

Chapter Trans 252

ESCORT VEHICLES

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Trans 252.01 Authority, purpose and scope. (1)

This chapter is adopted pursuant to the authority of the department under s. 348.25 (3), Stats.

(2) The purpose of this chapter is to interpret and implement s. 348.25 (3), Stats., by establishing the general policies which apply to escort vehicles.

(3) This chapter applies to the operation of escort vehicles required as a condition for operation under a permit issued under the authority of ss. 348.25 to 348.27, Stats., specifically including the applicable provisions of chs. Trans 230 and 250 to 275.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1989, No. 402, eff. 7-1-89; correction in (3) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, August, 1996, No. 488.

Trans 252.02 Definitions. Unless otherwise stated, the definitions of words and phrases in ss. 340.01 and 348.01(2), Stats., and s. Trans 250.02 apply to this chapter.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1989, No. 402, eff. 7-1-89; am (2), r. (3), Register, July, 1991, No. 427, eff. 8-1-91; r. and recr. Register, February, 2000, No. 530, eff. 3-1-00.

Trans 252.03 General conditions. (1) The department or local authority issuing a permit may require the use of an escort vehicle, or escort vehicles, as a condition of operation under any oversize or overweight permit.

(2) When required by the terms of a permit, the permittee shall secure escort by a uniformed police officer using a marked squad car, and shall pay all charges therefor. A permittee may at his or her option utilize a police escort in lieu of an escort vehicle and shall pay the charges therefor.

(3) One or more escort vehicles, including police escort vehicles, may be required by the permit issuing authority to accompany the oversize or overweight vehicle or load for unusual conditions such as extremely winding or hilly roads or where traffic is very heavy or when the permitted vehicle or load is unusually wide.

(4) A separate escort shall be provided for each load being transported.

History: (2), (3) and (4) renum. from Hy 30.02 (5) (q), (r) and (o) and am. (2) and (3), cr. (1), Register, June, 1989, No. 402, eff. 7-1-89.

Trans 252.04 Operator qualifications and duties.

(1) An escort vehicle shall be checked by the escort operator before each escort assignment to make sure that it is in safe operating condition.

(2) No person may operate an escort vehicle unless the person is at least 18 years of age and has in his or her immediate possession an operator's license issued to the escort vehicle operator and valid in Wisconsin.

(3) (a) Before movement of the oversize or overweight vehicle or load begins, the escort operator shall read the permit which authorizes the movement and any and all conditions imposed by the permitting authority for operation under the permit, including but not limited to, specific routes to be followed, the speed of

movement, or the times of day during which the movement is permitted or restricted.

(b) The escort operator shall observe all conditions imposed on operation under the permit.

(4) The escort vehicle headlamps shall be lighted in the low beam position and the warning lamps required by s. Trans 252.05 (3) shall be lighted when accompanying the movement of a vehicle operated under permit. The escort vehicle's amber warning lamps may not be operated when the vehicle is not engaged as an escort.

(5) When a single escort vehicle is required by the conditions of the permit and the movement is upon 2-way undivided roadways, the escort vehicle shall precede the vehicle or load being moved under a permit by a distance of at least 300 feet and sufficient to give advance warning to vehicles coming from the opposite direction. Where the road narrows because of a bridge or for any other reason, or at a sharp turn or other point of special hazard because of the weight, width or length of the vehicle or load operated under permit, the driver of the escort vehicle shall slow down or stop, as necessary, to give adequate warning to oncoming traffic, utilizing hand flagging methods as necessary with a clean, bright red or orange flag at least 18 inches square.

(6) When a single escort vehicle is required as a condition of the permit and the movement is upon one-way roadways, including divided highways with one or more lanes of travel in the same direction, the escort vehicle shall follow the vehicle or load being transported under permit at a distance of 300 to 500 feet with its required warning lamps and sign visible from the rear.

(7) When more than one escort vehicle is used or required as a condition of the permit, then one escort shall precede the permitted vehicle as required in sub. (5) and one escort shall follow the permitted vehicle as required in sub. (6) regardless of the type of highway.

History: (1), (2) and (5) renum. from Hy 30.02 (5) (p), (l), and (h) and am. (2) and (5), cr. (3), (4), (6) and (7), Register, June, 1989, No. 402, eff. 7-1-89; am. (2), Register, July, 1991, No. 427, eff. 8-1-91; correction in (4) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, February, 2000, No. 530.

Trans 252.05 Vehicle and equipment requirements.

(1) **VEHICLE.** An escort vehicle shall be a Type 1 automobile or a single-unit motor truck of not more than 16,000 pounds actual gross vehicle weight, gross vehicle weight rating or registered weight. The escort vehicle shall be so designed as to afford its driver a clear and unobstructed view to the front, rear, right and left. Unobstructed view to the rear may be provided by outside mirrors on both sides of the vehicle.

Note: The escort vehicle sign may not exceed "overhang" limitations specified in s. 348.09, Stats., which states:

348.09 Projecting loads on side of vehicles. (1) No person, without a permit therefor, shall operate on a highway any motor vehicle, trailer or semitrailer carrying any load extending beyond the fender line on the left side or extending more than 6 inches beyond the fender line on the right side of the vehicle. In the case of motor trucks, "fender line" means the outermost limits of the rear fenders, flare boards or floor of the body, whichever projects outward the farthest.

(2) This section applies even though the total width of the vehicle and load does not exceed the maximum permitted under s. 348.05.

(2) OVERSIZE LOAD SIGN. A vehicle escorting an oversize vehicle shall have an "OVERSIZE LOAD" sign mounted above the roof of the escort vehicle and above any equipment mounted on the vehicle which would obscure an approaching driver's clear view of the sign. The lettering on the sign shall be 10 inches high in black on a solid yellow or amber background and may not have a stroke width of less than one and one-half inches. The visible surface of the sign may not be less than 5 feet wide and 12 inches high. The sign shall be visible to traffic approaching from the front of an escort vehicle preceding a load. In the case of an escort vehicle operating to the rear of the load being transported, the sign shall be visible to traffic approaching from the rear. No sign message may be displayed to traffic when the escort vehicle is not escorting an oversize load.

(3) WARNING LAMPS. (a) An escort vehicle shall be equipped with at least 2 amber warning lamps mounted on or above the vehicle roof. A warning lamp includes a single or multiple pulse strobe light. Each such warning lamp shall flash, pulse or rotate between 30 and 120 times per minute. The multiple flash effect shall be counted as a single flash. Each such warning lamp shall have sufficient intensity to be clearly visible and attention-attracting at a distance of 500 feet, under all conditions when the oversize or overweight vehicle or load is on the highway, except when visibility of the lamp is temporarily obstructed by a hill crest, a curve or an object such as another vehicle.

(b) The amber warning lamps shall be mounted at the same level, shall be separated laterally as much as possible, shall be visible all around, or 360°, and shall flash, pulse or rotate.

(4) RADIO. The department or local authority issuing an oversize or overweight permit may require that each escort vehicle be equipped with a radio transceiver, maintained in good working order, with which each escort vehicle operator can communicate with the other escorts and the operator of the vehicle being operated under permit. When radio equipment is required, the authority issuing the permit shall state the requirement on the oversize or overweight permit.

History: (1) to (3) renum. from Hy 30.02 (5) (i), (m) and (h) and am., cr. (4) and (5), [Register, June, 1989, No. 402](#), eff. 7-1-89; am. (1), r. (2), renum. (3) to (5) to be (2) to (4) and am. (2) and (3), [Register, February, 2000, No. 530](#), eff. 3-1-00.

Trans 252.06 Police escorts exempted. **(1)** An escort vehicle which is a marked police squad car is exempt from the vehicle, flag and sign requirements of s. [Trans 252.05 \(1\)](#) and [\(2\)](#). Normal police red or blue emergency lights shall be deemed to satisfy the warning lamps requirement of s. [Trans 252.05 \(3\)](#).

(2) The police officer operating a police escort vehicle is exempt from s. [Trans 252.04 \(2\)](#). Compliance with s. [Trans 252.04 \(1\)](#), [\(4\)](#), [\(5\)](#), [\(6\)](#) and [\(7\)](#) shall be at the discretion of the officer.

History: Cr. [Register, June, 1989, No. 402](#), eff. 7-1-89; corrections in (1) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., [Register, February, 2000, No. 530](#).