



Florida Highway Patrol Policy Manual

SUBJECT ESCORTS FOR OVERDIMENSIONAL VEHICLES OR TOXIC/HAZARDOUS CARRIERS	POLICY NUMBER 5.10	ISSUE DATE 02/01/1996
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5.10.01 PURPOSE

To specify procedures governing escort services for overdimensional vehicles or toxic/hazardous carriers.

5.10.02 POLICY

It is the policy of the Florida Highway Patrol to employ measures which will enhance public safety and ensure compliance with regulatory provisions pertaining to the transportation of toxic or hazardous substances or to load bearing vehicles which exceed weight or dimensional limits.

5.10.03 DEFINITIONS

Definitions presented in Chapter 5.08 apply to this directive as well and are incorporated by reference.

- A. **COMMERCIAL VEHICLE** - Any self-propelled or towed vehicle used on the public highways to transport passengers or cargo, as defined in Section 316.003(66), Florida Statutes. FOR PURPOSES OF THIS POLICY ONLY, such vehicles that are owned by components of government are excluded from the definition.
- B. **OVERDIMENSIONAL VEHICLES** - Any commercial vehicle which exceeds specifications for width, length, or height stated in Section 316.515, Florida Statutes, or weight as defined in Section 316.535, Florida Statutes.

- C. **TOXIC/HAZARDOUS CARRIERS** - Any commercial vehicle engaged in the transportation of any explosive or hazardous compounds, as defined in Chapter 316, Florida Statutes.

5.10.04 OBJECTIVES

- A. To ensure public safety by promoting strict adherence to statutory and regulatory provisions relating to the transportation of toxic/hazardous substances or overdimensional loads by commercial carriers.
- B. To promulgate administrative procedures for approval/disapproval of any proposals for off-duty police employment (ODPE) by Division members pertaining to the escorting of overdimensional commercial vehicles or toxic/hazardous carriers.

5.10.05 RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Except as noted below, any person, firm, or corporation, that proposes to arrange for services involving escorting any commercial vehicle which exceeds dimensional specifications or which contains any toxic or hazardous substance(s), must prepare and submit a plan outlining measures which will be initiated to ensure public safety, in conjunction with any request for such escorts involving any Florida Highway Patrol personnel.
- B. Members who:
 - 1. Regularly engage in ODPE involving the escorting of overdimensional/hazardous/toxic substance carriers shall assume responsibility for notifying such firms of requirements necessary to achieve compliance with the provisions of this section.
 - 2. Propose to provide such escorts must obtain written authorization from their troop commander before such services may be provided.
- C. The appropriate troop commander or deputy director shall be responsible for approving all requests for overdimensional or toxic/hazardous escorts. Written authorization must be obtained before such services may be provided.

- D. Responsibilities of troop commanders shall be limited to reviewing and approving/disapproving requests for escorts which are initiated pursuant to the provisions of this directive and for retaining copies of documents submitted for their approval.

5.10.06 PROCEDURES

A. ESCORTS INVOLVING MEMBERS IN ON-DUTY STATUS

1. The Division's patrol resources shall not be devoted to servicing requests for escorts for overdimensional vehicles and toxic/hazardous carriers, unless such escorts are provided:
 - a. For purposes of alleviating an existing hazard or in furtherance of an equally vital public safety concern.
 - b. In accordance with requests initiated by components of government, where vital public safety or security interests are at stake.
2. When exigent circumstances prevail involving public safety or security or vital governmental interests, troop commanders may waive compliance with the provisions of Section "B" below.

B. OTHER ESCORTS

1. Escorts not involving overdimensional vehicles or toxic/hazardous carriers may be undertaken as ODPE provided the escort serves a specific public purpose. Such examples of an acceptable escort would be escorting a collegiate or professional sports team to and/or from a sporting event. An example of an unacceptable escort would involve funeral processions; however, the troop commander has authority to authorize escorts for funeral processions as designated by the Director. Members will refer to FHP Policy 5.08 for additional rules governing ODPE.

NOTE: The Director or designee shall have final authority on granting permission for escorting other vehicles (for example: emergency vehicles in crisis situations) and the handling of special request funeral processions dealing with individuals who were members of the law enforcement community, governmental dignitaries, or other special circumstances.

2. Members shall be permitted to engage in ODPE involving the escorting of commercial vehicles which exceed weight or dimensional restrictions or which contain hazardous or toxic substances, provided written approval for each escort undertaken is obtained from the member's troop commander or deputy director.
3. At no time are escorts permitted to exceed the posted speed limit.
4. Unless exigent circumstances prevail, requests for approval should be submitted at least five working days prior to the date on which the proposed escort is projected to take place. The following documents must accompany each such request:
 - a. Escort Safety Plan (HSMV 61199) prepared by the person, firm, or corporation requesting escort services. Such plan shall at minimum include:
 - 1) A description of the material to be transported.
 - 2) The dimensions of the load bearing vehicle, including:
 - a) Length.
 - b) Width.
 - c) Height.
 - d) Minimum vertical body or load clearance.
 - e) Gross Weight.
 - 3) A map depicting, listing, or outlining the route to be taken.
 - 4) A timetable outlining the approximate time when the escorted vehicle is expected to pass through each city (over 10,000 populations) along the route.
 - 5) Authentication that appropriate county and municipal authorities along the route have been contacted and:
 - a) Advised of the time and date the escorted vehicle will pass through their respective jurisdictions.

- b) Issued any required permits.
 - 6) When hazardous or toxic substances are being transported, telephone listings for the Division of Emergency Management, the Chemical Transportation Emergency Center (CHEMTREC), and the National Response Center (NRC) must also be obtained.
 - 7) Unless the route taken is via the interstate or other controlled access highway system, authentication that railroad and utility companies and other private entities from whom authorization for access must be obtained by law or permit have been contacted and:
 - a) Approval for access, passage, or assistance provided.
 - b) The names, position titles, and telephone numbers of persons that must be contacted in the event of an emergency have been listed.
 - 8) A listing of any safety apparatus installed on the load-bearing vehicle.
 - 9) Copies of any permits issued by the Florida Department of Transportation or by any component of county or municipal government. If the permit cannot be issued five days prior to the date on which the proposed escort is projected to take place, the submitting member shall immediately, upon receipt, provide a copy to the approving authority. The permit must be received prior to the proposed escort taking place.
 - 10) A listing of the name(s) and troop(s) of the members participating in the escort.
- b. A release of liability, bearing the signature of an officer of the firm or corporation or the person who contracts for the services of escorting officers.

5. Multiple escorts involving cargoes, routes, and load vehicle dimensions that are scheduled to take place on the same day or at successive intervals during any 90 day period may be summarized on a single Escort Safety Plan, provided a "multiple escorts" entry is placed in the "special notes" field on the Escort Safety Plan and the timetable reflects respective times and dates when escorts are to take place.
6. Individual troop commanders/deputy directors are at liberty to approve/disapprove off-duty escorts involving non-overdimensional vehicles and accompanying Escort Safety Plans without prior consultation with other command personnel. However, if the route of the escort extends beyond the geographical limits of any troop, copies of the plan shall also be supplied to other troop commanders along the path taken by the escorted vehicle. Finally, a copy of the Request for Off-Duty Police Services (HSMV 61077), which reflects the decision of the troop commander or deputy director, and the Escort Safety Plan, will be returned to member(s) who initiated the request, and a copy shall be retained at troop headquarters.
7. Upon receipt of the troop commander's or deputy director's response, members will contact the person, firm, or corporation that requested escort services and apprise that entity of the decision. Escort Safety Plans which have been rejected may be amended and resubmitted in accordance with procedures specified herein.
8. Before initiating the escort or permitting the load-bearing vehicle to be placed in motion, members shall inspect it and verify compliance with:
 - a. Dimensional specifications outlined on the Escort Safety Plan.
 - b. Safety requirements identified pursuant to the issuance of any permits.
 - c. Members shall also:
 - 1) Verify the validity of the operator's driver license.
 - 2) Note all restrictions contained thereon.

- 3) Ensure operator is in compliance with provisions of Section 316.302, Florida Statutes, entitled "Commercial Motor Vehicles; Safety Regulations; Transporters and Shippers of Hazardous Materials; Enforcement."
 9. Copies of the Escort Safety Plan shall be maintained in each Florida Highway Patrol vehicle assigned to the escort.
 - a. At least two marked Florida Highway Patrol vehicles will be assigned to each escort. Escorting vehicles shall generally keep stationed not more than 300 feet in front of/behind the load-bearing vehicle. At least one of the escorting vehicles must be equipped with a cellular telephone which must be supplied by the member at the member's own expense or by the person, firm, or corporation which requests the escort.
 - b. House trailers (or equivalent units) may be escorted by a single Florida Highway Patrol vehicle, provided a second vehicle bearing appropriate warning devices is operated in trail behind the load bearing vehicle.
 10. Breakdowns or other unforeseen occurrences may disrupt escorts. When such circumstances prevail, the firm which requests the escort services will develop an adjusted timetable. Members shall apprise the troop commander of these modifications to the original Escort Safety Plan and obtain approval for any changes. Members shall also initiate measures designed to ensure that county and municipal authorities are acquainted with timetable revisions and that utility and railroad companies and other private entities that will provide assistance or authorization for access are notified as well, if appropriate.
 11. ODPE involving escorts must begin within 40 miles of the member's county of assignment but the escort may travel beyond the 40-mile limit.
- C. No portion of this directive shall be construed as restricting the ability of command personnel or law enforcement officers in the field to alleviate threats to public safety or to deal with law enforcement emergencies.

5.10.07 REGULATIONS

For the purposes of ODPE escorts, travel to the origination point, standby time, and travel time to the final destination point shall be counted as time worked, regardless of whether or not the member was paid, for the purpose of determining compliance with the 16 and 72-hour limitations. The travel time returning to the member's residence will count towards the 16-hour workday; however, the time will not count towards the 72-hour limitation.