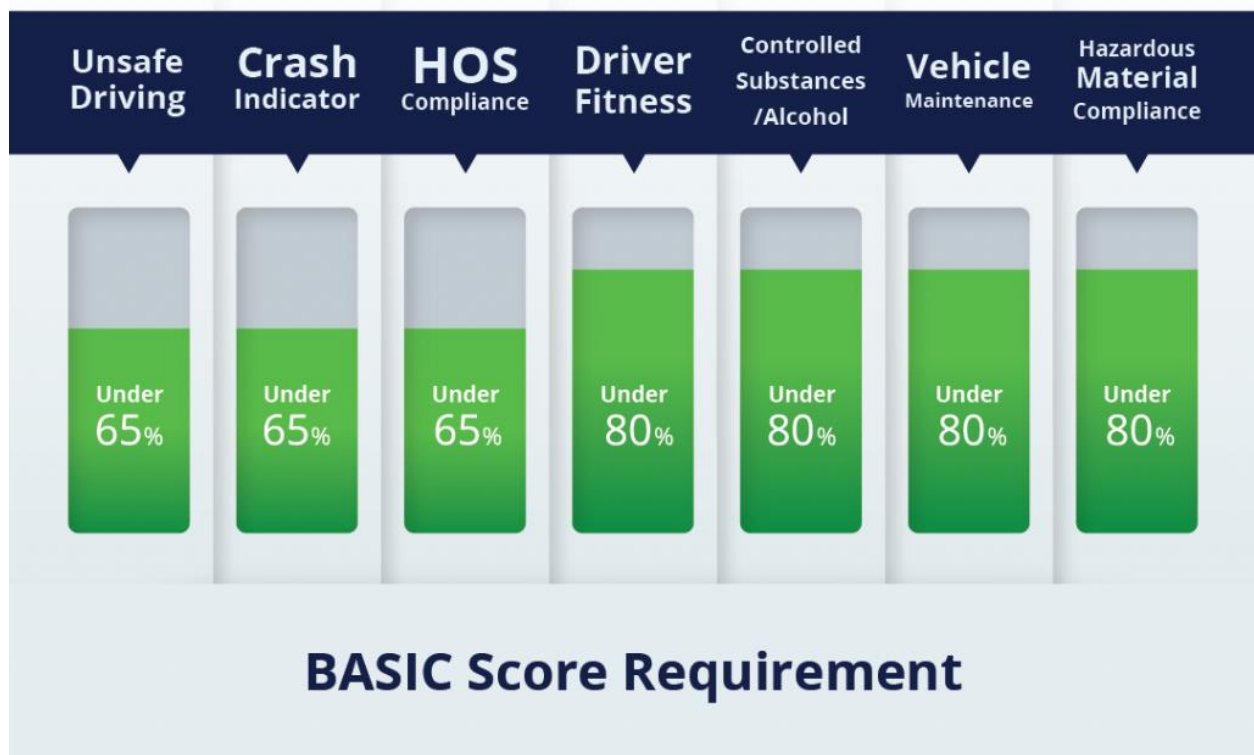




What is a CSA score and how do you check it?

CSA scores can be a factor in the success or failure of a carrier. They impact potential revenue, insurance rates, and even recruitment. So, what exactly is a CSA score? What goes into CSA score? How can a CSA score impact your business? And what exactly can you do to improve your CSA score?



What are CSA scores?

The FMCSA's Compliance, Safety, and Accountability (**CSA**) program is designed with two purposes in mind: holding carriers responsible to safety standards and preventing accidents through proactive intervention.

This is done by calculating a score through the Safety Measurement System (**SMS**). SMS tracks and measures data from a carrier's operations in the past two years to identify carriers at greater risk of accidents and violations. The score is assigned to your DOT and updates once a month.

The data used to calculate your score includes:

- Crash reports provided by states
- Violations found during roadside inspections
- Violations found during safety audits and investigations

How are CSA scores calculated?

Every imaginable safety-related violation is placed within a specific Behavioral Analysis and Safety Improvement Category or FMCSA BASIC.

There are seven BASICS:

1. Unsafe Driving
2. Driver Fitness
3. Hours-of-Service Compliance
4. Vehicle Maintenance
5. Controlled Substances
6. Crash Indicator
7. Hazardous Materials Compliance

SMS compares the data between carriers and assigns a percentile from 0-100 in each BASIC. When the offense took place, the severity of the violation, and the number of miles traveled per vehicle helps determine the score. A higher percentile means the carrier is a greater risk on the roads.

The FMCSA has set an “intervention threshold” for each BASIC to help prioritize who receives intervention. Each BASIC is weighted by the highest crash risk, so the intervention thresholds are different for each category. When a carrier’s BASIC score is at or above the threshold, the likelihood of intervention grows.

<https://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/documents/smsmethodology.pdf>

How do CSA scores impact a carrier?

- **Increased intervention.** The higher your score, the more likely you’ll receive warning letters, safety audits, roadside inspections, and in extreme cases, an out-of-service order.
- **Revenue and profit.** While Crash Indicator and Hazardous Materials Compliance BASICs are not public, the five other BASICs are. Shippers can easily look up a carrier’s CSA score and use it to determine who to hire for loads.
- **Recruitment.** If a carrier is unable to receive good loads and is dealing with the stress of intervention, it becomes difficult to keep drivers on the road.
- **Insurance.** Insurance companies often use CSA scores to evaluate a carrier’s risk profile and factor it into your premium and deductible.

How do I check my CSA score?

Carriers can look up their own CSA score and the CSA score of any drivers that they plan to hire from the FMCSA. It should be part of every carriers hiring process to check the CSA scores of all drivers before they bring them into their company.

Bad drivers can bring down a companies reputation and open them up to more scrutiny by the FMCSA. To view your own CSA score you can visit <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/SMS/> and login in using your USDOT# and PIN

Are there ways to improve my CSA scores?

- **Improve your hiring process.** The FMCSA's **PSP** (Pre-Employment Screening Program) contains a driver's crash and inspection data for the past five years and can help lower crash rate by 8% and driver out-of-service rates by 17%.
- **Contest erroneous violations.** Don't be afraid to contest violations you think were wrongly assessed. **DataQ** allows you to report incorrect data and wrongful violations.
- **Educate your drivers and reward good behavior.** Teach your employees and drivers the importance of CSA scores and why it's important to be trained in DOT compliance. Rewarding good maintenance, compliance, and record keeping helps lower CSA scores.
- **Consider a good ELD provider.** HOS violations are one of the most common violations. You can alleviate the risk of Hours-of-Service violations by implementing a

Keeping your CSA score in good standing requires diligence to safety standards. And improving it takes patience and changes. Either way, it's important to keep an eye on your CSA score so you can keep your carrier and business running smoothly.