

CSA 2010 – What Is It?

Comprehensive Safety Analysis (CSA) 2010 is a new FMCSA safety initiative to more effectively identify and quickly intervene with truck and bus drivers and carriers who are not complying with safety rules. CSA 2010 will replace SafeStat and the current safety rating methodology process with a new Safety Measurement System (SMS). In February 2008, FMCSA launched its first field test of the program in Colorado, Missouri, Georgia and New Jersey, followed by Minnesota and Montana in May 2009. More test states were added in October 2009. Full implementation in all states is scheduled to begin in July 2010 and slated for completion near the end of 2010.

CSA 2010 will enable FMCSA and its state partners to assess the safety performance of a greater segment of the industry and to intervene with more carriers to change unsafe behavior early. The CSA 2010 Operational Model is the new way compliance and enforcement programs will be carried out. The Operational Model is characterized by (1) a more comprehensive measurement system, (2) a proposed safety fitness determination methodology that is based on performance data, and (3) a comprehensive intervention process designed to more efficiently and effectively correct safety problems.

The new Safety Measurement System (SMS) will measure the previous two years of roadside performance data and calculate a score in six behavior categories, called BASICs (Behavioral Analysis and Safety Improvement Categories). The BASICs are categories of behaviors measured in the SMS to rank entities' performance relative to their peers. The BASICs represent behaviors that can lead to crashes: unsafe driving, fatigued driving (hours-of-service), driver fitness, controlled substances and alcohol, vehicle maintenance and cargo related. For example, with this new program, an inspection in which a driver received no Driver Fitness violations (i.e. a "clean inspection") would have a positive impact on the Driver Fitness BASIC. Additionally, the SMS evaluates an entity's crash involvement (Crash Indicator) relative to its peers, which may indicate a problem with the entity that warrants intervention. The Crash Indicator looks for histories or patterns of high crash involvement, including frequency and severity, based on information from state-reported crash reports.

FMCSA is developing a Safety Fitness Determination (SFD) methodology, to replace the current system, which is solely dependent on onsite compliance review results. The SFD will expand the use of on-road performance as calculated in the SMS and include results of all investigations. One of three Safety Fitness Determination (SFD) ratings will be assigned to a carrier: Continue to Operate, Marginal, and Unfit. With the implementation of CSA 2010, an on-site compliance review will not required to issue or change an SFD rating.

Using the CSA 2010 Operational Model, FMCSA and State partners will identify carriers for interventions. These interventions will offer an expanded suite of tools, ranging from warning letters to comprehensive on-site investigations that supplement the labor-intensive compliance review, to better address the specific safety problems identified. Under the new system, higher scores will cause a motor carrier to enter, or remain in the pool of carriers with deficient BASICs. Increased scores may make a carrier subject to more severe interventions.

There are six important differences between the new Safety Measurement System (SMS) and the current measurement system, SafeStat:

Safety Measurement System (SMS)	SafeStat
Organized by specific behaviors (BASICs) & Crash Indicator	Organized into four broad Safety Evaluation Areas (SEAs)
Identifies safety performance problems to determine the intervention level	Identifies carriers for a compliance review
Emphasizes on-road performance using all safety-based inspection violations	Uses only out-of-service and selected moving violations
Uses risk-based violation weightings	Does not use
Will be used to propose adverse safety fitness determination based on a carrier's own data	Has no impact on an entity's safety fitness rating
Includes two distinct safety measurement system: Carriers and Drivers	Assesses only carriers

Initial feedback from test states has suggested that achieving an acceptable rating under the new program will be a challenge, even for motor carriers currently operating under satisfactory safety ratings and acceptable SafeStat scores. All the more reason that carriers should begin preparing for CSA 2010 now, by analyzing their safety programs and the elements of BASICs that will be evaluated next year to determine their safety fitness. For more information, go to: <http://csa2010.fmcsa.dot.gov>

We will follow progress with the new CSA 2010 and report periodically so that our readers might better understand this new initiative.