Safety Measurement System (SMS) Display Changes: Guidance Document

Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) is the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) data-driven safety enforcement and compliance program that is working to improve the safety of America's large trucks and buses and the seven million drivers who operate them by identifying and monitoring those carriers who demonstrate the greatest safety risk.

As announced in FMCSA's April 9, 2010 Federal Register Notice, CSA provides the motor carrier industry and other safety stakeholders with more comprehensive, informative, and regularly updated safety performance data. CSA helps the Agency assess the safety performance of a greater segment of the motor carrier industry and allows it to intervene earlier with more carriers to change unsafe behavior and practices. The ultimate goal is to achieve a greater reduction in large truck and bus crashes, injuries, and fatalities, while making efficient use of the resources of FMCSA and its State Partners.

The SMS is the foundation of CSA, using all roadside inspection and crash data from more than 3.5 million inspections and 100,000 crash reports each year to quantify the relative safety performance of carriers based on seven Behavior Analysis and Safety Improvement Categories (BASICs). FMCSA uses SMS results to prioritize its workload, giving those carriers with the highest safety risk priority for safety interventions.

The SMS Website is an essential safety improvement tool for motor carriers. As it previously did with SafeStat data, FMCSA actively promotes and encourages carriers to access the data on the SMS Website—to review and monitor their safety performance data, request reviews of any data they believe to be incorrect, and take action to improve any safety problems identified.

FMCSA intended for both the SMS methodology and the SMS Website to be improved over time as more extensive user input, better data and technology, and additional analysis became available, as explained in FMCSA's March 27, 2012 Federal Register Notice announcing improvements to the SMS. FMCSA made a number of enhancements to the SMS methodology following the CSA Operational Model Test in 2010, and again following a preview period in December 2012. This release of proposed improvement to the display of information through the SMS Website is the second in a series that will be proposed up to twice a year. FMCSA provides a preview period for enforcement personnel and motor carriers prior to implementing changes. This preview provides a mechanism for the public to see the enhanced website in advance by showing some sample webpages.

Why is FMCSA proposing these changes?

This preview proposes a re-design of the SMS public Website but does not propose changes to the SMS methodology itself. The new features are based on feedback received from enforcement, industry, and other safety stakeholders. Following the preview period, FMCSA may make final refinements to the proposed display changes before releasing the enhanced site to the public.

FMCSA is proposing these display changes to advance the Agency's safety mission by making important information more understandable for motor carriers seeking to improve their safety performance and for other public users interested in FMCSA data, consistent with the goals the Agency announced in its April 9, 2010 Federal Register Notice.

This document lists FMCSA's key objectives regarding the SMS Website display changes, and highlights significant examples of how FMCSA is seeking to meet those objectives. Some of the changes listed below meet more than one objective.

Objective 1: Provide easier, more intuitive navigation and user-friendly features to clarify the SMS's role as FMCSA's prioritization tool for CSA interventions

OVERALL BASIC STATUS   Displaying a summary BASIC status to better clarify if a motor carrier's performance in the individual BASICs causes it to be prioritized for an intervention. Detailed data such as the motor carrier's percentile ranking in each BASIC has been moved to the individual drill down pages for each BASIC.

TAKE A TOUR   A new "Take a Tour" feature highlights enhancements to the site, and shows visitors how to locate and use particular enhancements. You can visit "Take a Tour" by selecting this link [https://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/SMSPreview/HelpCenter/Index.aspx#tour].

SAFETY EVENT GROUPS   The SMS determines a BASIC percentile for each motor carrier within a BASIC based on how the individual carrier's BASIC measure ranks relative to other carriers with a similar number of safety events (i.e., inspections, violations, or crashes). The new SMS display will allow the visitor to download all of the carriers in the same safety event group used to rank a carrier's BASIC percentile. The BASIC percentiles are used to prioritize carriers for CSA Intervention, but do not impact the safety rating.

CARRIER'S MEASURE   The new SMS display will provide a carrier's measure; a carrier's measure does not take into account peer performance.

Objective 2: Provide a "one-stop-shop" for FMCSA safety information

SAFETY RATING The safety rating from a compliance review issued in accordance with 49 CFR Part 385 will be displayed. Previously, users had to go to FMCSA's Safety and Fitness Electronic Records System website.

LICENSING & INSURANCE Current insurance and authority status will be displayed. Previously users had to go to FMCSA's Licensing and Insurance Online website.

PENALTIES HISTORY The new display shows a motor carrier's enforcement case history including the date the case was closed, the applicable violations, and the associated fines.

Objective 3: Retain and provide easy access to detailed information and new performance monitoring tools

NEW GRAPHS Throughout the enhanced SMS display, new information and graphics present data in a variety of customizable displays to enhance user understanding of safety performance over time. Users can select graphs that will show trends, history, or both, as well as monthly, quarterly, or semi-annual intervals related to a specific measure and carrier.

INSPECTION HISTORY The new display shows the total number of inspections for each carrier, as well as a breakdown of the number of inspections with and without violations. Inspection History is now offered in three views: "All Inspections," "With BASIC Violations" and "Without BASIC Violations," with detailed information available about each inspection.

KEY TERMS The terms used in the SMS have been clarified, and are explained in a new glossary, called "SMS Display Key Terms." These include definitions of the terms "0%" and "<5 inspections with violations."

How will FMCSA inform stakeholders?

Consistent with its dedication to transparency, FMCSA is conducting a preview of the package of changes to the SMS Website display. During the preview, law enforcement and motor carriers will be able to view the new features and share comments prior to implementation. In addition, this preview will allow the public to view the proposed site by looking at sample data. During the preview, but before implementation, FMCSA will conduct educational webinars for the public.

As part of the SMS Website preview and webinars, visitors will see some new messaging that encourages them to "Get Road Smart about Safety and Compliance." This marks the introduction of a refreshed CSA communications campaign designed to enforce the message that FMCSA is working to make America's roads as safe as possible. The FMCSA Get Road Smart campaign, when fully launched in

2014, will deliver a national education initiative complete with tools and information to help increase the national commitment to a culture of safety.

FMCSA has already sought feedback on the SMS's public display from a variety of stakeholders through the Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee's subcommittee for CSA. FMCSA established the subcommittee in September 2012 to provide input that will help to continue to improve the CSA program. Subcommittee members recommended many of the new features proposed in this package.

FMCSA seeks stakeholder feedback before it implements changes to the SMS public display that is currently on the SMS Website (http://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/sms/). FMCSA also will publish a notice in the Federal Register detailing the rationale for SMS display changes and instructing readers on how to submit comments (https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/federal-motor-carrier-safety-administration). FMCSA is listening, because together we can save more lives.