

## Scott Ineson Reportedly Killed on QEW Bronte Road On-Ramp

The Hamilton Spectator Newspaper has reported that Scott Ineson, 31, was one of two persons killed when their car struck a utility pole on the Bronte Road on-ramp to the Queen Elizabeth Way at approximately 0600 hours on Monday, December 20th. The newspaper report indicated "The head-on crash split the car in half...".

A photograph accompanied the article and this was quite revealing. It showed a front view of the rear half of the vehicle and in the background it showed a tow truck with the front half of the vehicle suspended in the air by the towing hook of the tow truck. This single photo provided a very good illustration of what damage was caused to the vehicle.

Few people would understand the significance of what was shown in this photo. The structure of the vehicle was essentially undeformed, except for the fact that it was separated into two parts. That is not what is supposed to happen. The structures of vehicles are supposed to be built so that they can absorb energy and they do so by deforming. In the case of pole impacts I have seen tremendous deformations of vehicles in side impacts to the point that you would think the front bumper was going to wrap around to make contact with the rear bumper, yet there was rarely a separation into two pieces. When a separation occurred I had complained (where I could) that this result is a safety hazard.

By the way, the newspaper reported that this was a head-on impact into the pole and they were completely wrong. The impact was to the right side of the vehicle, just in front of the right front door.

But what occurred in this collision was not right. The vehicle separated without any major evidence of deformation or energy dissipation. This indicates the weakness of the structure of the vehicle. Few people looking at the photograph would recognize that the vehicle was essentially the same shape as it was before the impact and that's not what is supposed to happen. Vehicles colliding into such poles should end up looking like very bowed bananas, that is the best way I can describe it. But they should not separate into two pieces unless they have reached their limit of "safe" deformation. While we build vehicles with air bags of all sorts and with anti-lock brakes and electronic stability control, we simply do not recognize when a vehicle's structure has failed.

Whoever is investigating this collision from a police standpoint will most likely not appreciate what a vehicle structure is supposed to do and nothing will be done to examine this further. The possibility that an insurer might consider something is wrong is also doubtful. Even the family is likely to be unaware.

This caught my attention because this is the second collision I have seen recently where a vehicle separated into two pieces and there was some report that it occurred in

a head-on collision. The other collision I am referring to occurred near Iona Road, west of London in early December and I wrote about it in this News section of my website. I am doubtful that that collision was also a head-on collision, but I was never able to see the damaged vehicle. Vehicles that collide with something in a head-on fashion simply do not separate into two pieces. I cannot say if there was a problem with the structure of the vehicle in the Iona Road incident but the present case has a fairly good photo showing the damage to the vehicle so I am fairly sure that there is a problem here.

Government agencies simply do not conduct any testing to understand which vehicle structures are susceptible to this kind of separation. And since these separations are fairly uncommon it would not make sense for any government to spend a great deal of money on testing to bring manufacturers to deal with such a problem. But this issue of separation has been going on for decades, certainly ever since uni-bodies came into existence in North America, so since about 1980. There are weak points in many vehicles at the base of the A-pillar and at the B-pillar and if a vehicle is struck at a substantial forward angle the direction of force results in this separation. Something that government agencies simply know nothing about or simply are unwilling to officially admit. But if these events are becoming more common then somebody better be waking up to the issue.