Oversize/Overweight Permit Unit

Attn: Certified Vehicle Escort

Program 959 E.

Confederate Ave SE,

Atlanta, GA 30316

(404) 624-7254; (888) 262-8306

The one-day training and testing workshop is conducted by Georgia Department of Public Safety. The workshop is offered periodically throughout the year.

What the Certification Training and Testing Program will entail

The workshop will consist of four main parts: Escort Driver
Requirements
Skills
Training
Defensive
Driving
Testing

A minimum score of 80 percent (80%) on the test given at the end of the workshop will be required.

Testing and Certification Fees

A company check or money order made payable to The Georgia Department of Public Safety in the amount determined by the Agency.

Notification of Test Results; Re -testing

The workshop instructor will grade the test and document with the Permit Unit the scores.

The applicant must submit a copy of their certified driving record and documentation of completion of a defensive driving course approved by the National Safety Council to the Permit Unit. If all requirements of the program are met, a wallet card certification will be sent by the Permit Unit, usually within 15 days of completion of the class.

Should the applicant fail to pass the test with at least 80% on the first try, he or she may arrange to retake the test one more time at the Public Safety Oversize Permit Unit's main office location. Please contact the office for details on test re-takes (404) 624-7257.

Effective Dates and Enforcement

After July 1, 2011, all drivers operating escort vehicles must be certified. Active enforcement begins on October 1, 2011.

Change of Address or Name; Replacement Certificates

If you have a change of name or address, or your Escort Driver Certificate is lost, stolen, or destroyed, you may be issued a new certificate by contacting the Public Safety Oversize/Overweight Permit Unit within 30 days.

Expiration and Renewal

Certificates will be valid for four years from the date of issue. At least two months before expiration date, contact the Public Safety Oversize/Overweight Permit Unit to obtain procedures for renewal.

Tillerman Operations

Tillerman operations should not be performed by the pilot/escort driver or by a passenger in the pilot/escort vehicle that is escorting the oversize load.

Reciprocal Agreements

The Public Safety Administrator of the Oversize Permit Unit may arrange reciprocal agreements with other states that demonstrate the course materials meet the minimum requirements outlined by the U.S. DOT Federal Highway Administration publication FHWA-HOP-04.028, Best Practices Guidelines. A list of reciprocal states may be obtained from the Department's website at <http://gamccd.net>

A vehicle is oversize/overweight if any of the following conditions exist:

Width is greater than eight feet six inches (8'6").

Height is greater than thirteen feet six inches (13'6").

Weight is greater than 80,000 lbs (20,000 lbs. single axle, 34,000 lbs. tandem axle) Or gross weight greater than the maximum allowable weight according to the federal bridge law.

Length is greater than 100 feet (varies). Including overhang.

A legal 53 foot semi trailer combination with no overall length limitation is allowed on federally designated highways/STAA vehicle routes.

Any dimensions found to exceed the legal limits will require an **OS/OW Loads Requiring an Escort**

An escort driver is required if stated on the OS/OW permit. Generally, one or more escorts are required when:

1. Front escort for width in excess of 12' for all over-width permitted movement on two lane/two way traffic highways and as a rear escort/amber light on multi-lane highways or as determined and stated on the permit documented by issuing agent. Loads more than 14 feet 8 inches wide including 16 feet wide are required to be accompanied by two escort vehicles, one in front and one in the rear, on two-lane highways. A rear escort only is required on interstate highways. All loads more than 16 feet wide or for loads not defined above are required to be accompanied by two escort vehicles, one in the front and one in the rear, on all roads and highways. Public Safety may require a police escort.
2. Front pole car escort vehicle equipped with a height pole indicator for over-height in excess of fifteen feet six inches (15'6") for entire route of travel. 15 Feet (15') or greater requires a Vehicle Front Escort with a height sensor when traveling through larger cities where traffic signals may be encountered.
3. Rear escort/amber light for length in excess of 75'. A rear escort is required for length exceeding 100' but less than 125'. Front and rear escorts are required for overall length in excess of 125'.
4. Superloads escorts will be determined on a case by case basis.
5. Multiple escorts may be required for a combination of over-dimensions.
6. Additional escorts may be required for any vehicle/vehicle combination with individual consideration of width, length, height, weather, geographical location or route of travel as determined by issuing agent.

Special Rules: 16' Wide Manufactured Homes, Modular buildings, and Houses

These moves in excess of 16' wide are a special extension of oversized permitting rules. While each permit will specifically list the special requirements, general requirements will include:

Travel times: Monday through Saturday only (plus holiday restrictions), with hours limited to 9 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. for most house moves and unless otherwise designated on the permit. Exceptions to the times for house movements will be considered if the hauler provides a written request from all local governments or police/sheriff offices along the proposed route(s).

Application for the movement of a house shall be made at least 72 hours prior to the time of movement with the prior approval of the local utilities affected.

Special Rules: Superload Escorts

Superloads are a special category of permitted loads. Specific instructions will be dictated on the permit - read it carefully. A superload is defined as:

- Weight in excess of 150,000 pounds gross weight
- Weight in excess of allowable weight over low limit/posted bridge
- Width in excess of 16 feet

Additional escort may be required as determined by issuing agent.

VEHICLE LIGHTING REQUIREMENTS

Two methods of lighting are authorized by the Department. Required as follows:

1. Flashing Amber Light(s): A flashing or revolving light at least eight (8) inches in diameter, with a minimum candlepower of 35,000 lumens or equivalent, four (4) inch strobe light and shall flash so as to be visible from a distance of not less than one quarter mile. In lieu of the amber warning light also acceptable is a light-emitting diode (LED) light equipped with a multidirectional type lens, and shall flash at a rate of at least 60 flashes per minute and shall be plainly visible from a distance of at least 500 feet from the rear and sides at a radius of 180 degrees any time day or night.
2. A flashing beacon/light bar mounted on top of the pilot/escort vehicle. The beacon/light bar must be unobstructed and visible for 360 degrees with warning lights illuminated at all times during operation.
3. The pilot/escort vehicle operator shall have obtained a permit for the amber light from the appropriate state agency for the use of the light as required by the provisions of Code Sections 40-8-92, 40-8-93 and 40-8-95, O.C.G.A.
4. Incandescent, strobe or diode (LED) lights may be used provided they meet above criteria.
5. Lights must only be activated while escorting an oversize load, or when used as traffic warning devices while stopped at the side of the road taking height measurements during the prerunning of a planned route. A route survey may not be conducted during the piloting of an oversize load.
6. Head lamps: When actively escorting, escort vehicle head lamps must be burning at all times during movement.

PILOT/ESCORT VEHICLE STANDARDS

Vehicle standards for pilot/escort vehicles are as follows:

1. Escort vehicle should be a truck of not less than one-quarter (1/4) ton-rated capacity but not more than 17,000 pounds GVWR or a passenger vehicle of not less than 2,000 pounds gross weight.
2. Equipment shall not reduce visibility or mobility of pilot car/escort vehicle while in operation.
3. Escort vehicle must be equipped with outside rear-view mirrors, located on each side of the vehicle.
4. Escort vehicles are not permitted to pull a trailer of any kind.
5. Passengers or pets should not be allowed in pilot/escort vehicle during movement of oversize loads, except for a certified individual in training status.
6. Pilot/escort vehicles shall be equipped with a two-way radio capable of transmitting and receiving voice messages over a minimum distance of one-half mile. Radio communications must be compatible with accompanying pilot/escort vehicles, permitted vehicle operator and police escort, when necessary. When operating with police escort CB radio required.
7. A pilot/escort driver must meet the requirements of 49 CFR 391.11 if using a vehicle for escort operations in excess of 10,000 lbs GVWR.
8. Pilot/Escort vehicles may not carry a load.

PILOT/ESCORT VEHICLE SIGNING REQUIREMENTS

Sign requirements on pilot/escort vehicles are as follows:

1. On all loads over legal width, or height, or length, a sign containing the wording "OVERSIZED LOAD" shall be mounted on the front of the escort vehicle (for a front escort) and to the rear of the escort vehicle (for a rear escort). The letters shall be black on an orange or yellow backboard and shall be at least eight (8)

inches high and four (4) inches wide. The backboard shall be at least one (1) foot high and six (6) feet wide.

2. The sign for the front/pilot car escort vehicle shall be displayed so as to be clearly legible and readable by oncoming traffic at all times.
3. The rear pilot/escort vehicle shall display its sign so as to be readable by traffic overtaking from the rear and clearly legible at all times.

EQUIPMENT - REQUIRED

As a best practice, Pilot/Escort Vehicles should be equipped with the following required safety items.

1. Height Pole Indicator: Required for front escort vehicles for overheight moves in excess of fifteen feet, six inches (15'6"). The height pole must be nonconductive and nondestructive to overhead clearances.
2. Radio: Two-way radio contact with driver of oversize/overweight load and other driver(s).
3. Stop/Slow Paddle: the sign shall be at least 18"x18" with 6 inch high letters, octagonal, and should be mounted on a rigid handle. For portability, a 1' handle may be used, but if mounted on a long staff, a 7' mounting height is recommended. For more visibility, a 24"x24" sign sized or high-intensity flashing stop/slow paddle may be used. For nighttime travel moves signs must be reflective in accordance with MUTCD standards.
4. Safety Helmet: Must wear an approved safety helmet/hardhat when performing duties outside of the vehicle.
5. Vest or High Visibility clothing: Must wear an approved safety vest or shirt or coat while flagging. Approved colors are orange, yellow, yellow green or fluorescent versions of these colors.
6. Channelization devices: At least nine bi-directional retroreflective triangles, with minimum 17" arm length and minimum arm width of 2".
7. Eight red-burning flares, glow sticks or equivalent illumination device.
8. Three orange, 18" high cones.
9. Fire extinguisher: Minimum five lb. Type "BC" or "ABC".
10. A traffic wand flashlight in good working order with a safety nose cone. Additional batteries should also be on hand.
11. Clearly marked first aid kit.
12. One serviceable spare tire.
13. Identification of Escort Vehicle: Sign showing name, city and state of company/owner of escort vehicle must be displayed on each side of the vehicle. Sign shall be a minimum of 8" x 12" and be readily legible during daylight hours from a distance of 50 feet.
14. A minimum of two red flags mounted to the top of the vehicle at approximately 45 degree angles and not extending more than 6 inches on either side of the vehicle.
15. Vehicle shall not have unauthorized equipment on the vehicle such as those generally reserved for law enforcement personnel.

EQUIPMENT - OPTIONAL

A true professional will be prepared for many of the unpredictable situations which may arise on the highway. Some equipment which is not mandated but could be very useful:

A. Routine Job and Maintenance Items

1. General tool kit with pliers, wrenches, screwdrivers, etc.
2. Motor oil, coolant, water, windshield fluid, etc.
3. Flashlight, batteries
4. Extra "Oversize Load" sign; hardware for attaching sign.
5. Spare amber light unit.
6. Light bulbs - flashers, turn signals, brake lights, headlights
7. Assorted automotive fuses.
8. Jumper cables, shovel
9. Repair/replacement parts for height pole
10. 25 foot tape measure

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6. Light bulbs - flashers, turn signals, brake lights, headlights
7. Assorted automotive fuses.
8. Jumper cables, shovel
9. Repair/replacement parts for height pole
10. 25 foot tape measure

Extra 28 inch traffic cones

11. Radio - handheld two-way for flagging
12. Extra red flags and materials for attaching to the OS/OW load.

NOTE: *Red Flags are not to be used for flagging traffic. The stop/slow paddle must be used for traffic.*

B. Emergency/Breakdown Items

1. Latex gloves, CPR breathing shield
2. Aerosol canned tire inflator
3. Cellular phone; numbers if not in 911 area.

C. Personal Items

1. Drinking Water, lunch
2. Medications
3. Maps - local, state
4. Extra clothing, blanket

Note that these items are generally not required by law. However, having these items in your vehicle can reduce your breakdown time and control costs by having them purchased in advance. More importantly,

being prepared for routine and emergency situations shows your professionalism and gives you peace of mind, allowing you to focus on your job.

For convenience, a pre-job checklist is included as Appendix "A".

ENFORCEMENT

Failure to conform to the escort requirements of this Rule shall result in penalties imposed in O.C.G.A.

32 -1-10(a).

Any person who violates any of the provisions of this title for which no specific penalty is provided, whether or not such act or omission is expressly declared elsewhere in this title to be unlawful, or who violates any of the rules and regulations issued under authority of an in accord with the provisions of this title shall be guilty of a misdemeanor; provided, however, that a violation of Code Sections 32-6-26 and 36-6-27 shall not be considered a crime.” O.C.G.A 32-1-10

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

CHAPTER 2

FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

- Oversize Load Hazards
 - Railroad Crossings
 - Utility Lines
 - Height Poles
- Pre-Trip/Post-Trip Planning and Coordination Requirements
- Police Escort Vehicle Equipment and Safety Requirements
 - Front & Rear Escort Responsibilities
 - Distances Between Vehicles

CHAPTER TWO
FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF ESCORT DRIVERS

"OVERSIZE LOAD" HAZARDS

Each permitted load has its own hazards, depending on whether it is overwidth, overheight, overlength, or overweight. In all cases the permitted load exceeds the optimum design limits of the highway system. It is the responsibility of each escort vehicle operator to know the dimensions of the permitted load in order to avoid endangering the public and the permitted load. Additionally, the escort vehicle operator must know the limitations of the highway on the route selected for transporting the load.

A. Over width Load Hazards: Over width loads are of particular hazard to the motoring public since these loads generally impact the adjacent lanes and roadway shoulders. When escorting an over width load, the escort driver(s) must always be aware of road width and any obstructions, such as narrow bridges and narrow or non-existent shoulders.

Frequently the motoring public does not pay much attention to oncoming traffic until it presents an immediate threat. Drivers do not give up what they consider "their lane" very easily. It is the duty of the escorting driver to warn the motoring public that an over width load is using part of "their lane". Weather, particularly rain, may soften roadway shoulders to the extent that they are not usable by an over width load. In this case the permitted load is forced to take up and use more of the adjacent oncoming lane. Areas of roadway that frequently "give way" can be noted by the escort vehicle operator when large patches of asphalt are observed in road bed fill areas.

B. Overheight Load Hazards: Loads that are overheight must be verified by the escort vehicle operator prior to departure. Drivers should determine actual load dimensions. This is particularly true for overheight loads that could impact bridge or overpass structures that have a variable clearance, depending on the lane selected.

C. Overlength Load Hazards: Overlength loads are limited to roadways where the load can negotiate curves, interchanges, entrances, and exits to roadways. Overlength loads must be evaluated for railroad crossings to make sure that long loads do not get high-centered. In all cases, it is the safety of the public that determines whether or not a permit is granted.

D. Overweight Load Hazards: Overweight loads represent a traffic hazard due to their reduced speeds. Whenever permitted loads cannot maintain the speed of the surrounding vehicles and there is a backup of traffic, escort vehicles and transport operators shall pull to the roadside periodically to allow traffic to clear.

RAILROAD CROSSINGS

Transporting oversize/overweight loads across railroad tracks can be particularly tricky due to the possibility of becoming stuck on the tracks. Some crossings are marked with a warning sign. If you see a sign approaching a railroad crossing, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CROSS. Pull over and make alternate plans. Call the railroad company.

If there is no sign, you still need to make a visual check to be sure the load can make it across. IF THERE IS ANY DOUBT, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CROSS. Pull over and make alternate plans. Call the railroad company. One sign of potential problems is scrape marks on the pavement near the tracks. This indicates other vehicles may have bottomed out while making the crossing.

If you do get stuck on the tracks, follow these Emergency Safety Steps:

1. **If the truck gets stuck on or stalls within 15 feet of the tracks, get out of the vehicle and get help immediately.**
2. **Quickly find the nearest phone. Call for help. If you can identify the track operator (see #4), call their 800 number first.**

Norfolk Southern Emergency Number: 1-800-946-4744 CSX

Emergency Number: 1-800-232-0144

Local Police: 911

GSP - Motor Carrier Compliance Division (MCCD): 404-624-7211

3. **If a train is coming, get out of the truck and run away from the track toward the direction from which the train is coming.** This will help you to avoid flying glass and debris, which is extremely hazardous in the event of a collision.
4. **The most important information you can give to emergency response personnel is the DOT-AAR crossing identification number.** This number is located on the crossbuck signpost, the signal mast, or the control box. Here is an example of an identification number:

CSX TRANSPORTATION

TO REPORT STALLED VEHICLE BLOCKING
CROSSING OR OTHER EMERGENCY

CALL 1-800-232-0144

REFER TO CROSSING

LOCATED AT

630 657 S

163.43

ID NUMBER

MILEPOST

If you are unable to find the AAR -DOT crossing identification number, remember to provide as much information as you can about the location of the crossing including the street name or number, city, or county where you are located. Norfolk Southern and CSX have emergency number stickers posted on many of their gates or below the crossbuck signs at crossings not equipped with gates.

UTILITY LINES ARE HAZARDOUS!

Utility lines must only be lifted, moved, or otherwise touched by a trained employee of the utility company. Do NOT attempt to move a line yourself; call the power, phone, cable, or other utility company. Many fatalities occur every year because of unqualified persons attempting to move lines themselves.

Treat all wires, cables, utility lines

As "HOT" - no exceptions!

HEIGHT POLES FOR OVERHEAD MEASUREMENT

The height pole is very important for escort vehicles that have an over height pole with them. This device determines the load clearance for utility lines, traffic signal lights, overpasses, and bridges. Once the height pole has been placed on the escort vehicle, the pole should not be less than three inches above the load height or greater than six inches above the maximum height of the load. The load driver should tell the escort driver the height of the load. The height pole or other measuring device can be used to check the measurements given to you by the load driver.

Do **not** climb the oversize load to measure it!

Height poles and associated hardware for attaching to vehicles are not available in stores, so it is up to the escort driver to build one or have one built and attach it to their vehicle.

Height poles should be nonconductive, adjustable, and nondestructive. The poles must be nonconductive in case it comes into contact with any utility wires. Because of the different overheight loads an escort vehicle will have to lead, the height pole needs to be adjustable. Also, the height pole must be nondestructive or easily and cheaply replaced.

The height pole needs to be flexible, but not breakable if it comes into contact with bridges or overpasses. If the pole does bend due to contact with a bridge or overpass, it needs to be able to return to the exact height it was before the hit.

When not escorting a permitted load, the height pole must be stored. The only exception is when the escort driver is checking the route for any possible obstacles.

Height pole mounts must be strong enough to withstand the wind and any impacts with utility lines, traffic signals, bridges, overpasses, and any other overhead impacts. The mount must be firm and not affect the pole's position or height.

The lead escort vehicle needs to be well ahead of the load in order to measure any overhead barriers that are on the route and relay any problems or other important information to the permitted load driver. Allow the permitted load driver plenty of time to react to whatever situation is ahead.

Follow these guidelines when measuring overhead barriers:

- Measure bridge lanes from their mid-point.
- Measure overhead utility wires and power lines at their lowest point.
- Measure traffic signals to their side. Avoid hitting them because they are fragile and costly to repair.

PRE -TRIP/POST-TRIP PLANNING AND COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS

A coordination and planning meeting should, as best practice, be held prior to and immediately following load movement. Pre run the route, if necessary, to verify acceptable clearances. The driver(s) carrying or pulling the oversize load(s), the pilot/escort vehicle driver(s), law enforcement officers (if assigned), Department personnel (if involved), and public utility companies (as appropriate) should attend. The meeting should include discussion and coordination on the conduct of the move, including at least the following topics:

1. The person designated as being in charge (law enforcement officers if present)
2. Authorized routing and permit conditions. Ensure that all documentation is distributed to all appropriate individuals involved in the move. Review special permit conditions with the operator of the oversize load.
3. Communication and signals coordination. Ensure clear communications and predetermine the channel to be used.
4. Check mandatory equipment. Each operator is responsible for his or her own vehicle. Check two-way mirrors, mount signs, and turn on lights.
5. Verification/measurement of load dimensions. Set the height pole, pull next to the load and verify, compare with permitted dimensions. If the load measurements are not the same as the permit, obtain a corrected permit with a redefined route appropriate for the actual measurements. Copies of permit and routing documents shall be provided to all parties involved with the permitted load movement.
6. Prior to the load movement, the appropriate parties (operator of oversized load, pilot/escort vehicle driver, law enforcement) should complete the “Pre-Trip Over dimensional Load Checklist”.
7. Following the load movement, a debriefing meeting should be held and the appropriate parties (operator of oversize load, pilot/escort vehicle driver, law enforcement) should complete the “After Action Report.”

POLICE ESCORT VEHICLE EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Police escort vehicles shall be equipped with the following safety items:

1. All officers must have a CB radio to communicate with the pilot and transport vehicles.
2. Officers shall complete inspections prior to load movement.
3. Police vehicles must be clearly marked with emergency lighting visible 360 degrees
4. Officers shall be in uniform while conducting police escort moves.
5. Officers should sign the required pre and post trip documentation.

GENERAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

General Duties - The purpose of an escort vehicle is to alert the traveling public to the presence or approach of an over dimensional load. Escort drivers are also responsible for assisting the driver of the load and should obey all traffic laws.

Specific duties of front and rear escort drivers are given below:

Escort drivers and transporters are NOT exempt from traffic laws and regulations,
- and - Escort drivers do NOT have police powers or permission to operate vehicle
as an emergency vehicle
while escorting overdimensional loads.

Front Escorts

- Warn oncoming traffic of the presence of the over dimensional load.
- Assist the driver of the over dimensional load by using the two-way radio to provide notification of hazards, obstructions, pedestrians, and other potential problems.
- Check shoulder and alert driver of soft shoulders, ruts, debris, abandoned vehicles, mailboxes, narrowing shoulders, etc.
- Assure the over dimensional driver that the route prescribed on the permit is being followed.
- Watch for construction zones. Lanes may narrow and workers may be close to traffic.
- Locate safe places to allow the over dimensional load and escort vehicles to clear the roadway so traffic following the load can safely pass.
- Warn motorists to stop at the end of narrow structures to permit safe passage of the load through the obstruction.
- Check overhead clearances in the case of overheight loads.
- If the front escort passes through a traffic light as it turns red, the escort load is always required to stop.
- Flag traffic if necessary.

Rear Escorts

- Know the dimensions of the oversized load.
- Warn traffic approaching from the rear of the presence of an overdimensional load ahead.
- Assist the overdimensional load driver by providing notification of flat tires, objects coming loose from the load and other occurrences the driver may not be aware of.
- Monitor top of overheight loads while passing under bridges, wires, etc.
- Notify the front escort driver and overdimensional load operator of traffic buildup and other delays to the normal flow of traffic.
- Notify the overdimensional load driver of motorists attempting to
- pass the load.
- Warn motorists to stop at narrow structures and other roadway restrictions to permit safe passage of the load through the obstruction.
- Keep driver informed of your location, particularly when the oversized load is to be maneuvered through curves, turns, bridges, and lane changes.
- When the load is passing another vehicle, the escort driver should pull into the left lane *before* the load attempts to pass.
- Flag traffic if necessary.

DISTANCES BETWEEN VEHICLES

There is no one set distance between escort vehicles and permitted loads; traffic density, road conditions, road type, speed, type of load, and other factors must be taken into consideration. Use judgment to determine the best distance based on the conditions and adjust as necessary. Remember that the lead vehicle needs to give the towing vehicle enough time to slow or stop in the case of an obstructed lane, narrow shoulder, stalled vehicle, etc.

- On two lane, two way roads, remember that you are warning approaching vehicles of the permitted load behind you and they will need time to react
- They are closing the distance very rapidly; therefore you should try to keep ¼ mile (approximately 1,300 feet) ahead at highway speeds and lesser amounts as speeds slow
- Inside cities, towns, and in urban conditions, distances will be shorter due to congestion, speed, signals, and other factors. Use a shorter lead distance usually less than 200 feet.
- On interstates and multi-lane, divided highways, higher speeds require the larger distances (1/4 mile), but clear radio contact must be maintained, and in no case should the separation exceed ½ mile
- Radio communication must be maintained between the escort and the load
- When using the height pole to verify clearances for an overheight load, larger distances may be justified

Rear Vehicle

- A 3 to 4 second following distance should be maintained. These are 4 second following distances:

25 mph 150 feet 30

mph 175 feet

40 mph 250 feet

50 mph 300 feet

55 mph 325 feet

60 mph 350 feet

- In towns, cities, and in urban conditions, smaller distances may be needed to keep other vehicles from getting between you and the permitted load.

Stopping Distances:

The distance needed to stop a vehicle is related to:

- Speed
- Pavement conditions
- Slope of the roadway

The distance needed to stop a 150-car freight train moving at 55 mph is 1 and ½ miles.

If the pavement is wet, stopping distances are doubled.

Traffic Control:

The escort vehicle operator is authorized, when needed to direct traffic to stop, slow down, or proceed.

Remember this program basic:

Most hazards in escort operations develop when drivers violate a law, a safe driving practice, or are unaware of how to control traffic

CHAPTER 3

HIGHWAY OPERATIONS

- Rules and Regulations
- Getting on the Road
- Maneuvering the Load
- Typical Applications

CHAPTER 3

HIGHWAY OPERATIONS

GENERAL PROCEDURES AND SAFETY PROVISIONS

Allowing built -up traffic to pass

Escort vehicles and transport operators shall monitor trailing traffic and pull to the roadside periodically to allow lines of traffic to clear. Slow to a maximum speed of 25 mph to allow traffic to pass.

Headlights - burning

Towing unit and escort vehicles must burn headlamps during highway movement of permitted loads.

Holiday travel

Permitted vehicles cannot travel on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Nighttime and Sunday travel

Transportation of a permitted load is prohibited between ½ hour before sunset and ½ hour after sunrise and on Sundays unless otherwise stated on permit.

Removal or cover of banners, signs, and amber lights

Banners, signs, and flags should be removed from escort vehicle after job and before driving while not escorting a load. Turn off amber lights.

Passengers and pets

The escort vehicle operator should travel alone, no passengers or animals. This helps to minimize distractions and allows full attention to the job. The only exception should be a passenger with an approved escort vehicle operator certification.

Speed Limits

Escort vehicles and oversize loads must travel at a speed safe for conditions and not exceed the posted maximum speed, or speed as stated on permit.

Emergency 4 -Way Flashers

Not to be used unless speed is less than 40 mph or less than posted minimum speed.

Weather Conditions

Travel should cease if weather conditions do not permit safe movement. Permits are not valid when visibility is less than 600 feet, if the highway is covered with snow/ice, or if wind gusts exceed 25 mph, or if travel conditions are considered unsafe by Public Safety or law enforcement having jurisdiction

Convoy Travel

Is NOT authorized. Permitted vehicles owned or leased by the same company or permitted vehicles originating at the same location shall travel at a distance of not less than 2 miles apart.

Warning

A citation WILL be issued for traveling in a convoy!

GETTING ON THE ROAD

Prior Driving of Route

It is the responsibility of the permittee to check the proposed route and detour when necessary. If you are unfamiliar with the route and are escorting an especially large or overweight load, it is a good idea to pre-drive the route you will be taking. Issuance of a permit does not guarantee clearances (overhead and width) along the route.

Pre -Trip Activities

Good planning and preparation can mean the difference between a good day and a bad one. Professionals will recognize that their vehicles, equipment, mapping, and communication are all essential for success. Take a few minutes to make sure everything is ready to go.

1. Check Permitted Load

- A. Flags properly installed- the flags should be attached to the corners of the load and on any overhangs.
- B. Signs/banners properly installed- the sign or banner should be placed on the roof so that it is visible from the front and the back. Nothing should be obscuring it.
- C. Flashing light installed, working- a minimum 5 inch diameter base and 4 inch lens height; visibility a minimum of 500 feet by approaching traffic in all directions.
- D. Measurements confirmed- double check the measurements of the load before starting.

2. Check Escort Vehicle

A. Equipment: it is best practice to have all the recommended equipment described in Chapter One of this manual.

B. Starting at the front bumper of the escort vehicle, check the following items while walking around it:

- Height pole Turn Signals
- Radiator Level
- Coolant, wiper fluid level Wheel lugs (tight)
- Exhaust System
- Tarps and Lashings Fire Extinguisher(s) Hard Hat and Vest
- Stop and Turn Signals
- Flashing Amber Light(s) 4-way flashers
- Horn
- Signs/Banners
- Headlights Oil Level
- Hoses, belts Tire Inflation
- Suspension
- Emergency Reflective Devices First Aid Kit
- License Plate, Stickers Stop/Slow

Paddle

__ Full or nearly full gas tank __ Mirrors

C. Make sure all items are securely stored away on escort vehicle.

3. Communication equipment and procedure: __ Primary and backup channel(s)

__ Phone numbers if cell phones are available

__ Check batteries, adapter cords, etc __ Manner of communication: when and how much talk does the driver want?

4. Trip Planning

A. Verify permitted route - permit does not guarantee route.

B. Identify locations requiring extra caution: bridges, RR crossings, intersections, work zones, etc., and develop a plan for safe passage.

A Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Meeting should be Held Prior to Movement.

A “Pre-Trip Overdimensional Load Check List” and “After Action Report” should be completed. (Forms are in the Appendix Section)

HIGHWAY OPERATIONS

Two-Lane One Car Escort

The lead escort vehicle shall be in operating mode - headlights on, amber lights flashing, and banner or sign installed properly. Under most conditions, the escort vehicle should be in front of the oversize load, with a separation of about 500' to 1/4 mile. Distance will change with speed and weather conditions. The escort vehicle should never be more than 1/2 mile ahead of the load. The escort vehicle operator should always drive on the right side of the highway unless trying to clear an obstacle. When there is only one escort, the escort vehicle operator may need to move from the lead to the rear in order to check the load and "coach" the load driver through curves, bridges, narrow streets, or any other obstacles.

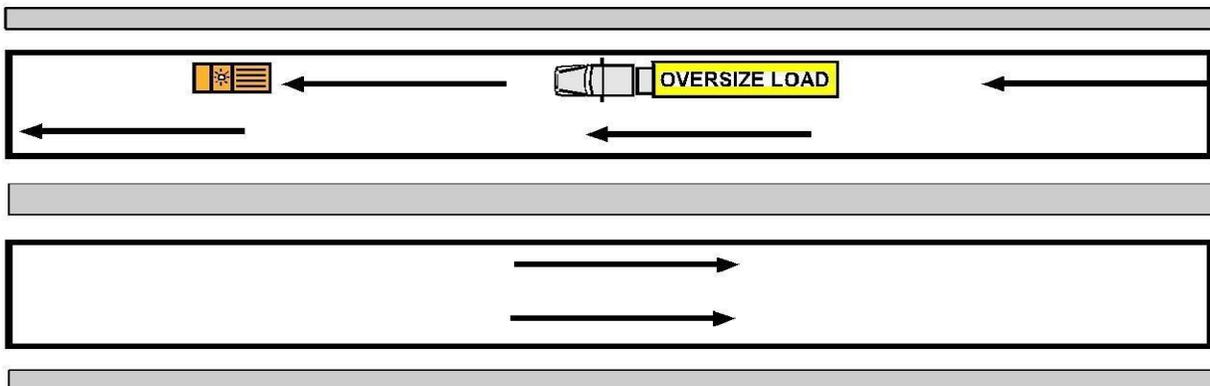


Fig. 1: Two-lane, one car escort

Two -Lane Two-Car Escort

When there are two cars escorting a load, the lead escort needs to follow the same guidelines as described above except that the vehicle no longer needs to move to the rear because an escort is already there.

The rear escort vehicle should be in operating mode as described above. The rear escort vehicle operator must keep an eye on the load and contact the load driver by radio if there are any problems. The rear escort vehicle needs to maintain a following distance of 3 to 4 seconds. This distance will increase if there are adverse weather conditions. The rear escort vehicle operator must also drive on the left hand side of right lane even with the left side of the load. The load driver will be driving with the right front fender even with the edge line (white line) unless there are obstacles on the shoulder. The rear escort driver must never get into the load driver's blind spot. It is the responsibility of the rear escort driver to tell the load driver and lead escort driver of any vehicles that will be passing.

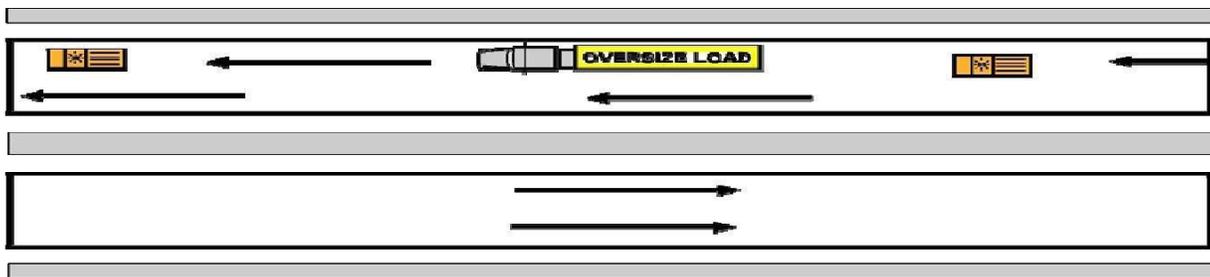


Fig. 2: Two-lane, two-car escort

Passing a Slower Vehicle

***Extreme caution must be taken when passing a slower vehicle
with an "Oversized Load."***

The lead escort vehicle operator must inform the permitted load driver and any other escort vehicle operators of the slow-moving vehicle. It is the responsibility of the lead escort driver to make sure that all of the following vehicles have enough clearance to get past the slow moving vehicle. The slow moving vehicle must not get caught between the load and an escort vehicle.

When the permitted driver confirms his/her intention to pass the slow -moving vehicle, the rear escort vehicle will move into the lane to the left to block following traffic from passing. This allows the load to move into the passing lane. Once the rear escort vehicle is in position, the operator will radio to the load driver which way to move and how many lanes. The rear escort operator will radio the load driver to move back into the right lane once the load has cleared the slower vehicle.

The permitted load driver should never move into another lane or back into the right lane until the rear escort operator has radioed that it is okay.

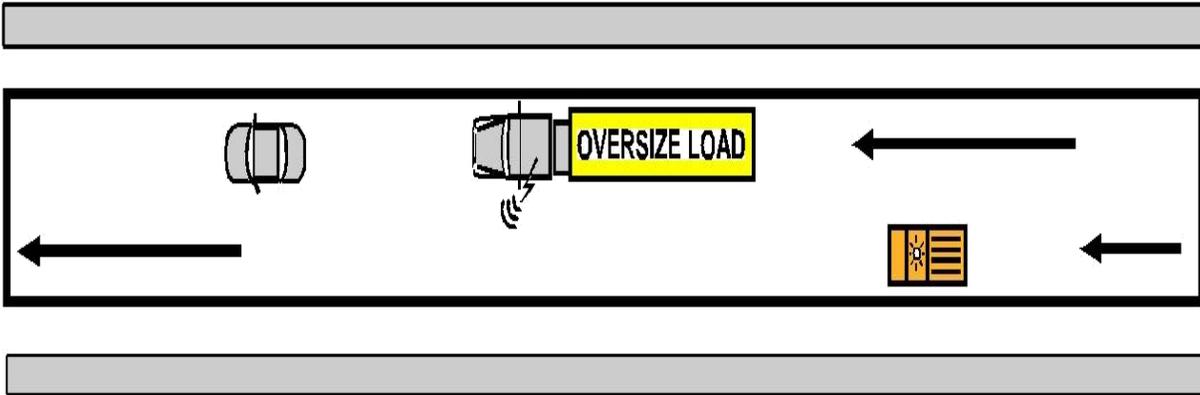
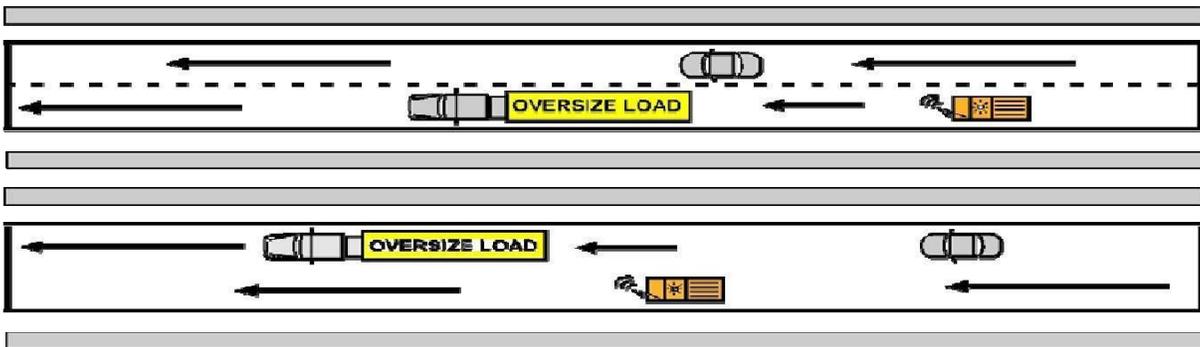


Fig. 3: Permitted driver radios escort vehicle operator(s) of intentions to pass slow-moving vehicle



Figs. 4 and 5: Rear escort vehicle operator radios to permitted driver - 1.
 1. "You are clear to move left one lane" to pass and then,
 2. "Move back right one lane."

Passing an Obstruction on Shoulder

If there is an obstruction on the shoulder that could impact the load, the lead escort vehicle operator must let the load driver and other escort vehicle operators know by radio how far off of the white line the obstruction is in feet. For example, "There is a car on the shoulder, two feet off of the edge line. Move one lane left." The lead escort vehicle should move to the left and stay there until the load has passed the obstruction. The rear vehicle escort operator must move one lane to the left as soon as the lead escort vehicle operator has radioed the message about the obstruction. Once the rear escort driver has blocked traffic from passing, the load driver must be notified by radio that it is clear to move to the left and pass the obstruction. When it is clear, the rear escort driver will notify the load driver to move back to the right lane.

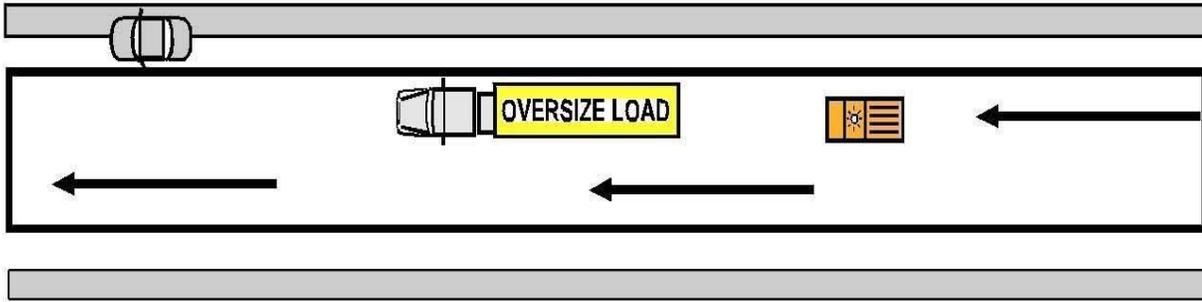


Fig. 6: Passing an obstruction on the shoulder - Lead vehicle has informed permitted load of hazard on shoulder. Rear escort vehicle checks for permitted vehicle to move left.

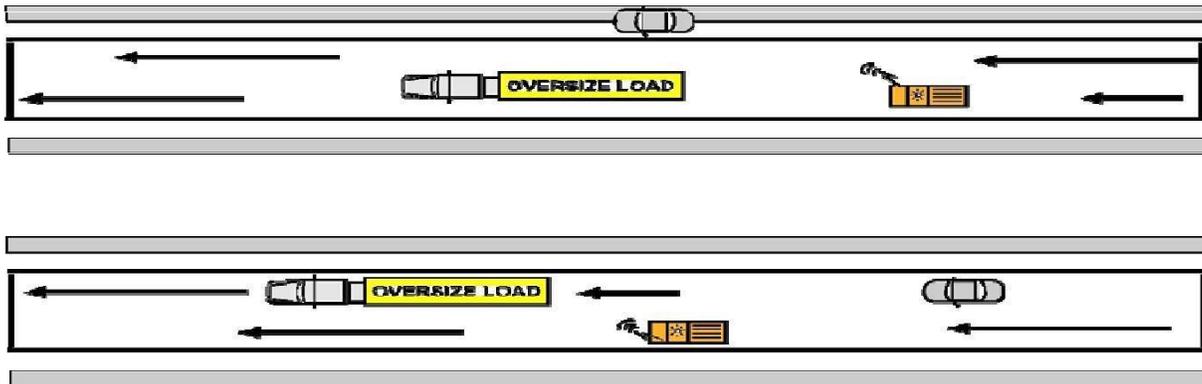


Fig. 7: Passing an obstruction on shoulder. Rear escort vehicle operator informs permitted driver when
 1. It is "clear to move one lane left" and
 2. It is "clear to move right, one lane, clear."

Two -Lane Bridge, Two-Way Traffic

When an "Oversized Load" must cross a two-lane bridge with two-lane traffic, traffic must be stopped to allow the load to pass through. The front and rear escort operators must control the traffic.

The lead escort vehicle operator must go on across the bridge to stop traffic. Wait until there is a break before attempting to stop traffic. Position your escort vehicle at an angle with your STOP sign displayed outside of the window. Do not hold the sign outside of your window with the vehicle moving. Be ready to move in case the traffic coming at you does not stop. Once you have stopped traffic, radio the permitted load driver and the rear escort vehicle operator that it is clear to cross after the last car passes. Be sure to include the color and make of the last car.

Useful Hints

- Inform other truckers with your CB radio that the bridge will be shut down.
- Get attention of a distant motorist by flashing high-beam headlights on and off.
- Use your emergency flashers with your sign and amber lights in order to signal motorists of the obstacle.

- If oncoming traffic is not going to stop, radio the load driver about the situation. You may have to wait several minutes before traffic will stop. Be patient!

The rear escort vehicle and permitted load may cross the bridge once the lead escort vehicle operator has said that it is clear and the last car has crossed the bridge. The rear escort vehicle will "coach" the load driver across the bridge. The rear escort vehicle operator will need to make sure that the load driver has enough clearance on both sides of the load and above if the load is overheight and the bridge is covered.

The rear escort vehicle operator should stop traffic behind the escort vehicle and the permitted load so that they do not hit the lead escort vehicle on the other side. If a vehicle goes around the rear escort vehicle the load driver and lead escort vehicle operator must be told immediately. The traffic that has been stopped behind the rear escort vehicle may proceed as soon as the load has cleared the bridge.

The oversized load should drive in the center of the road while crossing the bridge.

The oversized load should not move until the lead and rear escort vehicle operators have said it is clear.

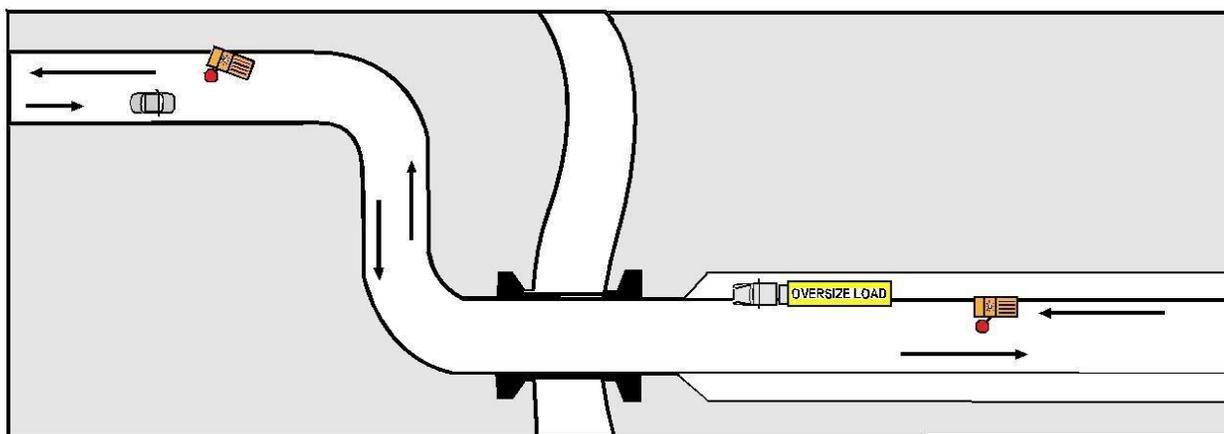


Fig. 8: Two-lane bridge, two-way traffic - Lead escort vehicle must cross bridge, proceed to open spot, and stop oncoming traffic. Permitted load waits until lead driver radios that it is safe to cross.

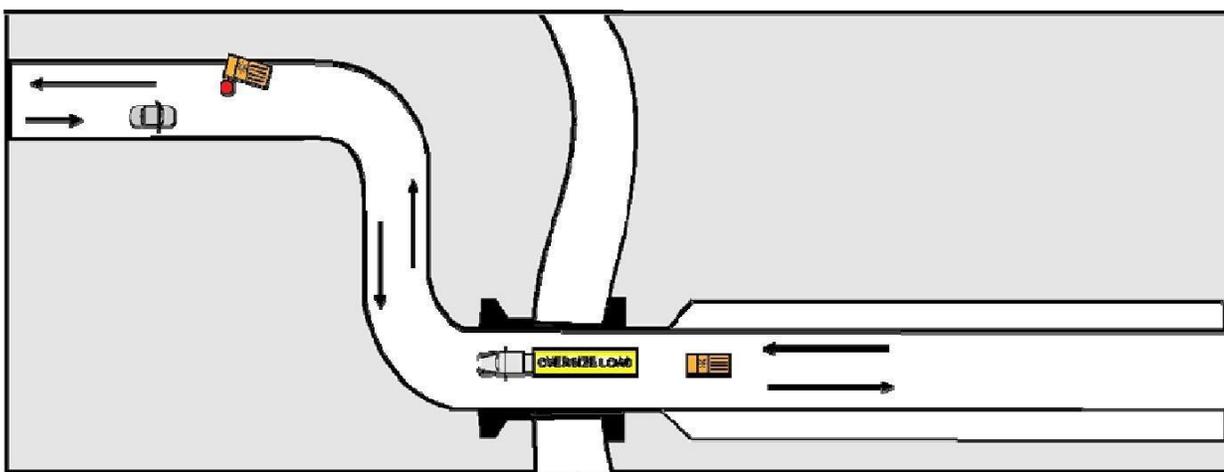


Fig. 9: Lead escort driver gives radio signal that they have traffic stopped and it is okay for permitted load to cross bridge.

Multi-Lane Bridge, One-Way Traffic

The lead escort vehicle operator will let the team know about the obstacle and advise

the load driver to move left.

The rear escort vehicle operator will move left to block traffic from passing the load.

The rear escort vehicle operator will radio the load driver to say it is all clear and to move left. The rear escort vehicle will move to the right and let the load driver know when he/she has cleared the bridge.

The load driver will drive in the center of the road once the lead and rear escort vehicles have radioed that it is clear and they are in position. The load driver will be "coached" by the rear escort vehicle operator. Once the load has cleared the bridge, move back into the right lane.

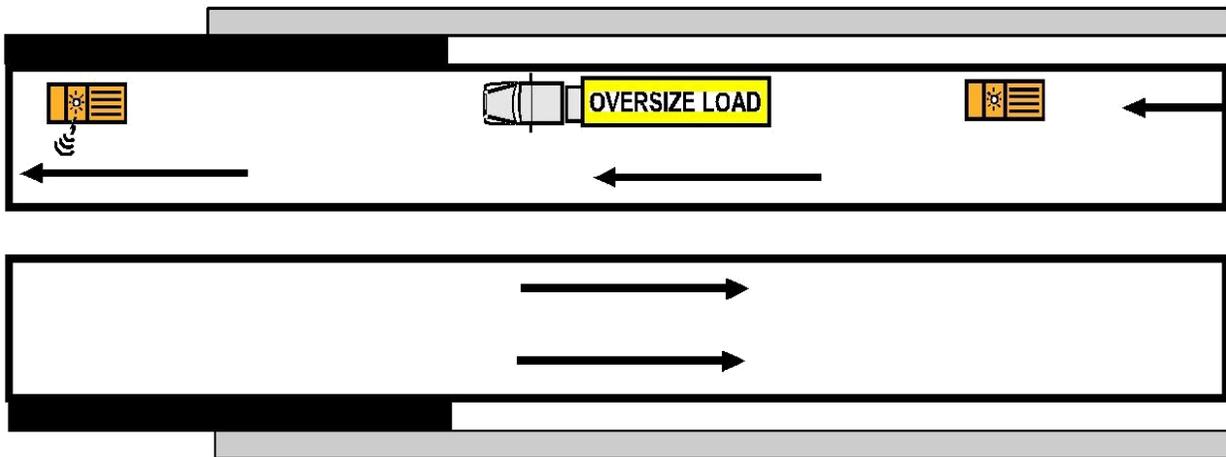


Fig. 10: Multi-lane bridge, one-way traffic - lead escort vehicle operator requests permitted load driver to "move left one lane."

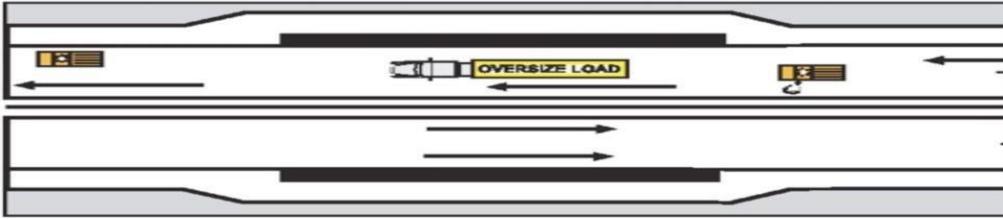


Fig. 11: Multi-lane bridge – Rear escort operator informs permitted load driver that it is “clear to move one lane left.” The escort vehicle operator moves over the center line to keep other vehicles from attempting to pass permitted load.

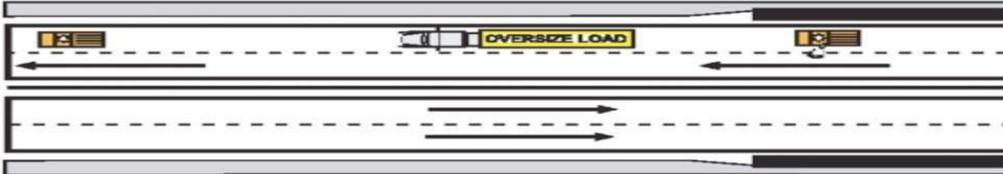


Fig. 12: Rear escort vehicle operator radios to permitted load driver that it is “clear to move one lane right” after bridge has been crossed.

Interstate Interchanges and Clover Leafs

The front and rear escort vehicle operators are responsible for guiding the “Oversize Load” through the interchange. The operators must keep the load from being damaged or crashing into merging traffic.

The lead escort driver must remain close to the load when entering an interchange. The lead escort vehicle must enter at a low speed and be able to warn traffic that an “Oversize Load” will be merging. The lead escort vehicle needs to be able to enter the highway at a regular speed and continue to use caution.

The rear escort vehicle operator must monitor the swing of the load and make sure that it is not going to hit any roadside obstructions. The rear escort vehicle operator must relay any important information about this to the load driver. The rear escort vehicle should enter the highway first and radio the lead escort driver and load driver when it is clear to move one lane left. While merging onto the freeway, the rear escort driver should keep other motorists from getting between it and the permitted load.

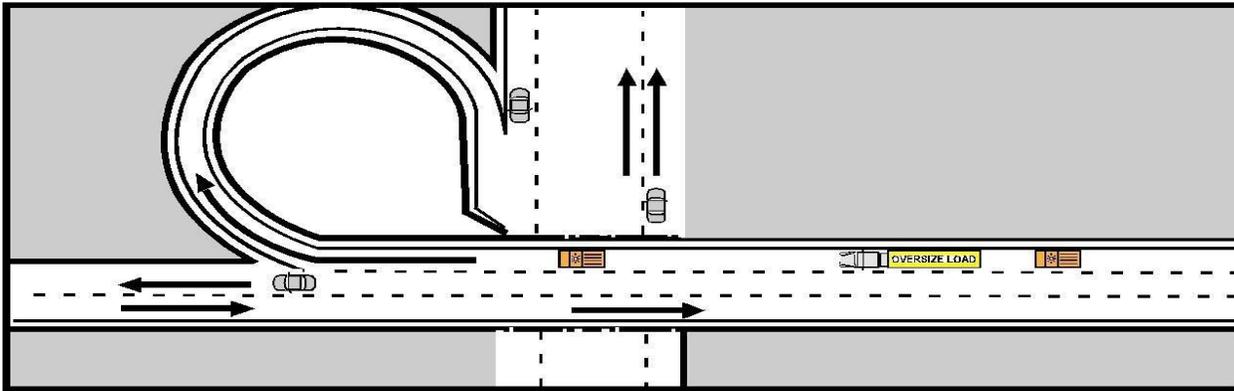


Fig. 13: Interchanges and cloverleaves – Stay close to the permitted load.

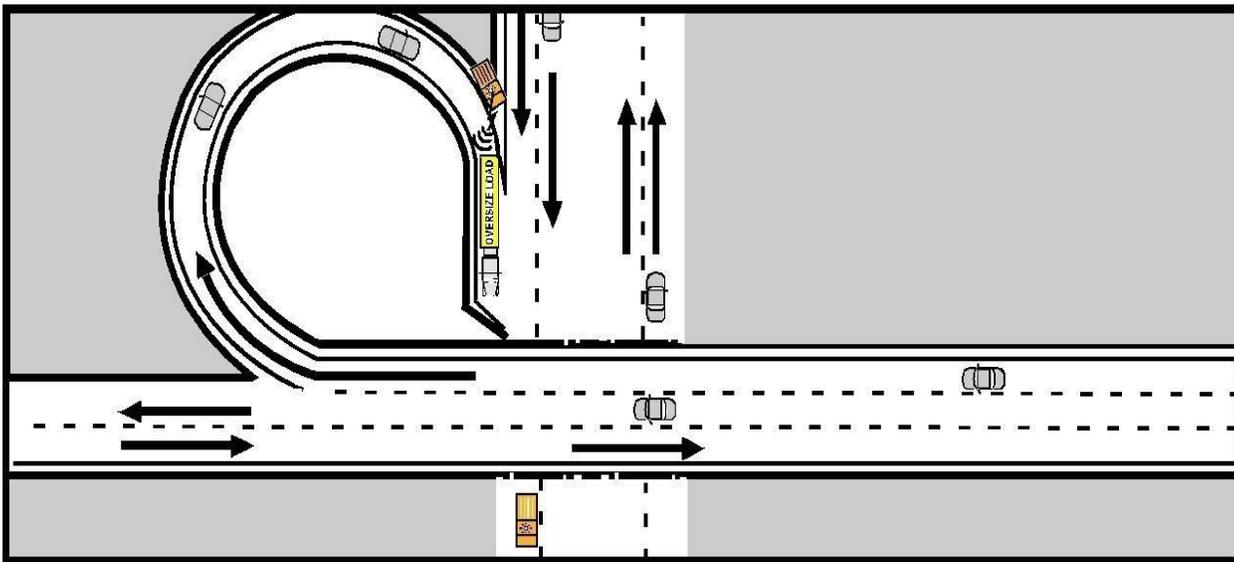


Fig. 14: Rear escort vehicle monitors clearances.

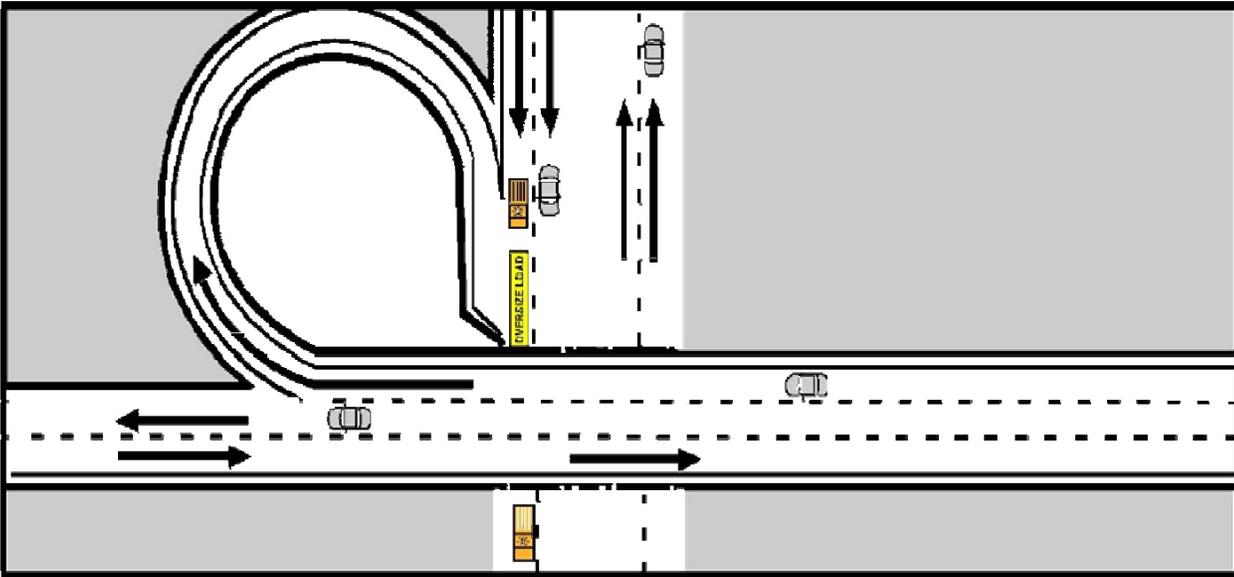


Fig. 15: Rear escort vehicle talks the permitted load driver through the traffic merger.

Right Turns at Intersection

The escort vehicle operators will have to protect the motorists while this maneuver is being made. The permitted load will need to swing left to make the turn. Watch for motorists who will move to the inside lane to try and get by the load. If this occurs, the load must be stopped until the motorist has passed.

The lead escort vehicle will make the turn so that motorists can be warned that the load is going to take up part of their lane. The lead escort vehicle operator will watch the right inside to make sure the load does not hit any obstructions. Once the front of the load meets up with the lead escort vehicle, normal leading distance should resume.

The rear escort vehicle must keep motorists from getting between the load and the curb or other roadside obstacle. Notify the load driver to stop the load immediately if a motorist gets between the load and the escort vehicle. Allow the motorist to pass before resuming your move through the intersection. The rear escort vehicle operator must watch the swing of the load to make sure it does not hit anything.

The permitted load drivers should watch for motorists trying to get between the load and an escort vehicle or the curb too. Make sure the right turn signal is on.

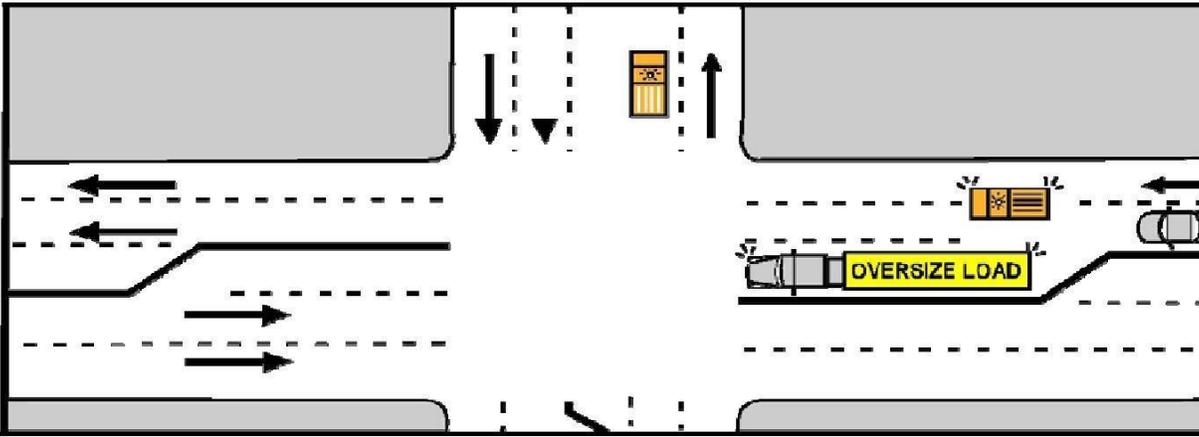


Fig. 16: Right turn at intersection – Lead escort vehicle proceeds through intersection to warn motorists of wide turns.

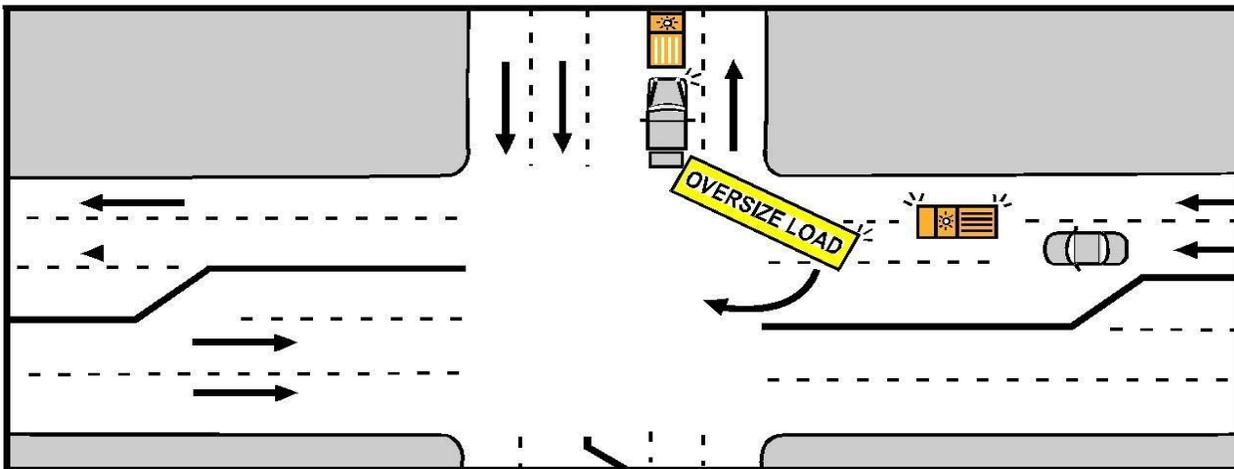


Fig. 17: Permitted vehicle swings wide as rear escort vehicle monitors.

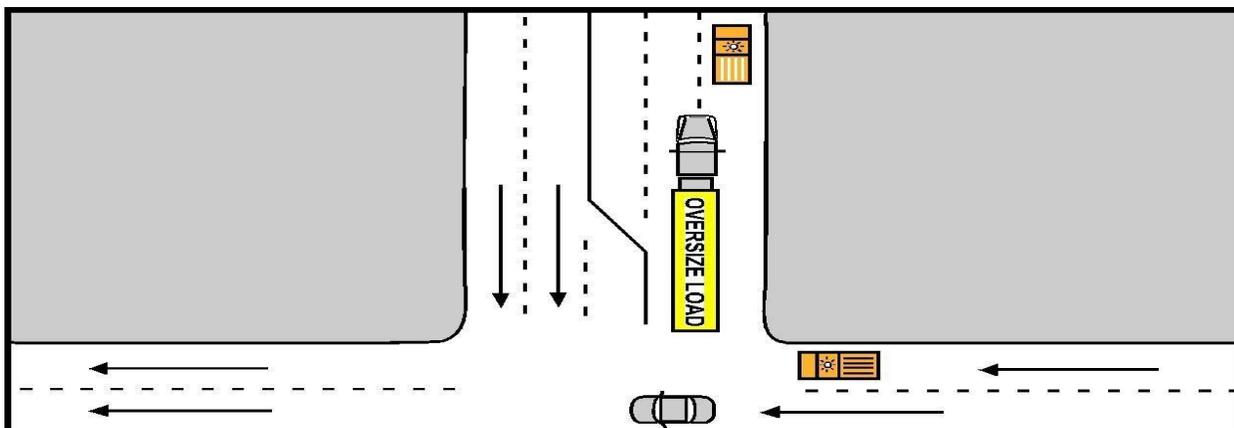


Fig. 18: Lead escort vehicle moves to the right lane as “oversize” load clears intersection.

Driving Thru Town and City Streets

There are many hazards that will be faced when escorting a permitted load through

a town or city. If the load is overheight, low utility wires, lights, and signs that hang over the streets are all obstacles that the load driver and escort vehicle operator should be aware of at all times. Other potential hazards while driving through a town or city include pedestrians, car doors being opened from parked cars on the street, and motorists trying to get around you at an intersection or another part of the road.

Extreme caution must be taken when making certain movements on a town or city street. The public is not aware of the drastic movements that have to be made in order to avoid some of the hazards. For example, you may have to drive on the wrong side of the road in order to get around traffic lights, signs, and other overhead obstacles.

The lead escort vehicle must look out for overhead hazards when escorting an overheight load. The lead escort vehicle operator should run the height pole at the same place where the peak of the load will be. Sometimes the load may split between obstacles such as traffic lights without hitting them. Other times, the load will have to drive around an obstacle. If this is the case, the lead escort vehicle operator must stop oncoming traffic far enough from the signal so that the load can clear all of the lights. Try to remain with the load. If the lead escort vehicle

makes it through an intersection and the load does not, then the lead escort vehicle should pull safely off to the right and wait until the signal changes. Do not leave the load so far behind that it is unsure if it can pass through intersections cleanly.

The rear escort vehicle operator is responsible for many things while escorting through town and city streets. The rear escort vehicle operator must watch the tail swing, manage lanes, control the traffic behind the permitted load, and watch the overhead obstacles. If the load must go around signal lights or dodge a wire, and it involves getting onto the wrong side of the road, then the rear escort vehicle operator must hold traffic until the load is back in the proper lane of travel. Do not let traffic pass while the load is moving under obstacles because something could fall and a pedestrian or motorist could get hurt.

The rear escort vehicle operator must be in a position where the wires and traffic signals can be seen. You must notify the load driver to stop immediately if the load is about to hit something. The rear corner of the load on the side that has the peak is usually the best place to be. The rear escort vehicle operator needs to see the traffic signal in order to tell the load driver which way to move and if the light changes. You need to obey the traffic signals. If the rear escort vehicle operator has to stop at the intersection, the operator must tell the load driver and the lead vehicle operator by radio. It is never appropriate for the pilot/escort driver to attempt to control traffic through an intersection controlled by traffic lights. The rear vehicle operator must also keep an eye on the traffic behind the load. If there is a long line, the rear operator must let the load driver and lead operator know. A decision must be made on the best way to allow the traffic to pass. If traffic is backed up too much, a motorist may get impatient and make a dangerous move.

The oversize load should drive on the lane divider line when driving on town or city streets. Motorists will not be able to pass if you are taking up both lanes and you can lessen the chances of hitting parked cars. It is appropriate to hug the centerline to discourage passing when a hazard exists. An overheight load driver should watch the height pole on the lead escort vehicle to see if it hits any of the overhead obstacles. The load driver should contact the lead escort vehicle if any motorists come between the load and the lead escort. If the rear escort vehicle gets stopped at an intersection, the load driver should slow down and wait for the rear escort to get back into position so that the back of the load is protected.

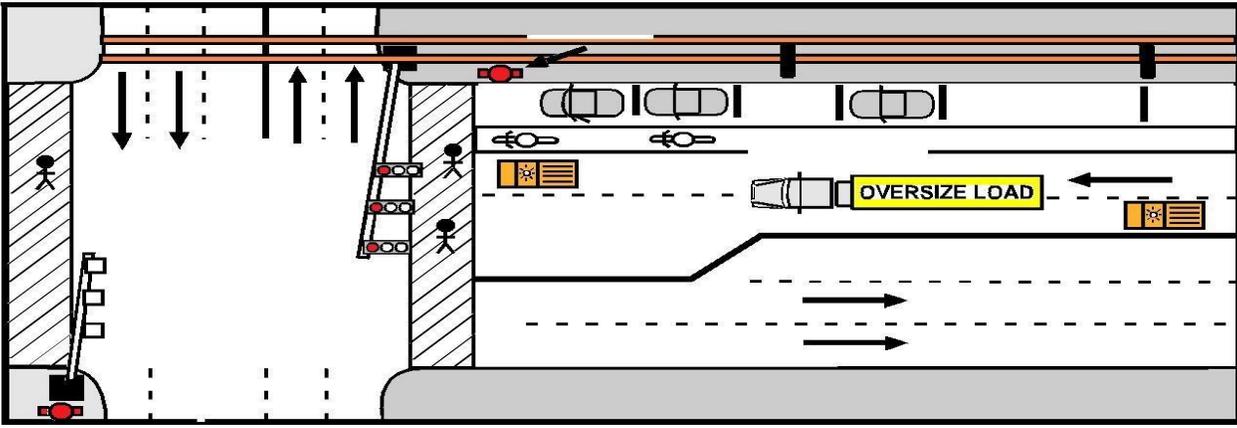


Fig. 19: Driving through town and city streets presents many more hazards than rural areas.

Best Practices:

The best place to get information about best practices for pilot/escort drivers is the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

CHAPTER 4

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

- Equipment
- Flagging
- Emergency Operations

CHAPTER 4

BREAKDOWNS AND EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

WHAT TO DO

If you or one of your crew is involved in an accident and not seriously hurt, you need to act to prevent further damage or injury. The basic steps to be taken at any accident are:

- Protect the area.
- Notify authorities.
- Care for the injured.

In an emergency, the *first* thing to do is warn approaching traffic. The first thing to do at an accident scene is to keep another accident from happening at the same spot. To protect the accident area:

- If your vehicle is involved in the accident, try to get it to the side of the road.
- This will help to prevent another accident and allow traffic to move.
- If you are stopping to help, park away from the accident. The area immediately around the accident will be needed for emergency vehicles.
- Put on your flashers.
- Set out reflective triangles to warn other traffic. Make sure they can be seen
- by other drivers in time for them to avoid the accident.

Put out a call on your CB or cell phone for help. If time is critical, wait until the accident scene has been properly protected, then phone or get somebody to phone police or 911. Try to determine exactly where you are (mile markers, exits, landmarks, etc.) so you can give the location correctly.

If a qualified person is at the accident and helping the injured, stay out of the way unless asked to assist. Otherwise, do the best you can to help any injured parties. Here are some simple steps to follow in giving assistance:

- Don't move a seriously injured person unless the danger of fire or passing traffic makes it necessary.
- Stop heavy bleeding by applying direct pressure to the wound.
- Keep the injured person warm.

REPORTING AN ACCIDENT

Report to police authorities as quickly as possible any accident where a person has been killed or injured or a vehicle or other property has been damaged. Report immediately any damage to stop signs, warning signs, traffic signals, etc.

When all involved parties are able, exchange information:

- Get name and address of other driver or drivers
- Get name, address, policy number, and insurance company of the other owners/drivers. Always carry your own insurance information when driving
- Make a reasonable effort to find the owner or caretaker of an unattended vehicle or other unattended property, which may be damaged. If you cannot find the owner or caretaker, you must leave a note that can be easily found which includes your name, address, driver's license number, license plate number, date/time of the accident, and estimated property damage

- In addition report the accident in writing within 24 hours to the oversize permit unit, Georgia State Patrol, or police department of municipality involved

FLAGGING

During the movement of an over-dimensional load/vehicle, pilot/escort driver, in the performance of the flagging duties required by these rules, may control and direct traffic to stop, slow or proceed in any situation(s) where it is deemed necessary to protect the motoring public from the hazards associated with the movement of the over-dimensional load/vehicle. The pilot/escort driver, acting as a flagger, may aid the over-dimensional load/vehicle in the safe movement along the highway designated on Over-dimensional load permit and shall:

1. Assume the proper flagging position outside the pilot/escort vehicle, and as a minimum standard, have in use the necessary safety equipment as defined in the Oversize/Overweight Load Escort Vehicle Operator Certification Program student handbook.
2. Use “Stop/Slow” paddles or a 24” red square flag to indicate emergency situations, and other equipment as defined in the Oversize/Overweight Load Escort Vehicle Operator Certification Program student handbook.
3. Comply with the flagging procedures and requirements as set forth in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and the Oversize/Overweight Load Escort Vehicle Operator Certification Program student handbook.

An escort driver must periodically stop or control traffic in order to permit loads to enter the highway, go through narrow sections, change tires, etc.

Flagging traffic is a NORMAL part of operations - proper equipment - and procedures must be used.

Flaggers must become knowledgeable and experienced in traffic control.

Workers in the area are dependent on the flagger to guide traffic safely through the problem area. For flagging to be effective, it must:

- Fulfill a need
- Command attention and respect
- Convey a clear, simple message
- Give adequate time for response

Along with the primary responsibility to provide safety for people in the work zone, the flagger is also the person who has the most contact with the public.

Flaggers are needed to provide clear, safe directions through the problem area, as well as comment on conditions ahead.

Therefore, a good flagger is alert, courteous, and patient.

Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

for Streets and Highways

2009 Edition



The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) is the federal standard used for flagging. The book outlines proper flagging methods
Basic Functions of Flagging

- To protect the lives of workers.
- To guide traffic safely.
- To avoid unreasonable delays to motorists.
- To answer questions courteously and intelligently.

Flagging Equipment

The STOP/SLOW paddle is your *preferred* traffic control device. The sign shall be at least 18” x 18” with 6” high letters, octagonal, and should be mounted on a rigid handle. For portability, a 1’ handle may be used, but if mounted on a long staff a 7’ mounting height is recommended.

To make a paddle more visible, a 24” x 24” sign size or high-intensity flashing STOP/SLOW paddle may be used.

You shall wear an approved safety vest, shirt, or coat while flagging. Approved colors are orange, yellow, yellow-green, or fluorescent versions of these colors. A brightly colored hat will also make you more visible.

Appearance

To assure motorist respect, your appearance is critical.

- All flaggers should maintain a clean, neat appearance.
- Drivers should report to work wearing proper attire.
- Transistor radios, walkmans, and books are not permitted.
- Safe and appropriate footwear should be worn.

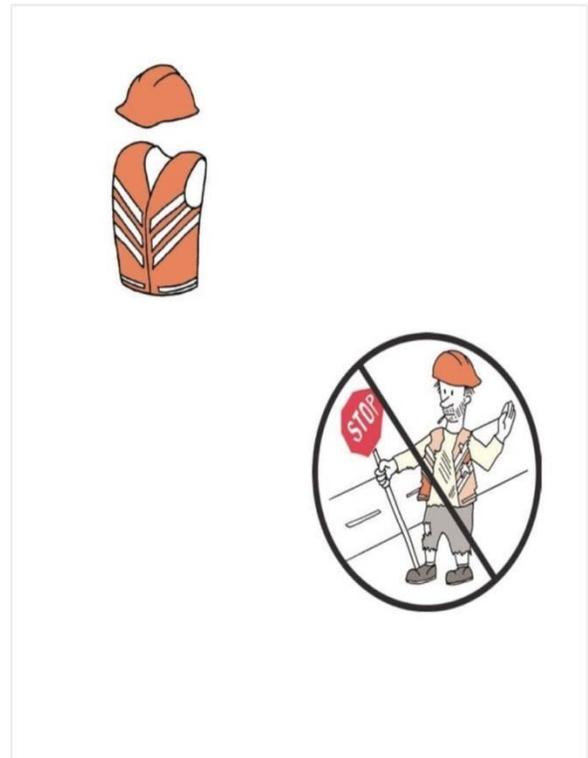
Flaggers in the daytime must wear a protective orange helmet and vest or jacket. Nighttime flagging requires retro-reflective material visible from 1000 feet. The primary function of traffic control procedures is to move vehicles and pedestrians safely around temporary traffic communication at all times by using predetermined signals when visible to each other, twoway radios, or a pilot car radio.

Signals Stopping Traffic

Stand in a safe position on the shoulder facing traffic. NEVER stand in the path of oncoming traffic and never turn your back on traffic.

Flagging Procedures

How to use the STOP/SLOW paddle to stop traffic



The flagger faces traffic and extends the “STOP” paddle in a stationary position extended horizontally away from the body. The free arm is extended at shoulder level with palm facing approaching traffic.



To let stopped traffic proceed -

The flagger faces traffic with the “SLOW” paddle held in a stationary position with the arm extended horizontally away from the body. The flagger motions with the free hand for traffic to proceed.



To alert or slow traffic -

The flagger faces traffic with the “SLOW” sign paddle held horizontally away from the body. The flagger motions up and down with the free hand, palm down, indicating the vehicle should slow down.



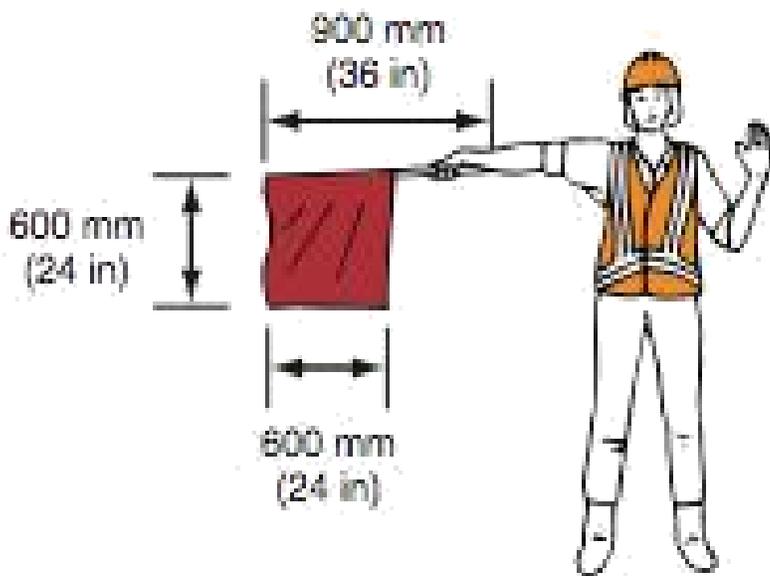
How to signal with a flag

24 x 24 inch Flag

In emergencies, a flag may be used. Flag should be a minimum of 24 inches square, red in color, and securely fastened to a 3-foot staff. The free edge should be weighted so the flag will hang vertically, even in heavy wind.

To stop traffic –

Flagger faces traffic, extending flagstaff horizontally across the traffic lane, holding the flag stationary. Hold free arm at shoulder level, with palm facing approaching traffic.



To let stopped traffic proceed -

The flagger stands parallel to traffic movement with the flag and arm lowered within clear view of motorists. Flagger uses the free hand (NOT the flag) to motion for traffic to proceed.



To alert or slow traffic -

The flagger faces traffic while moving the flag in a slow sweeping motion of the extended arm from shoulder level to straight down, without raising arm above shoulder level. Flagger keeps the free hand down.



Flagging Best Practices

Keep motorists informed as much as possible without leaving your position. Don't lean on vehicle to answer questions and never engage in small talk. Be polite and courteous, yet brief and factual.

Flagging Positions

Two - Flagger –

This operation uses a flagger on each end of the stretch of road needing traffic control. This is the most common method of flagging traffic. One flagger should be designated as the lead flagger for coordinating the operation.

To be effective, flaggers must always be able to communicate with one another.

Communication can be maintained by:

- Visual contact - effective when flaggers are close enough so they can read each other's STOP/SLOW paddles and see each other's "all clear" signals.
- Two-way radio – the best means of communication even when there is visual contact.
- Flag carrying – the driver of the last vehicle passes a flag/token from one flagger to another.

Single Flagger –

When only a short, straight stretch of a low-volume road needs to be controlled, a single flagger may sometimes be used. The flagger must be visible to both directions of traffic. Standing on the shoulder opposite to the disabled OS/OW load, the flagger directs traffic with the STOP/SLOW paddle.

Flagging stations must be located far enough ahead of the problem area so that approaching traffic has sufficient distance to stop before entering the problem area. The distance people need to stop is related approach speeds and condition of the roadway. These distances may be increased for down slopes. Flagger should stand either on the shoulder adjacent to the traffic being controlled or in the barricaded lane. Sometimes a position may have to be taken on the shoulder opposite the barricaded section to operate effectively. Flaggers

should stand in the lane being used by moving traffic only after traffic has stopped. Flaggers must to be visible to other traffic in order to communicate with drivers.

The position of the flagging station is affected by:

- Curves, hills, and other features of the terrain
- Wet or dry pavement
- Speed of approaching traffic

If traffic is moving at 70 mph, the flagging station should be 600 feet ahead of the problem area.

Flaggers should stand alone to reduce the chance of being distracted. Other workers should not be permitted to congregate near the flagging station. Because of curves, hills and other roadway conditions, flaggers must be clearly visible to approaching traffic at all times.

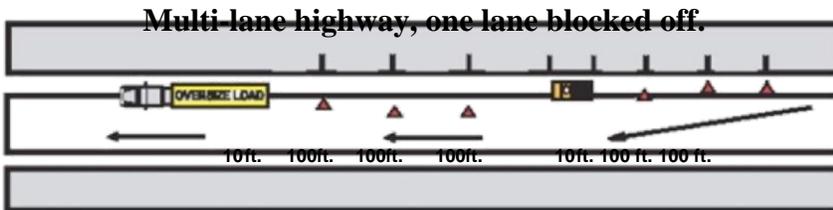
The flagger must be stationed far enough ahead of the trouble area to warn workers of approaching danger.

Concentrate on the job

Be visible

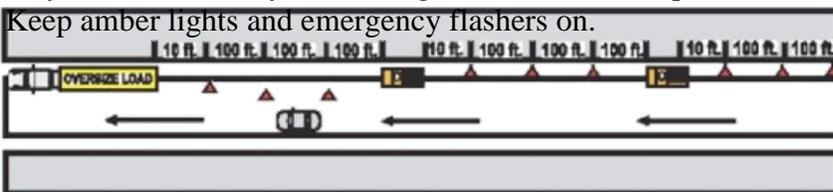
Be alert

- Call 911 and GDOT or local municipality (operator of road) for assistance.
- Use as much channelization (cones, triangles, etc.) as possible.
- When flagging traffic, stand on shoulder of road, not in lane of traffic.
- Have escape route planned.
- Move non-essential persons away from traffic as far as possible.



One Escort Vehicle

- Multi-lane roads usually mean higher speeds and traffic volumes; treat this as a TEMPORARY setup
- Call GDOT or municipality operating the roadway ASAP
- DO NOT attempt to repair or tow vehicles until more help (GDOT or Georgia State Patrol) arrives.
- Stay clear of roadway after triangles have been set up.
- Keep amber lights and emergency flashers on.

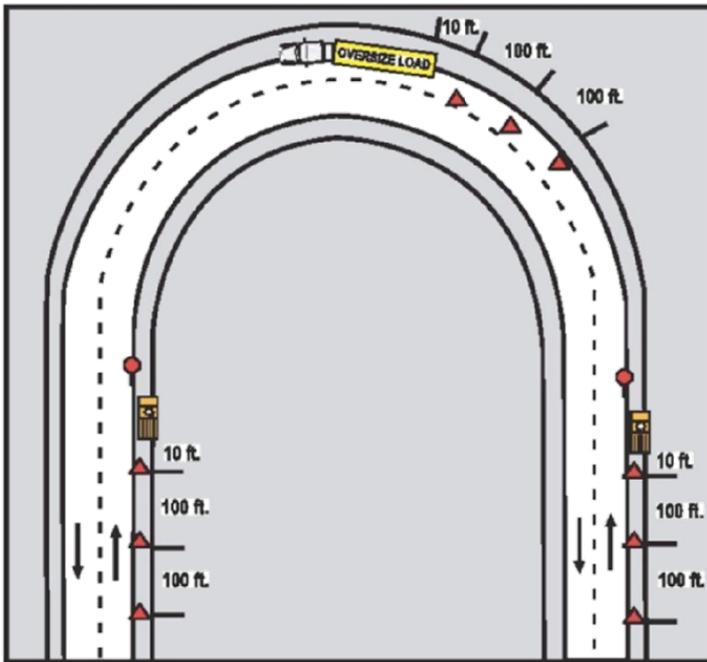


Two Escort Vehicles

- Multi-lane roads usually mean higher speeds and traffic volumes; treat this as a TEMPORARY setup
- Call GDOT or municipality operating the roadway ASAP

- DO NOT attempt to repair or tow vehicles until more help (GDOT or Georgia State Patrol) arrives.
- Stay clear of roadway after triangles have been set up.
- Keep amber lights and emergency flashers on.

**Disabled Vehicle on a Curve, Hill, or Obstructed-View
Section of Road
(Two-flagger operation)**



Flaggers should be able to communicate with radios; if radios do not work, a baton, flag, or other object may be carried by the last car released to proceed past the disabled vehicle

EMERGENCY SITUATION RESPONSE

If the permitted load or escort vehicle have to stop on the highway because of an emergency and traffic is not flowing properly, the vehicle warning signals must be turned on immediately until warning devices have been properly placed. Warning devices must be in place within ten minutes after the load and escort vehicles have stopped. The proper way to display the warning devices are explained in the Federal Motor Carrier (FMC) Safety Regulations handbook. Excerpts from paragraphs section 392.20 through 393.95 below:

FMC Subpart C – Stopped Commercial Vehicles

Sec.392.20 Unattended commercial motor vehicles: precautions.

No commercial motor vehicle shall be left unattended until the parking brake has been securely set and all reasonable precautions have been taken to prevent the movement of such commercial vehicle

Sec. 392.22 Emergency signals; stopped commercial motor vehicles.

- (a) Hazard warning signal flashers. Whenever a commercial motor vehicle is stopped upon the traveled portion of a highway or the shoulder of a highway for any cause other than necessary traffic stops, the driver of the stopped commercial motor vehicle shall immediately activate the vehicular hazard warning signal flashers and continue the flashing until the driver places the warning devices required by paragraph (b) of this section. The flashing signals shall be used during the time the warning devices are picked up for storage before movement of the commercial motor vehicle. The flashing lights may be used at other times while a commercial motor vehicle is stopped in addition to, but not in lieu of, the warning devices required by paragraph (b) of this section.
- (b) Placement of warning devices—
- (1) General rule. Except as provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, whenever a commercial motor vehicle is stopped upon the traveled portion or the shoulder of a highway for any cause other than necessary traffic stops, the driver shall, as soon as possible, but in any event within 10 minutes, place the warning devices required by Sec. 393.95 of this subchapter, in the following manner:
- (i) One on the traffic side of and 4 paces (approximately 3 meters or 10 feet) from the stopped commercial motor vehicle in the direction of approaching traffic;
 - (ii) One at 40 paces (approximately 30 meters or 100 feet) from the stopped commercial motor vehicle in the center of the traffic lane or shoulder occupied by the commercial motor vehicle and in the direction of approaching traffic;
 - (iii) One at 40 paces (approximately 30 meters or 100 feet) from the stopped commercial motor vehicle in the center of the traffic lane or shoulder occupied by the commercial motor vehicle and in the direction away from approaching traffic.

(2) Special rules—

- (i) Fuses and liquid-burning flares. The driver of a commercial motor vehicle equipped with only fuses or liquid-burning flares shall place a lighted fuse or liquid-burning flare at each of the locations specified in paragraph (b)(1) of this section. There shall be at least one lighted fuse or liquid-burning flare at each of the prescribed locations, as long as the commercial motor vehicle is stopped. Before the stopped commercial motor vehicle is moved, the driver shall extinguish and remove each fuse or liquid-burning flare.
- (ii) Daylight hours. Except as provided in paragraph (b)(2)(iii) of this section, during the period lighted lamps are not required, three bidirectional reflective triangles, or three lighted fuses or liquid-burning flares shall be placed as specified in paragraph (b)(1) of this section within a time of 10 minutes. In the event the driver elects to use only fuses or liquid-burning flares in lieu of bidirectional reflective triangles or red flags, the driver must ensure that at least one fuse or liquid-burning flare remains lighted at each of the prescribed locations as long as the commercial motor vehicle is stopped or parked.
- (iii) Business or residential districts. The placement of warning devices is not required within the business or residential district of a municipality, except during the time lighted lamps are required and when street or highway lighting is insufficient to make a commercial motor vehicle clearly discernable at a distance of 500 feet to persons on the highway.
- (iv) Hills, curves, and obstructions. If a commercial motor vehicle is stopped within 500 feet of a curve, crest of a hill, or other obstruction to view, the driver shall place the warning signal required by paragraph (b)(1) of this section in the direction of the obstruction to view a distance of 100 feet to 500 feet from the stopped commercial motor vehicle so as to afford ample warning to other users of the highway.
- (v) Divided or one-way roads. If a commercial motor vehicle is stopped upon the traveled portion or the shoulder of a divided or one-way highway, the driver shall place the warning devices required by paragraph (b)(1) of this section, one warning device at a distance of 200 feet and one warning device at a distance of 100 feet in a direction toward approaching traffic in the center of the lane or shoulder occupied by the commercial motor vehicle. He/she shall place one warning device at the traffic side of the commercial motor vehicle within 10 feet of the rear of the commercial motor vehicle.
- (vi) Leaking, flammable material. If gasoline or any other flammable liquid, or combustible liquid or gas seeps or leaks from a fuel container or a commercial motor vehicle stopped upon a highway, no emergency warning signal producing a flame shall be lighted or placed except at such a distance from any such liquid or gas as will assure the prevention of a fire or explosion.

Sec. 392.24 Emergency signals; flame-producing.

No driver shall attach or permit any person to attach a lighted fuse or other flame-producing emergency signal to any part of a commercial motor vehicle.

Sec. 392.25 Flame-producing devices.

No driver shall use or permit the use of any flame-producing emergency signal for protecting any commercial motor vehicle transporting Division 1.1,

Division 1.2, or Division 1.3 explosives; any cargo tank motor vehicle used for the transportation of any Class 3 or Division 2.1, whether loaded or empty; or any commercial motor vehicle using compressed gas as a motor fuel. In lieu thereof, emergency reflective triangles, red electric lanterns, or red emergency reflectors shall be used, the placement of which shall be in the same manner as prescribed in Sec. 392.22(b).

Sec. 393.95 Emergency equipment

Three bidirectional emergency reflective triangles that conform to the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 125, Sec. 571.125 of this title; or at least 6 fusees or 3 liquid-burning flares. The vehicle must have as many additional fusees or liquid-burning flares as are necessary to satisfy the requirements of Sec. 392.22.

- (3) Supplemental warning devices. Other warning devices may be used in addition to, but not in lieu of, the required warning devices, provided those warning devices do not decrease the effectiveness of the required warning devices.
- (g) Restrictions on the use of flame-producing devices. Liquid-burning flares, fusees, oil lanterns, or any signal produced by a flame shall not be carried on any commercial motor vehicle transporting Division 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 (explosives) hazardous materials; any cargo tank motor vehicle used for the transportation of Division 2.1 (flammable gas) or Class 3 (flammable liquid) hazardous materials whether loaded or empty; or any commercial motor vehicle using compressed gas as a motor fuel

CHAPTER 5

ESCORT VEHICLE OPERATION

□ Defensive Driving

CHAPTER 5

ESCORT VEHICLE OPERATION AND DEFENSIVE DRIVING

INTRODUCTION TO SAFE AND DEFENSIVE DRIVING

Escort vehicle operation involves many risks. It is managing those many risks that is so important. The definition of risk is the chance of any injury, damage or loss to property. These are the factors most frequently associated with vehicle escort operations and incidents.

Driver Inattention and Fatigue

Cell phones, radio, talking to passenger

Speeding

Unsafe and imprudent speed for safe driving conditions

Disregard of Traffic Control Devices and Signs

Inattention to traffic control devices and signs

Driving while impaired

Impaired driving, prescription and unlawful drugs, alcohol

Unsafe vehicle movements and failure to yield right of way

Inattention to other vehicles, backing, unsafe start and yield right of way

Vehicle Safety Violations

Equipment defects, safety restraints, tire traction, brakes and steering

FATIGUE

Fatigue is:

A major killer on our roads

A contributing factor in 18% of fatal crashes.

In rural areas, 30% of crashes involve at least one fatigued driver.

Fatigue produces almost as many accidents and fatalities as drinking and driving.

Why does fatigue cause accidents?

Reduced reaction time, attention span, information processing ability.

Temporary Relief From Fatigue

There is no “stay awake” strategy proven to consistently increase alertness to a safe level.

Recognize and acknowledge when you are too tired to drive.

The only sure way to combat fatigue is plan ahead: Get a good night’s sleep.

Remain alert at all times

It is difficult to remain alert after driving for long hours or going without sleep for a long time. Fatigue is a major contributor to accidents because performance is greatly reduced when a driver is fatigued.

CELL PHONES :

Cell Phones and Driving

Statistics are mounting that suggest distractions from cell phones increase accidents.

And, the evidence is the act of participation in a conversation is as dangerous as the actual use of the phone (dialing, for example). The National Safety Council reports when subjects were conversing on cell phones, many were so distracted they went unaware of traffic signals. Results of these studies were unaffected by whether a hand-held or hands-free device was used. Avoid using a cell phone while driving

DRIVING DISTRACTIONS :

Cell phones-Talking or texting

Prescription Medication

Fatigue

Drinking alcohol

Unlawful drugs

MANAGING RISK AND SAFE VEHICLE ESCORT OPERATIONS

Risk is always present during any vehicle escort operation driving task. **Perceived Risk** differs from actual risk. **Risk** can be shared by more than one vehicle escort operator. **Risk** can be altered by one or more vehicle escort operators.

Factors to Reduce Risk During Vehicle Escort Operations

- Risk can be reduced by defensive and safe driving operations at all times.
- Risk can be reduced by making sure all escort vehicles are properly maintained.
- Risk can be reduced by all vehicle escort operators being properly trained.
- Risk can be reduced by all vehicle escort operators communicating with each other and the load transporters, law enforcement personnel, and the Georgia Department of Transportation's Oversize/Overweight Permit Unit.

Seeing/Scanning & Safe Escort Vehicle Operations

- Establishing a safe and visual lead between other vehicles while driving.
- Seeing and checking from behind the vehicle using a proper sequence of mirror and head checks.
- Checking to the sides, looking in both directions, looking both ways at intersections to be absolutely sure the path is clear of vehicles, trains and pedestrians.
- Compensating for driver, vehicle and environmental factors to improve seeing while operating a motor vehicle.

COMMUNICATION AND TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

- A. Road signs and traffic control devices communicate to all vehicle operators of the hazards and warnings of roadways and highways.
- B. Other vehicle operators communicate to each other to warn of roadway emergencies and roadway hazards.
- C. Aggressive driving by other vehicle operators communicate the risk of their aggressive driving behavior to you warning you.
- D. Law enforcement personnel and state laws communicate to us about the risk of not operating a motor vehicle safely.

ADJUSTING SPEED AND DEFENSIVE DRIVING

- A. **Accidents and speed** - operators have to adjust their speed well below the posted speed limit in many cases to drive safely.
- B. **Visibility and speed** - what you can see and what you can't see should influence your choice of speed.
- C. **Traffic and speed** - operators should be aware of traffic conditions that could influence safe speed for driving.

- D. **Environmental conditions and speed** - roadway and pavement surfaces and tire traction limitations should determine the speed of the operator. Speed limit means the maximum speed under ideal conditions.

MARGIN OF SAFETY AND DEFENSIVE DRIVING

- A. **Following distance** - the vehicle escort operator can best control the space in front of their vehicle by using safe and prudent following distances.
- B. **Blind spots and hazards on the sides** - correct lane positioning of the escort vehicle enables you to minimize dangers from the left or right side.
- C. **Safety and tailgating** - defensive driving and safe following distances will reduce tailgating accidents and hazards.
- D. **Safe passing** - and determining a margin of safety distance between other vehicles and objects will reduce lane passing accidents and hazards.

DRIVING EMERGENCIES AND VEHICLE ESCORT OPERATIONS

- A. **Mechanical failures** - vehicle escort operators should be able to safely and properly change a tire and determine basic mechanical failures on their vehicle.
- B. **Skidding and accident avoidance** - vehicle escort operators can best avoid accidents and skidding by not hydroplaning and by using proper braking, steering and by decreasing their vehicle speed.
- C. **Hydroplaning and driving emergencies** - antilock braking systems (ABS) brakes will reduce the vehicle from hydroplaning, in addition to proper steering and by reducing speed.
- D. **Restraint system** - safety belts and restraints can help prevent an accident and when combined with safe vehicle escort operations can also protect you in an accident. Proper seat and head positioning is also a factor.

VEHICLE ESCORT OPERATOR AND DEFENSIVE DRIVING

- A. **Fatigue and safe vehicle operations** - vehicle escort operators should have proper rest and sleep before operating any vehicle or performing any task.
- B. **Emotions and safe vehicle operations** - a vehicle escort operator can be affected by emotions that can impair safe vehicle operations and judgment
- C. **Alcohol and drugs** - consuming any alcohol or drugs is extremely dangerous before and during any vehicle operation or escort vehicle operation.

The pilot/escort vehicle operator shall:

1. If the front pilot/escort vehicle goes through a traffic light but the load does not, then the pilot/escort vehicle must pull over to the right side of the highway, where practical, to wait for the oversize load.
2. If the load goes through the traffic light but the rear pilot/escort vehicle does not, then the load cannot proceed under the provision of the permit to have a rear pilot escort.

CHECKLIST

Pre-Trip Overdimensional Load Checklist

Complete prior to each day's activity

Driver's (Escort Veh.) Name _____

State of License _____

Make/Model of Escort Veh _____

License Plate # _____

Exp. Date of License Plate _____

Company Address _____

State of Certification _____

EQUIPMENT - REQUIRED

Vehicle

- Car or
- Two-Axle Truck
- 17,000 Max G.V.W.R.
- 2,000 lb. Min V.W.
- Headlights
- High Beam
- Low Beam
- Turn Signals, Brake Lights
- Emergency Flashers
- Rear View Mirrors
- Escort Business Identification Sign

Equipment

- 18" or 24" Stop/Slow Paddle
- Emergency Reflective Devices
- 3 Triangles or
- 6 Fusees or
- 3 Liquid Flares
- High Visibility Vest/Jacket
- Fire Extinguisher (min 5 lb.; BC or ABC)
- Non-Conductive Height Pole (if overheight)

Warning Lights

- Flashing or Rotating Amber Light

Radio

- Two-Way Radio or
- 4 Watt CB Radio

Sign/Banner

- "OVERSIZE LOAD" or "WIDE LOAD"
- Yellow Background
- 10" x 1 1/2" Black Lettering
- Clearly Visible
- Full Width

Comment(s)

Driver's License # _____

Expiration Date _____

Vehicle Color _____

State of License Plate _____

Company Name _____

Driver's Certification # _____

Date of Expiration _____

EQUIPMENT -OPTIONAL

Vehicle

- Tires (including spare): Check inflation, tread
- Jack and Lug Wrench
- Check Wheel Lugs
- Washer Fluid, Coolant, and Oil Levels
- Check Hoses, Belts, and Exhaust System
- Check Suspension
- Full Gas Tank
- Check Horn

Equipment

- Extra Amber Light
- 3 - 28" orange cones
- Flashlight with Red Nose Cone
- Extra Batteries, Flashlight, Radio, Phone
- Extra "OVERSIZE LOAD" Sign/Banner
- High Visibility Hard Hat
- First Aid Supplies
- 25' Tape Measure, Tool Kit, Shovel
- Tarps and Lashings
- "Slow Vehicle" if needed

Personal Items

- Extra Clothing and Toiletries for long trips
- Blanket
- Business License
- Lunch, Drinking Water
- Cash/Credit Card
- Local/State Maps
- Medications
- Rain Gear
- All Items Secured and Stored

Radios

- Cell Phone

Comment(s):

AFTER ACTION REPORT

AFTER ACTION REPORT

Assignment Summary

Travel Dates/Time _____ Load Description _____

Point of Origin _____ Destination _____

Load Height _____ Load Length _____ Load Width _____

Driver _____

Lead Escort _____ Rear Escort _____

Other Team Members _____

Truck # _____ Job/Control # _____

Issues (Emergencies, Inadequacies, and Malfunctions): Yes _____ No _____

Provide a synopsis of the impact of any encountered issues.

Recommendations: Yes _____ No _____

Number each recommendation and refer to the respective number when assigning member responsibility in the next section.

Follow-up

Recommendation	Responsible Team Member	Follow-up Date

Conclusion (Lessons Learned, Key Successes, Areas For Improvement)

Sign and Date:

Commercial Load Driver _____

Law Enforcement Escort _____

Pilot Car Escort (Lead) _____

Pilot Car Escort (Rear) _____

Team Member (Other) _____

Team Member (Other) _____

Appendix C - CONTACT INFORMATION

Public Safety Oversize/Overweight Permit Unit (404) 624-7257
959E. Confederate Ave. SE
Atlanta, GA 30316
Customer Service 1-888-262-8306
Single Trip Permit Line 1-800-570-5428
Single Trip Fax Line (404) 635-8501 (8507, 8509)
Annual Permit Line 1-888-774-1460
Annual Fax Line (404) 635-8164 Superloads/House Moves (404) 635-8216
Email All Completed Applications (Single, Annual, Superload) to:
PEWireRoom@GSP.Net

Georgia State Patrol – Motor Carrier Compliance Division (MCCD) (404) 624-7211
Amber Light Permit (404) 624-7211
(Available on the web at: www.dps.georgia.gov)
Overweight Assessment Citation Unit 1-888-409-2001

Department of Revenue (DOR)
DOR Liability (404) 417-6712
Motor Vehicle Division (404) 417-6712/ (404) 968-3800
(Motor Carrier Fuel Tax Stickers and IRP Tag Regulations, Transporter Tags, Etc.)

Department of Driver Services (DDS) (678) 413-8400

Road Emergency Numbers:

Norfolk Southern 1-800-946-4744
CSX 1-800-232-0144

Rail