

TRUCK TALK

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Safety Management Cycle

CSA (Compliance, Safety, and Accountability) has been around for a few months now. In February, FMCSA began sending out the first round of warning letters, which is the first step in the progressive intervention process. The warning letter puts the motor carrier on notice that its on-road performance over the past 24 months indicates safety issues and encourages the motor carrier to look at its safety performance online. It also outlines possible consequences of continued safety problems.

Motor carriers are not required to send a written response to FMCSA upon receipt of this first warning letter. However, motor carriers that receive warning letters should review their safety data in order to develop and execute strategies that will make their operations compliant with safety regulations. Continued poor performance may lead to more intensive interventions.

Assume for a moment that you received a warning letter. You, as a motor carrier, must decide what you are going to do about it. While a written response may not be required THIS TIME, you still need to be prepared, for the time may come when you will need to respond.

The model on this page was developed by FMCSA as a guide to preparing responses to future investigative inquiries. By following this model you, as the motor carrier, will be able to provide FMCSA with information regarding your progress in taking action now to avoid future problems.



Step 1, Policies and Procedures: Have your policies and procedures in writing. As we all know, when dealing with the DOT, if it isn't written down, it didn't happen.

Step 2, Roles and Responsibilities: Is someone in your company directly responsible for safety? Are roles clearly defined? Be sure to include if the CWG Loss Control Department is assisting you.

Step 3, Qualification and Hiring: Do you have written hiring criteria? Are you using the new Pre-Employment Screening Program (PSP)?

Step 4, Training and Communication: How do you communicate with your drivers (newsletters, safety meetings, Toolbox Talks)? What type of on-going training is provided? Be sure to include if CWG Loss Control is assisting you with driver meetings. FMCSA will want to know how- and how often - training and communication take place. These records must be constantly updated!

Step 5, Monitoring and Tracking: Develop a method of keeping track of roadside performance, GPS for example. Periodically review SMS data. When accessing data via the COMPASS Portal, FMCSA will be able to monitor how often you look at your data. There is just no excuse for not checking your data on a regular basis. If you do not already have your Portal account set up, go to www.fmcsa.dot.gov and click on FMCSA PORTAL in the upper right corner.

Step 6, Meaningful Action: Have you developed a new safety program? Safe driving awards? Do you have regularly scheduled safety meetings?

The incentive is for motor carriers to take action now to prevent future, more intensive interventions. The DOT has changed their focus from scaring and threatening to education and measuring accountability. There just is no excuse in today's environment to not know where you stand in the CSA process.

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