

Unsafe Driving Overview

What is the Unsafe Driving BASIC? The Unsafe Driving Behavior Analysis and Safety Improvement Category (BASIC) is one of seven categories that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) uses to determine how a motor carrier ranks relative to other carriers with a similar number of safety events (i.e., inspections, violations, or crashes). The Unsafe Driving BASIC addresses the requirements within the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs), specifically 49 CFR Parts 392 and 397, and refers to the operation of commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) by drivers in a dangerous or careless manner. Some example roadside safety violations that may cause a motor carrier to rank poorly in this BASIC include speeding, reckless driving, improper lane change, and inattention.

How do motor carriers know where they stand? FMCSA's Safety Measurement System (SMS) determines an overall BASIC status for each motor carrier based upon roadside inspection results that are reflected as a percentile rank and/or prior investigation violations. This information can be seen by logging into the **SMS Website** (<https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/sms/>). Once logged into the SMS Website, a motor carrier with safety compliance problems in the Unsafe Driving BASIC will see a warning symbol in that BASIC. You can also view the records of your company's crashes and request a review of any records you think are inaccurate through DataQs. Violations of the regulations related to the Unsafe Driving BASIC raise the percentile rank, which indicates lower safety compliance and may lead to safety interventions such as warning letters or investigations.

What documents associated with this BASIC should motor carriers keep? If an investigation is conducted, Safety Investigators (SIs) may request from motor carriers these types of documents: driver training certificates and written route plans for certain explosives. Motor carriers should keep these documents as required by the FMCSRs, and know that SIs may use them to assess the nature and severity of safety problems.

How can motor carriers and their drivers improve safety performance in the Unsafe Driving BASIC? Motor carriers should be aware of all requirements included in the regulations related to the Unsafe Driving BASIC. Unsafe driving includes both obvious, and more subtle, behaviors. For example, regulations associated with this BASIC require drivers to wear seatbelts, to follow traffic laws, and to abide by speed limits. The Unsafe Driving BASIC is based on the regulations that require CMV drivers to drive in accordance with the laws, ordinances, and regulations in a jurisdiction and with the FMCSRs at 49 CFR Part 392 – Driving of Motor Vehicles and Part 397 – Transportation of Hazardous Materials.

Motor carriers should identify patterns of noncompliance in their drivers to educate them on the regulations and the importance compliance. They should answer drivers' questions, and direct them to the information they need, which can be found on FMCSA's Websites.

Motor carriers should know that violations related to the Unsafe Driving BASIC adversely affect SMS results for 24 months; time and/or inspections with no Unsafe Driving violations can improve motor carriers' BASIC percentile ranks. Also, they should check out the "What can a motor carrier do to improve?" section of the SMS Information Center for answers to commonly asked questions about safety performance.



© iStockPhoto/M.D. Riley



This is an official U.S. government publication, produced and disseminated by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

CSA is FMCSA's enforcement and compliance program to improve large truck and bus safety and ultimately reduce CMV-related crashes, injuries, and fatalities. For more information about CSA, visit <http://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov>

