

FMCSA's Offsite Compliance Investigation Process

November 2022

Why an Offsite Investigation?

- An Offsite investigation enables FMCSA staff and State enforcement personnel to evaluate and improve safety problems without sending an enforcement official to a carrier's place of business.

What is an Offsite Investigation?

- A non-ratable, focused investigation conducted remotely, rather than at the carrier's place of business.
- An offsite investigation will not result in a safety rating, but penalties may be assessed for any violations found.
- An Offsite Investigation may be converted to an Onsite Focused or Comprehensive Investigation.

How is an Offsite Investigation Initiated?

- Email

Email transmitting an Initial Contact letter notifying carrier of the investigation and requesting preliminary information for the investigation from the carrier.



- Phone call

If no email on record and/or if information requested in the Initial Contact Letter is not uploaded by requested date.



Initial Contact letter



U.S. DOT
FMCSA
EDMUND S. MUSKIE FEDERAL
BUILDING
40 WESTERN AVENUE, ROOM 411
AUGUSTA, ME 04330
207-622-8358

Carrier Name
Address
City, State Zip
U.S. DOT: XXXXXXX

MM/DD/YYYY

Action Required by MM/DD/YYYY – U.S. DOT/FMCSA Initial Information Request for Investigation

Dear MOTOR CARRIER NAME:

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is an Agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) whose primary mission is to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving large trucks and buses. To help motor carriers like you comply with important safety regulations, FMCSA has a suite of safety intervention tools that evaluate why safety problems occur, recommend solutions, encourage corrective action, and, if necessary, invoke penalties for carriers failing to comply.

The purpose of this letter is to officially notify you that FMCSA will investigate your operations to determine the level of safety within your transportation operation. I will start this safety compliance investigation online, rather than in person at your place of business. This allows FMCSA to evaluate your safety compliance with little disruption to your business. An Offsite Investigation will not result in a safety fitness determination but may result in the issuance of civil penalties for any violations discovered. At any time during this investigation, FMCSA may determine that an Onsite Investigation is required. In the event this occurs, I will contact you with a date and time to review your transportation operation at your place of business.

To start this investigation, please complete the following steps.

- 1) Visit the Safety Measurement System (SMS) at <https://safety.fmcsc.dot.gov/SMS>
- 2) Log into your company's profile where you can find your investigation record
 - If you do not have or know your U.S. DOT Personal Identification Number (PIN), please visit <https://safer.fmcsc.dot.gov/AutoPin/index.shtml>
- 3) Complete and upload the following using the provided form by MM/DD/YYYY

- o Accident Register
- o Driver List

- o Equipment List
- o MCS-90
- o Questionnaire

Once I receive this initial information, I will request specific documentation for review. I may make follow-up requests, ask questions about the documents you submit, or request additional documents. **Please do not submit documents via mail, fax, or email;** FMCSA will first collect and examine all documents online to inform the type and location of the remainder of the investigation. Your full cooperation will help to expedite the review.

Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to improving your company's safety performance and compliance. If you have any questions, please contact me at the information provided above.

Sincerely,

Investigator Name
Safety Investigator
2076228358
First.Last@dot.gov

*This FMCSA special agent or designated State Partner is duly accredited by the Secretary of Transportation with the authority to enter upon, inspect, and examine lands, buildings, and equipment, and to inspect and copy records and papers of carriers and other persons, in performance of his/her duties under the Department of Transportation Act, related acts, and regulations of the Department.



SMS and the BASICS

12/11/11

4.5

How does SMS relate to crashes?

BASIC Status (Enforcement View) ?

Behavior Analysis & Safety Improvement Categories (BASICS)


Based on a 24-month record ending July 29, 2022



SEE YOUR DATA

CONTACT US

Select a BASIC icon above to get details, or view your [Complete SMS Profile](#).

 Denotes this carrier exceeds the FMCSA Intervention [Threshold](#) relative to its safety event grouping based upon roadside data and/or has been cited with one or more Acute/Critical Violations within the past 12 months during an investigation. Therefore, this carrier may be prioritized for an intervention action and roadside inspection.

Document Request Letter

Action Required by MM/DD/YYYY – U.S. DOT/FMCSA Documentation Request for Investigation

Dear CARRIER NAME:

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is an Agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation whose primary mission is to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving large trucks and buses. To help motor carriers like you comply with important safety regulations, FMCSA has a suite of intervention tools that evaluate why safety problems occur, recommend solutions, encourage corrective action, and, if necessary, invoke penalties for carriers failing to comply.

Thank you for submitting the initial documents to comply with the safety compliance investigation process. Your continued cooperation will help expedite the review and minimize any disruption to your business. If you fail to respond promptly, FMCSA may initiate enforcement action.

Based on FMCSA's review of the materials you have already provided, I need to review the specific documentation listed below. Please complete the following steps.

- 1) Visit the Safety Measurement System (SMS) at <https://safety.fmcsc.dot.gov/SMS>
 - If you do not have or know your U.S. DOT Personal Identification Number (PIN), please visit <https://safer.fmcsc.dot.gov/AutoPin/index.shtml>
- 2) Log into your company's profile where you can find your investigation record.
- 3) Upload the following by MM/DD/YYYY:

Crash Indicator

- Crash Report Number: , CT
 - o Police Accident Reports, 06/23/2022
- Crash Report Number: , AZ
 - o Police Accident Reports, 03/15/2022
- Driver: JOHN SMITH
 - o Driver qualification (DQ) files
- Driver: ROBERT SMART
 - o Driver qualification (DQ) files

Hours-of-Service Compliance

- Driver: PHIL COLLINS
 - o Bills of Lading, 06/01/2022-06/30/2022
 - o Dispatch Records, 06/01/2022-06/30/2022
 - o ELD edit reports, 06/01/2022-06/30/2022
 - o Fueling records with time dates, 06/01/2022-06/30/2022
 - o Records of Duty Status (RODS), 06/01/2022-06/30/2022
- If your device supports transferring ELD files via the web services or Bluetooth™ methods, you can send this information to FMCSA by initiating a data transfer for the information requested and entering the code INV-XXXXXX-XXXXXX-XXXX-1 when asked for the output file comment. Note: this code is unique to this driver.
- Toll road receipts and supporting documents, 06/01/2022-06/30/2022
- Driver: KENNETH ROGERS
 - o Bills of Lading, 06/01/2022-06/30/2022
 - o Dispatch Records, 06/01/2022-06/30/2022
 - o ELD edit reports, 06/01/2022-06/30/2022
 - o Fueling records with time dates, 06/01/2022-06/30/2022
 - o Records of Duty Status (RODS), 06/01/2022-06/30/2022

If your device supports transferring ELD files via the web services or Bluetooth™ methods, you can send this information to FMCSA by initiating a data transfer for the information requested and entering the code INV-XXXXXX-XXXXXX-XXXX-2 when asked for the output file comment. Note: this code is unique to this driver.

- Toll road receipts and supporting documents, 06/01/2022-06/30/2022
- Additional Documents
 - o Carrier's HOS disciplinary policy
 - o Carrier's records of driver HOS violations (from internal reviews)
 - o Written explanation as to what action have or will be taken to reduce SMS scores in the HOS BASICs which is in Alert.

Other Documents

- Driver: PHIL COLLINS
 - o Drug & Alcohol Clearing House written or electronic consent form, MM/DD/YYYY - MM/DD/YYYY
- Driver: GLEN CAMPBELL
 - o Drug & Alcohol Clearing House written or electronic consent form, MM/DD/YYYY - MM/DD/YYYY
- Driver: JOHN SMITH
 - o Drug & Alcohol Clearing House written or electronic consent form, MM/DD/YYYY - MM/DD/YYYY
- Additional Documents
 - o Accident/loss file or Loss/Run reports

After I receive this information, I may make follow-up requests, ask questions about the documents you submit, or request additional documents. Please do not submit documents via mail, fax, or email. FMCSA will first collect and examine all documents online to inform the type and location of the remainder of the investigation. An Offsite Investigation will not result in a safety fitness determination but may result in the issuance of civil penalties for any violations discovered. At any time during this investigation, FMCSA may determine that an Onsite Investigation is required. In the event this occurs, I will contact you with a date and time to review your transportation operation at your place of business. If you do not have a requested document and/or wish to submit something additional, please provide an explanation. Please log into SMS to view examples of documentation for reference.

Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to safety compliance. If you have any questions, please contact me at the information provided above.

Sincerely,

NAME
Safety Investigator
2076228358
first.last@dot.gov

*This FMCSA special agent or designated State Partner is duly accredited by the Secretary of Transportation with the authority to enter upon, inspect, and examine lands, buildings, and equipment, and to inspect and copy records and papers of carriers and other persons, in performance of his/her duties under the Department of Transportation Act, related acts, and regulations of the Department.



How to upload documents

How to upload documents

1

ACCESS THE SMS WEBSITE

<https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/SMS>

Log in with your U.S. DOT # and FMCSA-issued U.S. DOT # PIN (NOT your Docket Number PIN) or your Portal credentials.



U.S. DOT# & PIN	FMCSA Portal Login
U.S. DOT# <input type="text"/>	User ID: <input type="text"/>
U.S. DOT# PIN <input type="text"/>	Password: <input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="SUBMIT"/>	<input type="button" value="SUBMIT"/>

*Note: If you do not have a U.S. DOT PIN or don't know your PIN, you can request one here: <https://safer.fmcsa.dot.gov/AutoPin/index.xhtml>

How to upload documents...

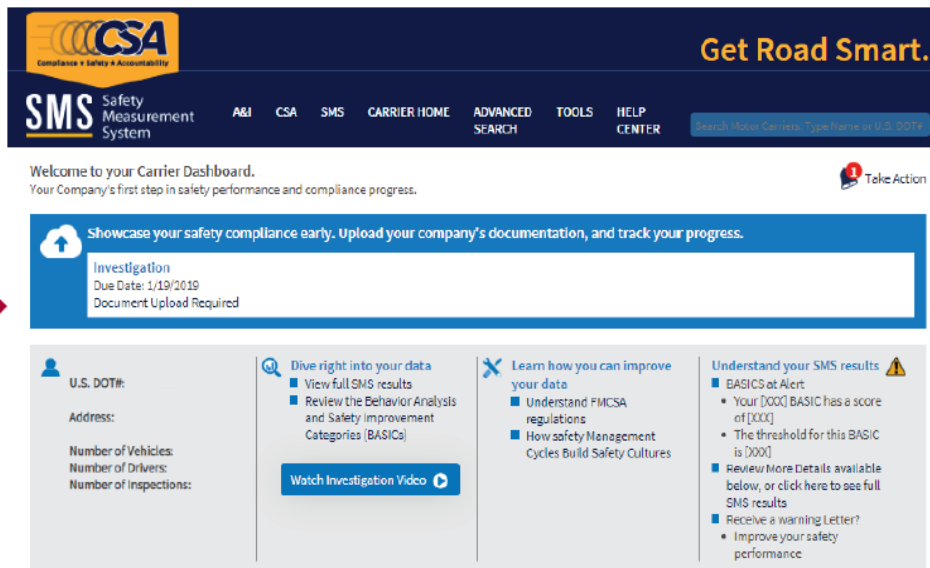
2

NAVIGATE TO DOCUMENT UPLOAD PAGE

In the blue box at the top of the screen, select **"Document Upload Required."**

OR

Click any of the notifications under **"Take Action."**



The screenshot shows the CSA SMS Carrier Dashboard. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the CSA logo, 'SMS Safety Measurement System', and various menu items like 'A&I', 'CSA', 'SMS', 'CARRIER HOME', 'ADVANCED SEARCH', 'TOOLS', and 'HELP CENTER'. A search bar is also present. Below the navigation bar, a welcome message is displayed. A red arrow points from the 'Take Action' notification icon to a blue box containing an 'Investigation' with a 'Due Date: 1/19/2019' and a 'Document Upload Required' status. Another red arrow points from the 'Document Upload Required' text to the 'Watch Investigation Video' button. The bottom section of the dashboard provides a summary of the carrier's information, including U.S. DOT#, address, and vehicle/driver/inspection counts, along with links to view full SMS results, understand FMCSA regulations, and learn how to improve safety management cycles.

How to upload documents...

3

Upload Documents
Consent Agreement
Document Upload
Document History

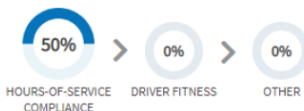
CHOOSE YOUR UPLOAD METHOD

Upload documents by selecting your preferred method of **fax** or **upload**. If you **do not have** a requested document, you can indicate you do not have it by selecting "Do Not Have" and providing a detailed explanation. If you are required to provide Records of Duty Status, an Electronic Logging Device or ELD button will appear.



If you have been asked to provide Accident Register, Driver List, or Equipment List, or to complete an Investigation Questionnaire, please use one of FMCSA's templates by clicking the "Download Template" button.

Upload Documents



Please note that these indicators show upload progress and do not indicate completion of FMCSA's review, you may be required to upload additional documents.

Hours-of-Service Compliance

Documents requested are listed below. Select your preferred method to submit or indicate you do not have it.

Driver Name #1

Document	
Fueling records with time/dates (11/21/2018-12/21/2018)	<input type="button" value="Fax"/> <input type="button" value="Upload"/> <input type="button" value="Do Not Have"/>
ELD	<input type="button" value="Fax"/> <input type="button" value="Upload"/> <input type="button" value="Do Not Have"/>
Bills of Lading (11/21/2018-12/21/2018)	<input type="button" value="Fax"/> <input type="button" value="Upload"/> <input type="button" value="Do Not Have"/>

✓ Driver Name #2

Document	
✓ Bills of Lading (11/21/2018-12/21/2018)	<input type="button" value="Fax"/> <input type="button" value="Review/Replace"/>
✓ Fueling records with time/dates (11/21/2018-12/21/2018)	<input type="button" value="Documents Available"/>
✓ Records of Duty Status (RODS) (11/21/2018-12/21/2018)	<input type="button" value="Documents Available"/>

NEXT: Driver Fitness

MONITOR YOUR PROGRESS

Once you have uploaded all the requested documents, the percentages marking your progress will appear at **100%**. This indicates you have uploaded the requested documents (or indicated those you do not have), but it **does not denote review or acceptance by FMCSA**; there may be additional documents requested in the future.

NAVIGATE PAGES

After you have completed the requested documents for one BASIC, simply click the "Next" button to move to the next BASIC page.

How to upload documents...

4

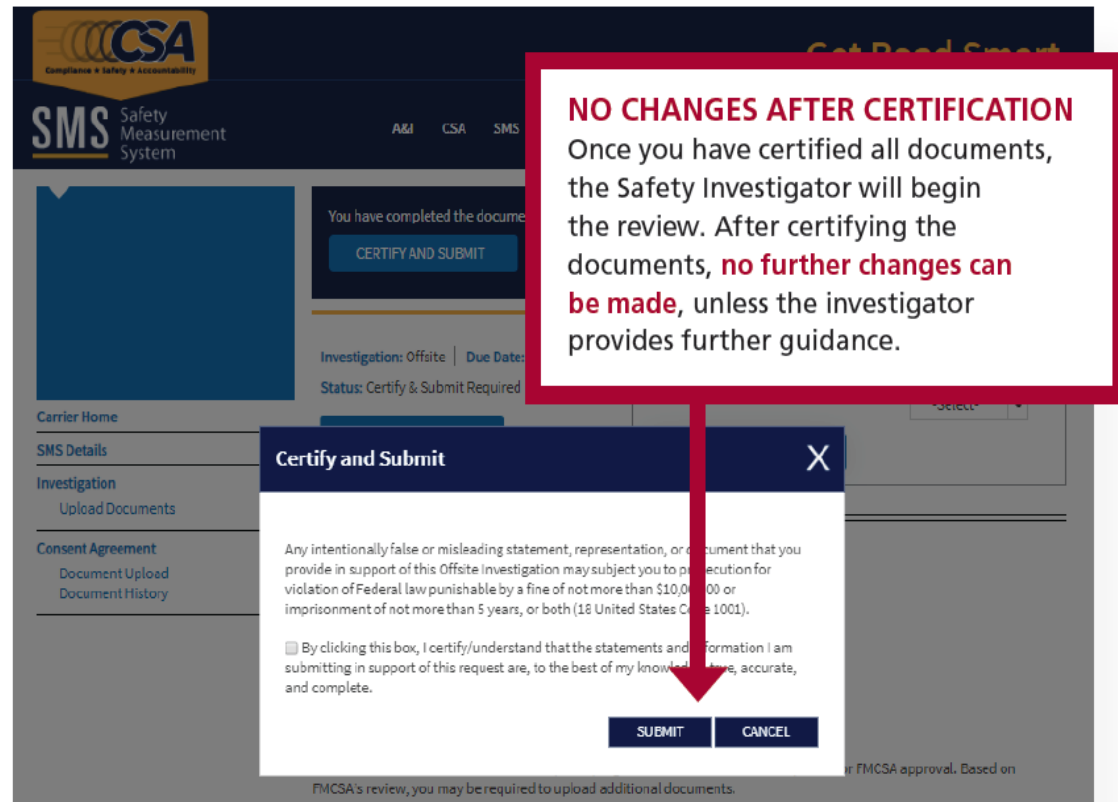
CERTIFY AND SUBMIT

Once you have uploaded all requested documents or provided explanations for those you do not have, the **"Certify and Submit"** window will appear.



REVIEW/REPLACE

If you uploaded the wrong document, you can replace the documents as many times as you would like until your package is ready and you complete the "Certify and Submit" process.



NO CHANGES AFTER CERTIFICATION
Once you have certified all documents, the Safety Investigator will begin the review. After certifying the documents, **no further changes can be made**, unless the investigator provides further guidance.

Certify and Submit

Any intentionally false or misleading statement, representation, or document that you provide in support of this Offsite Investigation may subject you to prosecution for violation of Federal law punishable by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment of not more than 5 years, or both (18 United States Code 1001).

☐ By clicking this box, I certify/understand that the statements and information I am submitting in support of this request are, to the best of my knowledge, true, accurate, and complete.

SUBMIT **CANCEL**

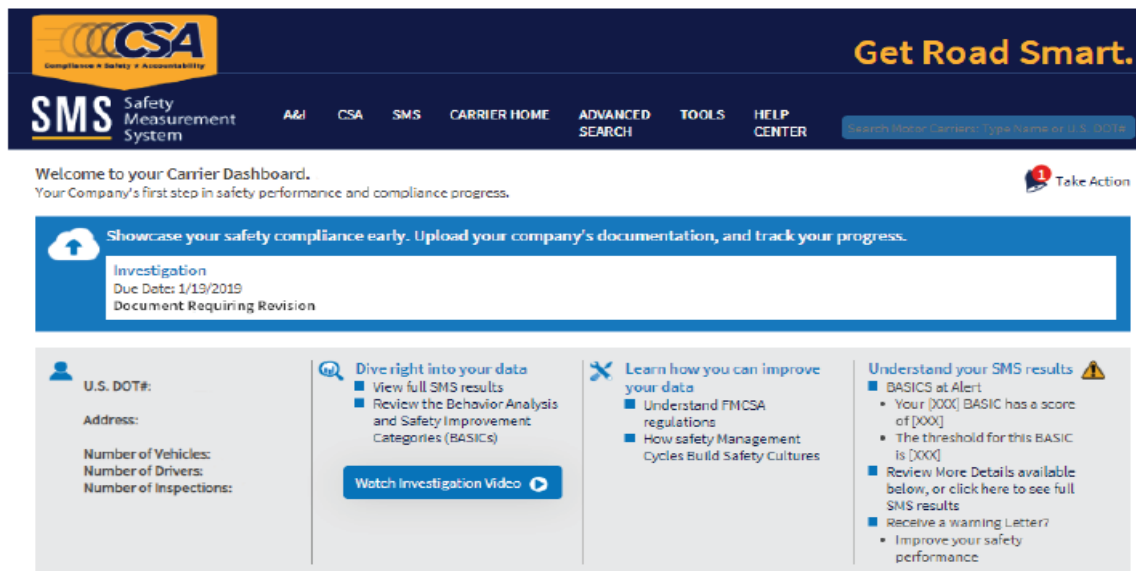
FMCSA's review, you may be required to upload additional documents.

How to upload documents...

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DOCUMENTS REQUIRING REVISION

If there are any issues with documents you submitted, or if additional information is required, the Safety Investigator may request additional documents. They will notify **you via email or phone and you will receive a notification on your SMS carrier dashboard** that says "Documents Requiring Revision."



The screenshot shows the SMS Carrier Dashboard. At the top, there's a header with the CSA logo and navigation links. Below the header, a blue banner reads "Showcase your safety compliance early. Upload your company's documentation, and track your progress." Underneath this banner, a white box highlights an "Investigation" with a "Due Date: 1/19/2019" and a status of "Document Requiring Revision". To the left of this box, a red arrow points from the number '5' to the investigation box. Below the banner, there are four columns of information: "U.S. DOT#" and "Address" fields; a "Dive right into your data" section with links to view full SMS results and review behavior analysis; a "Learn how you can improve your data" section with links to understand FMCSA regulations and safety management cycles; and a "Understand your SMS results" section with a warning icon and links to review BASICs at alert, review more details, and receive a warning letter.

**Note: The document upload process remains the same for any additional documents requested.*

Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse (DACH)

- DACH compliance is verified during every Onsite and Offsite, investigation.
- Ensure your company is registered and is completing Pre-Employment and Annual queries as required.

<https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov/>



Completion and Close out of review done Remotely

Get Road Smart

Stay connected.

- Visit the Motor Carrier Resource Center at:
<http://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/?carriersafety>
- Sign up for important updates via the CSA Website at:
<https://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/Home/Subscribe>
- Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse - <https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov>
- DataQs - <https://dataqs.fmcsa.dot.gov>
- Motor Carrier Safety Planner – <https://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetyplanner>

FMCSA Office Staff and Contact Information

- Eric Adair, Division Administrator
- Cheryl Quirion, Federal Program Specialist
- Brendan Shaughnessy, State Program Specialist
- Dennis Anderson, Investigator (Northern Maine)
- Christopher Canty, Investigator (Central Maine)
- Larry Bennett, Investigator (Southern Maine)

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