

Pilot Car Industry Update

Task Force

Montreal, Quebec December 2024



Ongoing and New Issues:

Pilot vehicles popping into the business with improperly equipped vehicles – both signage & safety equipment

No mandatory standard of training for pilot/escort operators

Extra amber lighting not authorized in regulations; extra flashing lights on sign; extra flashing lights in grill; extra flashing lights mounted in with taillights; extra flashing lights mounted in bumpers; extra flashing lights mounted on top of dash inside vehicles; directional light bars

Red and white flashing lights being added to vehicles

Blue lights now showing up mounted on vehicles as well as on dash





Images taken of vehicles in Western Canada
over the last 12 months

Reasons For Problems:

1. Lack of Enforcement – no one is checking pilots to see that they are complying with regulations, officers seem to be encouraged to turn a blind eye to what is going on
2. Lack of any training standards in the country that are mandatory – anyone with a vehicle can pop into the industry
3. A number of Regulations are either vague about what is being called for, or so old that they have not kept up with new technology in both materials and types of lighting available

Training Updates:

The only mandatory training program currently in Canada is in Ontario.

They have a requirement for **Superloads** to travel with Pilot/Escorts who have taken a special course and received a “Certified Superload Escort” certificate. As part of this training they also take a Traffic Flagging course. Legislation was also put in place as part of this, to give **legal authority** to those who hold the “Certified Superload Escort” certificate to do traffic control in the course of their duties while escorting an over size load.

Industry Training is ongoing. Pilot Operators in Canada currently take USA courses. They take these so that if incidents happen, they can show to Insurance Companies that they have done as much ‘due diligence’ as they can in their operations.

Specialized certification course for working with Wind Projects is a manufacturer’s requirement, not a government requirement.

Most new Pilot Operators get into industry as “fly by seat of pants” operators. This is a SAFETY ISSUE.

NEW ISSUE: Governments Trying to Push Electric Vehicles

Mid Range Pickup – Ford Lightning

Purchase Price aprox	\$98,918.00
Extended range battery	\$16,000.00
Tow Package – needed for power for lights & signage	\$ 1,200.00
Mobile Power Cord	\$ 650.00
Initial Start Up Cost (truck only)	\$116,768.00
Monthly loan payments (minimum)	\$ 1946.00

PROBLEMS WITH ELECTRIC VEHICLES:

1. Battery – warranty is supposedly 8 years or 100,000 miles (160,000 km), BUT our experience with battery warranty is that Commercial Use Vehicles are not covered by that warranty
2. Majority of Pilot Vehicles, when working steady, can easily put on mileage very close to the maximum mileage within a year
3. Current projected labour cost to replace battery is from \$30,000.00 to \$40,000.00
4. Life of the battery in this Industry is determined by the following: current draw by required pilot lights, radios, having heat or cooling on, having headlights on (regulation requirement while escorting), charging phone, running laptop
5. Life of battery also determined by outside temperature we are working in – extreme cold decreases battery charge
6. Charging stations – very few exist along the routes that Over Size Loads are permitted on
7. Charging stations – no where for Over Size Loads to safely park while an electric vehicle charging
8. Time – travel time is limited with Over Size Loads, they can not afford to be sitting for hours while an electric pilot vehicle charges
9. Bad weather, accidents, waiting out curfews in pullouts – electric vehicles not able to sit for hours before recharging in these instances. And in these instances refer to # 6
10. Traffic control for mechanical breakdowns – sometimes for hours in the middle of no where – refer to #6

