

# CSA

# CARRIER SCORING: AN OVERVIEW

Under the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's CSA initiative, your crashes and roadside safety violations will have a direct effect on your employer's safety record for years to come. Collect enough violations and the consequences for your entire company – and for you *personally* – could be severe. Are YOU doing your part to help keep the scores low?

## The Scoring System

Every 30 days, the FMCSA's Carrier Safety Measurement System will generate a score for each motor carrier based on its crash history and performance on about 650 specific rules spread across seven categories known as the "BASICS." The more crashes and violations collected in any one BASIC over the past two years, the worse the carrier's score and the more likely the FMCSA will take notice.

## The Formulas

The formulas used to measure a carrier's performance on each BASIC rely on data from the past 24 months:

| BASIC   | FORMULA  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsafe Driving</li> <li>• Crash Indicator</li> </ul>   | $\frac{\text{Severity Weight} \times \text{Time Weight}}{\text{Normalizing Factor}}$                             |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fatigued Driving</li> <li>• Driver Fitness</li> <li>• Drugs &amp; Alcohol</li> <li>• Vehicle Maintenance</li> <li>• Cargo-Related</li> </ul> | $\frac{\text{Severity Weight} (+ 2 \text{ for OOS}^*) \times \text{Time Weight}}{\text{Inspection Time-Weight}}$ |

\*An OOS order does not increase the severity of a drug/alcohol violation.

- **Severity Weight:** Each violation or crash carries a severity weight indicating how "bad" the violation or crash was in terms of safety, as listed in the CSA severity tables. For most BASICS, the severity increases by 2 if the driver was placed out of service.
- **Time Weight:** The total severity weight for each inspection or crash is multiplied by a time weight — the most recent crashes and violations carry more weight.

| Age of Crash or Violation | Time Weight |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| < 6 months                | 3           |
| 6-12 months               | 2           |
| 12-24 months              | 1           |

- **Normalizing Factor:** This allows for an "apples to apples" comparison between different types of carriers. It's based on a carrier's average number of power units, the types of vehicles operated, and the number of vehicle miles traveled.
- **Inspection Time-Weight:** For 5 of the BASICS, each relevant inspection is assigned a time weight, using the scale above, so that the most recent inspections have the most impact, good or bad.

The higher the severity and the more recent the violation or crash, the *worse* the score. The more clean inspections, the *better* the score!

## Why It Matters

The possible consequences of a bad score include:

- More roadside inspections for all the carrier's drivers;
- Investigations that could target both the carrier *and* specific drivers who are personally faltering on the BASICS;
- Fines or other penalties that could affect the entire operation; or
- A downgraded safety rating for the company.

**Remember:** It's in *your* interest to help your carrier's safety record! Do your part.



**J. J. Keller**  
& Associates, Inc.<sup>®</sup>  
Since 1953