

**MAIN STEPS INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS OF REVIEWING
CLASS 6 AND 7 PERMIT APPLICATIONS
AND DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FROM APPLICANTS**

The *Highway Safety Code* requires owners and operators of vehicles with an oversized load or oversized dimensions to obtain a special permit that is issued specifically for that purpose before setting out. These special permits are issued by the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ), and are subject to certain conditions and the payment of the fees specified in the *Regulation respecting special permits*. These permits are only issued for vehicles that are oversized as a result of their design dimensions or for hauling a load that cannot be split up.

The *Regulation respecting special permits* defines seven classes of permits. Class 1 to 5 permits can be obtained directly from SAAQ service centres. Class 6 and 7 permits require applicants to obtain confirmation of the feasibility of the planned trip from the Ministère des Transports du Québec (MTQ).

In order to facilitate the processing of Class 6 and 7 permit applications, this bulletin is intended to provide information with respect to the main steps that are involved in reviewing an application for a special permit that requires confirmation of feasibility; the documents that must be produced; and the stage at which the documentation is required.

Step 1: Submitting the application to the SAAQ

Unless it involves hauling a building, any application that is submitted to the SAAQ for a Class 6 or 7 permit must be accompanied by a letter from the owner, manufacturer, or shipper of the cargo that specifies the weight and dimensions of the cargo, and that confirms that it cannot be split up and that it has been reduced to its minimum weight or dimensions. The letter must indicate the origin and destination of the cargo. In the case of identical shipments, the letter must also indicate the total number of shipments. If this letter is not submitted, or if the carrier refuses to produce it, the application will be automatically denied.

For Class 6 permits, if the shipment is scheduled during the thaw period, this fact must be stated in the application.

Step 2: Preliminary analysis of the application

Once the application and the accompanying documents have been forwarded to the MTQ by the SAAQ, the information that is contained in the application form and the required documentation will be reviewed by the departmental official in charge. The official will contact the applicant in order to inform him that he is handling the application. At this stage, the official may also request additional information or details concerning the application. **For the sake of fairness, application permits are processed in chronological order.**

Step 3: Consulting the Structures Branch

Applications for Class 6 permits are sent to the MTQ's Structures Branch for a review of the proposed route, primarily with respect to infrastructures such as bridges, underpasses, etc. If necessary, the Structures Branch will check with other agencies, such as the Société des traversiers du Québec and the Federal Bridge Corporation.

Step 4: Consulting the territorial branch

Applications for Class 7 permits are also forwarded to the territorial branches that are affected by the shipment, in order to assess the proposed route. In some cases, the territorial branches must be contacted for a Class 6 permit application, especially with respect to roadwork.

Step 5: Request for additional information

Following the receipt of the conditions set by the Structures Branch and/or the recommendations made by the territorial branch, if applicable, the MTQ official who is handling the case will contact the applicant in order to inform him of the application number and to obtain the following documentation, as needed:

1. Authorizations from the managers of roads that are part of the route and that are not under MTQ jurisdiction (i.e.: managed by cities, municipalities, agencies, or other authorities). These authorizations must specifically include the following details:
 - a) The applicant's name;
 - b) The WEIGHT and dimensions of the oversized vehicle, including the cargo;
 - c) The routes that are authorized in their respective networks;
 - d) The period of validity, if applicable;
2. In the case of hauling a building, municipal authorization to install the structure at a permanent site;
3. In the case of a Class 7 permit application, authorization to use a ferry that is run by the Société des traversiers du Québec and that is on the proposed route;

4. In the case of a Class 7 permit application, an affidavit that contains details of the load and the dimensions of the oversized vehicle. The affidavit must also confirm that there are no overhead wires or cables that would represent an obstacle along the route, or that arrangements have been made with public utility companies to move the wires or cables so that the oversized vehicle can pass freely.

Step 6: Assessment and preparation of the evaluation report

Upon receipt of all required documentation, the official in charge will review it and write an evaluation report. If necessary, the application will be sent to the committee responsible for reviewing complex or special cases.

Step 7: Issuing or denying the permit

The official who is handling the application sends the results of the assessment to the SAAQ electronically. If the application is approved, the decision is accompanied by the evaluation report that confirms the feasibility of the proposed shipment, and if applicable, a list of additional conditions. If the application is denied, the official states the reasons for that decision. Once it has received these results, the SAAQ can either issue the permit or inform the applicant that the permit has been denied. In the case of a denial, the applicant may reapply by making adjustments to the original request.

In order to ensure swift and efficient processing, applicants for special permits should produce all of the required information with their application. More specifically, the description of the route should be precise and complete. The route should first be inspected, especially with respect to bridges that have load restrictions, construction or maintenance work along the way, the height of infrastructure, and the geometry of the road.

It is also important that all of the required documentation (letter from the shipper, municipal authorizations, affidavits, etc.) be precise and consistent with the details contained in the permit application. They should be reviewed before being forwarded to the official who is handling the application, in order to avoid mistakes that may delay processing, and consequently, the issuance of the permit.

The MTQ makes every effort to process the many applications that it receives for Class 6 and 7 permits as quickly as possible. Although it endeavours to reduce processing time in order to minimize the impact on carriers, shippers, and other parties concerned, the MTQ is obliged to produce quality evaluation reports that reflect its concerns for the safety of road users and the protection of highway infrastructures.

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