

How Does CSA Work?

CSA re-engineers the former enforcement and compliance process to provide a better view into how well large commercial motor vehicle carriers and drivers are complying with safety rules, and to intervene earlier with those who are not. Rolled out in December 2010, the program establishes a new enforcement and compliance Operational Model that will utilize the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) resources and those of its State enforcement partners, more efficiently and effectively, making the roads even safer for everyone.

The new CSA Operational Model has three major components:

- Measurement - CSA measures safety performance, using inspection and crash results to identify carriers whose behaviors could reasonably lead to crashes.
- Evaluation - CSA helps FMCSA and its State Partners to correct high-risk behavior by contacting more carriers and drivers—with interventions tailored to their specific safety problem, as well as a new Safety Fitness Determination methodology.
- Intervention - CSA covers the full spectrum of safety issues, from how data is collected, evaluated, and shared to how enforcement officials can intervene most effectively and efficiently to improve safety on our roads.

FMCSA carefully planned and developed CSA over the past few years. The first step involved a thorough review of the agency's compliance review process, followed by the development of the Safety Measurement System (SMS) that uses all roadside inspection and crash data and the development of a new interventions toolbox to deal efficiently and effectively with safety problems of various natures and different levels (as identified in the SMS). In addition, the CSA model includes a change to the Safety Fitness Determination (SFD), also tied to SMS results.

The expanded suite of intervention tools enable investigators to systematically evaluate why safety problems are occurring in order, to recommend remedies, encourage corrective action(s), and, where corrective action is inadequate, invoke strong penalties. The new SMS and interventions toolbox were tested in Colorado, Georgia, Missouri, and New Jersey starting in February 2008. Testing expanded to add Delaware, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota and Montana in 2009.

Feedback from enforcement staff and carriers indicate that the new model is both efficient, reaching more carriers, and effective, with some carriers undertaking proactive efforts to learn more and correct their safety problems.