



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration



Compliance ★ Safety ★ Accountability

# UNDERSTANDING FUTURE CHANGES TO SMS

Webinar 1 | January 16, 2025

# Agenda

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- 1** Updating SMS
- 2** Reorganized Compliance Categories
- 3** Reorganized Roadside Violations
- 4** Simplified Severity Weights
- 5** Q&A

## Presenter



Wesley Russell  
Transportation Specialist  
Compliance Division

# UPDATING SMS

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# Safety is FMCSA's top priority and core mission.

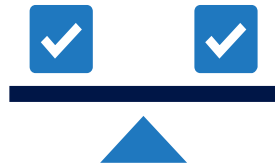
## FMCSA

- Uses SMS to identify behaviors most closely linked to crashes and prioritizes interventions
- Focuses resources where they will have the greatest impact to prevent crashes
- Invests in sound data and analysis
- Equips motor carriers with the proactive tools needed to improve their safety compliance



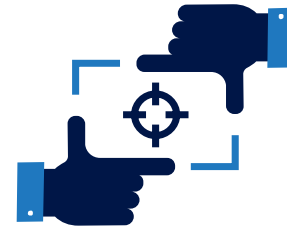
# Guiding Principles

The upcoming changes were informed by FMCSA's commitment to these guiding principles:



## **FAIRNESS**

Ensuring greater consistency in results by holding similar carriers to the same standard, regardless of how their safety issues are documented



## **ACCURACY**

Continually improving the quality of the data we use to stay focused on the motor carriers in most need of intervention



## **CLARITY**

Helping motor carriers better understand their results and how to use them to adopt safer behaviors

# Where We Are In the Process

## PHASE ONE

- Launched CSA Prioritization Preview website
- Collected comments from motor carriers and other stakeholders
- **Completed May 2023**
- **No changes implemented**

Prioritization Preview

## PHASE TWO

- Reviewed public comments, incorporated those that align with safety mission
- Updated CSA Prioritization Preview website to reflect changes
- Finalizing new methodology

Revise Prioritization

## PHASE THREE

- Update CSA enforcement program with finalized methodology
- Redesign SMS website
- Enforcement will use these results to prioritize carriers for CSA Interventions

Update Prioritization

 **Current Phase**

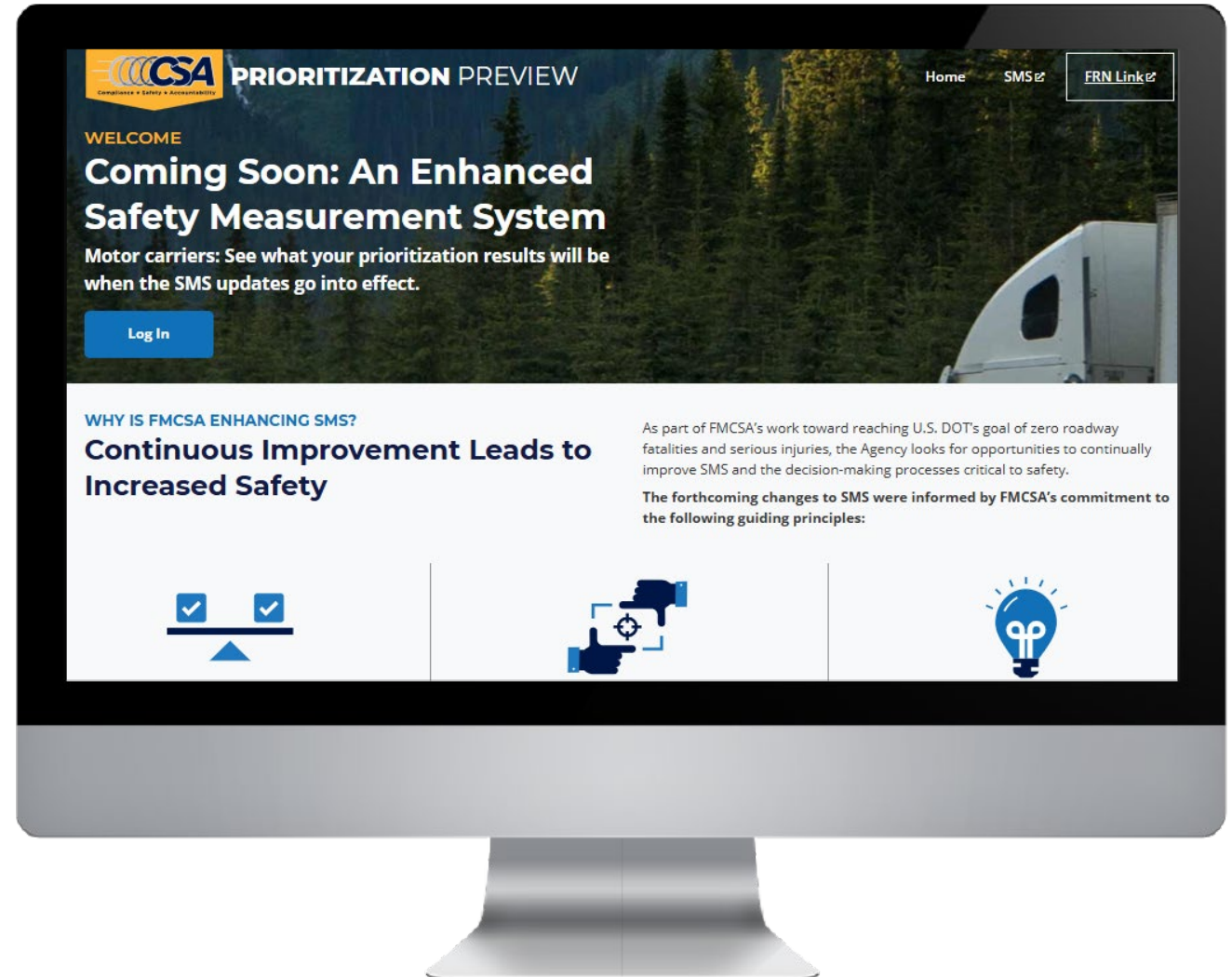
## CSA Prioritization Preview Website

- Summarizes the upcoming changes
- Explains how changes will enable FMCSA to improve safety
- Provides Preview resources for download



To visit, go to:

<https://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/PrioritizationPreview>



# REORGANIZED COMPLIANCE CATEGORIES

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# Reorganized Compliance Categories

NEW



**Crash Indicator**



**Hours of Service**



**Driver Fitness**



**Hazardous  
Materials**



**Unsafe Driving**

Includes Controlled Substances/Alcohol violations + Operating while Out-of-Service (OOS) violations



**Vehicle Maintenance**

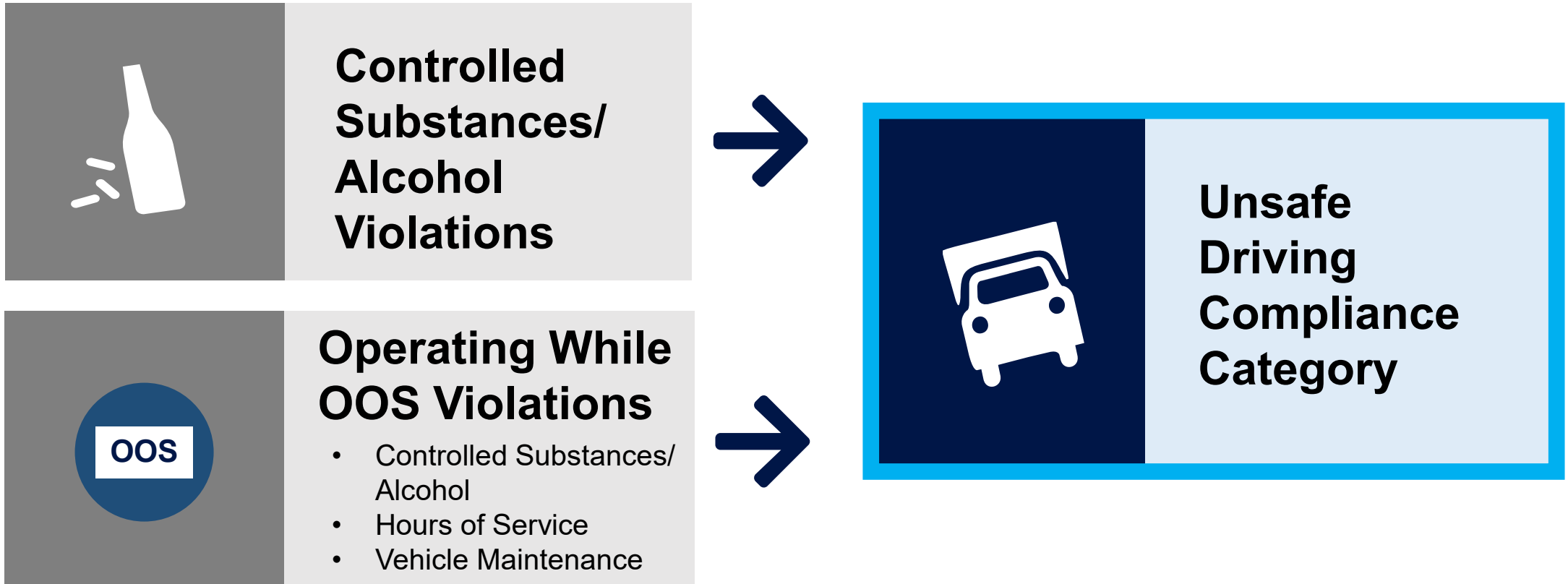
Includes all other vehicle maintenance violations, more commonly identified by a mechanic doing routine maintenance or detected as part of a Full (Level 1) roadside inspection



**Vehicle Maintenance: Driver Observed**

Includes violations that could reasonably be observed by a driver or detected as part of a Walk-Around (Level 2) roadside inspection

# Change to Unsafe Driving



# Change to Unsafe Driving: Example

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**EXAMPLE** Violation 396.9(c)(2): Operating an OOS vehicle

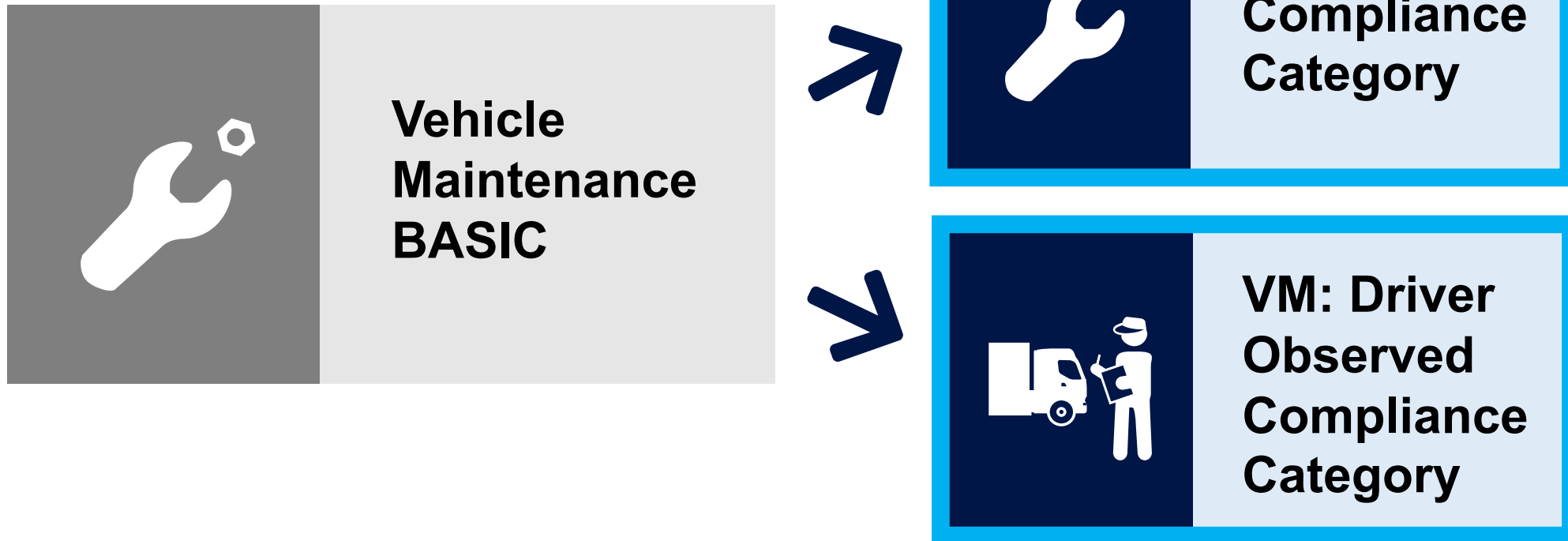
**CURRENT**

part of the Vehicle  
Maintenance BASIC

**NEW**

part of the Unsafe Driving  
Compliance Category

# Change to Vehicle Maintenance



# Reasons for Change

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Helps focus FMCSA's investigative resources on **carriers with higher crash rates**



Provides more specific information to help motor carriers and enforcement pinpoint **unsafe driver behavior and sources of vehicle maintenance issues**

# REORGANIZED ROADSIDE VIOLATIONS: VIOLATION GROUPS

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# Reorganized Roadside Violations

**2,000+**  
Roadside Violations



**~100**  
Violation Groups

- Violations that identify the **same** or a **similar** underlying safety issue will be grouped together
- If a carrier receives more than one of the violations in a violation group during a **single inspection**, the new SMS methodology will treat the set of violations as a **single violation**

# Reorganized Roadside Violations: Example

All of violations listed to the right are part of the “**HOS Requirements**” Violation Group.

If a carrier is cited with all these violations in an inspection, SMS will treat this set of violations as a **single violation** when calculating the Hours of Service measure.

## HOURS OF SERVICE COMPLIANCE CATEGORY

### Violation Group: HOS Requirements

- **395.3A2-PROP:** Driving beyond 14 hour duty period (Property Carrying Vehicle)
- **395.3 A3-PROP:** Driving beyond 11 hour driving limit (Property Carrying Vehicle)
- **395.3 (a)(3)(ii):** Driving beyond 8 hour driving limit since the end of the last on duty, off duty, or sleeper period of at least 30 minutes
- **395.3 B2:** Driving after 70 hours on duty in an 8 day period (Property Carrying Vehicle)



# Reasons for Change

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Our analysis indicated that, for prioritization purposes, determining **whether a safety issue is** identified is more important than determining **how many ways** it was documented



Ensures that **motor carriers are treated fairly** by holding carriers with similar safety issues to the same standards, regardless of how those issues were documented



**Prevents inconsistencies** in measures that occur when multiple violations are cited for the same underlying safety issue during one inspection

# SIMPLIFIED SEVERITY WEIGHTS

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# Simplified Severity Weights

1-10

Weighting Scale



1 or 2

Simplified Weights

Severity weights will be applied to a **violation group**, not individual violations.

# Simplified Severity Weights (continued)

If a carrier receives **one or more violations** within a violation group during an inspection, that set of violations would be assigned a **severity weight of 2** if they meet the criteria to the right.



## **Out-of-Service (OOS) violations**

Applies to all compliance categories except Unsafe Driving



## **Driver Disqualifying violations**

Applies to Unsafe Driving only, as defined in 49 CFR 383.51

If none of the violations in a set are OOS or Driver Disqualifying violations, that set of violations will receive a **severity weight of 1**.

# Simplified Severity Weights: Example

## EXAMPLE INSPECTION REPORT

Violation Code	OOS	Description	Compliance Category	Violation Group
172.504A	No	Vehicle not placarded as required	Hazardous Materials	HM Marking
393.53B	No	CMV manufactured after 10/19/94 has an automatic airbrake adjustment system that fails to compensate for wear	Vehicle Maintenance	Brakes
396.3A1BOS	<b>Yes</b>	BRAKES OUT OF SERVICE: The number of defective brakes is equal to or greater than 20 percent of the service brakes on the vehicle or combination	Vehicle Maintenance	Brakes

**+ 1**

**+ 2**

# Reasons for Change

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FMCSA determined that assigning **customized weights** to all violations was not as important as noting that the violation occurred



Identifies carriers **with higher crash rates** for prioritization



**Makes it clearer** why a specific violation is weighted more heavily than others



# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

## Changes covered:

- ✓ Reorganized Compliance Categories
- ✓ Reorganized Roadside Violations
- ✓ Simplified Severity Weights

**Type your questions  
in the Q&A pod!**



## Learn More

Visit the Preview site to:

- Learn more about the upcoming changes to SMS
- Download resources
- Watch a video on how to view your results on the site

Go to: <https://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/PrioritizationPreview>



## Contact Us

Questions on the upcoming changes?

### Contact our CSA InfoLine Team

- Call 877-254-5365 **OR**
- Submit a question via this form:  
<https://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/Home/Contact>



# STAY TUNED FOR MORE WEBINARS ON THE SMS CHANGES!

## WEBINAR 2

- Improved Intervention Thresholds
- Segmentation for Additional Compliance Categories
- Greater Focus on Recent Violations

## WEBINAR 3

- Proportionate Percentiles
- Updated Utilization Factor