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Pilot Projects



Pilot Project on Use of Low-Speed Vehicles

A pilot project on use of low-speed vehicles is currently in effect. This 3-year project, which may be extended an additional two years, is in effect throughout Québec.



Relevant Documents

Agreement with Nemo, the manufacturer

• **NEW** •

Ministerial Order 2008-07 from the Minister of Transport

Pilot Project in Low-Speed Vehicles (LSVs)

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Pilot Project on Low-Speed Vehicles (LSVs)



ZENN



NEMO



Québec 

A publication from:

- Ministère des Transports
- Société de l'assurance automobile

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Introduction

The Highway Safety Code now allows the Minister of Transport to authorize the implementation of pilot projects, particularly to test new types of vehicles. In this context, the pilot project on the use of low-speed vehicles (LSV) was launched.

The purpose of this document is to provide citizens with information about the terms of the pilot project, the traffic regulations to obey and the mandatory equipment on these vehicles. It also presents the respective obligations of the manufacturers, the users, the Ministère des Transports and the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec.

Further information may be obtained at the following locations:

Service de l'ingénierie des véhicules
Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec
333, boul. Jean-Lesage, C-4-21
C. P. 19600
Québec (Québec) G1K 8J6
Tel.: 418 528-3214

Direction de la sécurité en transport
Ministère des Transports du Québec
700, boul. René-Lévesque Est
Québec (Québec) G1R 5H1
Tel.: 418 643-3074, ext. 2388

Note: This document is purely explanatory. For the precise rules concerning the pilot project, please refer to the following documents, available on the SAAQ website:

- Ministerial order 2008-07 of the Minister of Transport;
- Information for Owners/Lessees of Zenn or Nemo Low-Speed Vehicles;
- Agreements Reached with the Manufacturers Zenn and Nemo.

What is an LSV?

From the outset, it is important to differentiate between an electric vehicle and an LSV. If an automobile manufacturer introduces a vehicle that complies with Transport Canada's standards for passenger vehicles, it can be put on the road without a problem, whether it runs on gas or diesel, is hybrid or electric.

Some years ago, Transport Canada, which is responsible for the safety standards of vehicles sold in Canada, introduced a new category of vehicle: the low-speed vehicle, or LSV. Transport Canada wanted to allow the sale of small, non-polluting vehicles designed for limited use in designated areas or in places where the operation of other vehicles is controlled.

This is why the safety standards for LSVs are not as restrictive as those for passenger vehicles. In addition, the maximum speed of an LSV is between 32 and 40 km/h.

To be precise, LSVs are small, environmentally friendly four-wheel vehicles that run exclusively on electricity. They emit no greenhouse gases, offering the benefits of environmental protection. Moreover, according to the manufacturers, the cost of electricity to run an LSV is very low.

However, LSVs have special features that other road users don't necessarily expect. In Canada, their use is limited. Provinces that allow LSVs do so in the context of pilot projects designed to gather more information about them.

Definition of the Pilot Project

The aim of the Québec pilot project is to study the use of LSVs in a controlled, safe environment, making it possible to gather the data necessary for deliberations that would eventually allow their permanent use. The project, which will last three years and may be extended another two, would allow the year-round operation of these vehicles in all regions of Québec subject to certain safety conditions.

The pilot project has the following specific objectives:

- to test the use of LSVs on certain public roads;
- to develop safe traffic rules regarding this type of vehicle;
- to establish norms with regard to safety equipment for LSVs.

Eligible Vehicles

The authorized LSVs are the **Zenn**, a small electric car assembled in Saint-Jérôme, Québec, and the **Nemo**, a small truck built in Sainte-Thérèse, also in Québec. These Québec-made vehicles exceed the standards of Transport Canada. They are the only vehicles currently accepted.

Assessment of the Pilot Project

Because they are responsible for the safety of road users, the Ministère des Transports du Québec (MTQ) and the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ) must ensure the safe introduction of new vehicles. That is why they must define the operating rules for LSVs, including traffic regulations, before allowing their use. These rules affect the driver (required driver's licence), registration (insurance costs), mandatory safety equipment (in addition to the basic equipment), places where the operation of LSVs is permitted, conditions for use, necessary road signs and signals, etc.

Traffic Regulations

The traffic regulations for LSVs are designed to ensure the safety of all road users. Among other things, they prevent the operation of LSVs on roads used by much faster vehicles. They are also aimed at protecting the occupants of LSVs against the risks of collision, particularly with much faster and heavier road vehicles, and serious injury.

Drivers of LSVs must therefore respect the following rules:

- the provisions of the Highway Safety Code;
- the prohibition against driving on public roads where the maximum speed limit is greater than 50 km/h;
- the prohibition against driving on limited access roads (e.g.: highways) as well as on their entrance or exit lanes (ramps);
- the authorization to cross roads where the speed limit is greater than 50 km/h solely at intersections where traffic lights or stop signs are present, or at traffic circles;
- the obligation to drive in the right lane except if making a left turn, in which case drivers must signal their intention over a sufficient distance to ensure that they can perform the manoeuvre without risk;
- the obligation to drive with the headlights on at all times;
- the prohibition against pulling a trailer or semi-trailer;
- the prohibition against driving up a slope whose incline is 15% or greater

These simple rules allow greater road safety for all road users, including the occupants of LSVs.

Mandatory Equipment

In addition to the safety standards required by Transport Canada, LSVs must be fitted with the following equipment:

- daytime running lights (failing that, drivers must keep their headlights on at all times);
- a slow moving vehicle identification emblem;
- a notice indicating the maximum speed of the vehicle;
- odometer;
- speedometer;
- windshield wipers;
- sound warning devices (horn and a proximity warning system);
- an information notice on the dashboard reminding drivers of the rules of the pilot project;
- defrosting and heating systems;
- three-point seat belts.

The manufacturers of Zenn and Nemo vehicles have been informed of the requirements concerning the minimum mandatory equipment and must ensure that it is present on LSVs upon delivery.

Obligations for Users

Users must hold a class 5 (passenger vehicle) driver's licence and register their LSV with a "C" licence plate for road vehicles with restricted use.

In addition, they must sign a declaration of commitment stating that they have read the operating rules for LSVs. This declaration also commits them to providing the SAAQ with the following data:

- kilometres driven;
- accidents or incidents that occurred;
- all relevant comments.

During the pilot project, these data will be provided according to a predetermined schedule or upon request.

Obligations for Manufacturer and Vendor

The manufacturers of Zenn and Nemo vehicles must respect the following requirements:

- ensure that the mandatory equipment is present on LSVs upon delivery;
- inform clients of the main parameters of the pilot project and of their obligations;
- give clients the SAAQ information folder;
- provide clients with registration documents.
- provide the SAAQ and the MTQ with the relevant data gathered on the pilot project;
- hold a dealer's licence.

Obligations for the SAAQ and MTQ

The SAAQ and the MTQ must:

- inform clients of their obligations and of limitations concerning use;
- gather data (kilometres driven, accidents, incidents, etc.);
- form a committee with certain partners to monitor and assess the pilot project;
- make recommendations to the Minister.