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American Transportation Association, Inc. was founded to bring increased safety awareness and driver training initiatives to its members as a way of promoting a safer, more profitable transportation industry. As time went by, it became apparent that the ATA, Inc. was able to bring its resources to also deliver purchasing power for its members through its size and scope. The association used this power to develop programs to aid its members in buying services and materials at deep discounts. This helped to increase the members' bottom lines while facilitating the delivery of necessary information and services to its members. American Transportation Association was born to make our industry safer and more profitable, and works every day to make sure we do this for our members and our transportation community as a whole.

## Safety Focus: Q & A: Your perioditic/annual inspection questions

This edition of Q & A addresses periodic/annual inspection requirements in Part 396 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs).

**Q:** How can our company meet the periodic/annual inspection requirements?

**A:** Commercial motor vehicles operating in interstate or foreign commerce must pass an inspection at least annually.

The inspection requirements may be met through:

- A self-inspection program;
- An inspection performed by a commercial garage or similar business; or
- A periodic inspection program administered by a state.

The inspection must comply with federal or compatible state standards.

**Q:** Who is qualified to conduct a self-inspection?

**A:** A self-inspection must be conducted by a qualified inspector, whether the inspector works directly for the carrier or a third party, such as a truck stop, repair shop, or an inspection business.

The individual conducting the inspection must understand the inspection criteria in Part 393 and Appendix G of the FMCSRs and must be able to identify defective components.

He/she must be knowledgeable of and have mastered the methods, procedures, tools, and equipment used when performing the inspection.

The inspector must have a combination of training and/or experience totaling at least one year. Evidence of the inspector's qualifications must be documented.

**Q:** How is the inspection documented?

**A:** The inspector performing the inspection must prepare a report which identifies the:

- Name of the individual performing the inspection;

- Motor carrier operating the vehicle;
- Date of the inspection;
- Vehicle inspected; and
- Components inspected.

A statement certifying the accuracy and completeness of the inspection must be included.

The inspection report must be kept where the vehicle is housed or maintained for 14 months and a copy of the inspection report must be kept in the vehicle.

**Q:** Can we use a decal to document the inspection?

**A:** A decal may be placed on the vehicle. The decal must include:

- The date of inspection;
- Name and address of your company or other entity (for example, commercial garage) where the inspection report is maintained;
- Information uniquely identifying the vehicle inspected if not clearly marked on the motor vehicle; and
- A certification that the vehicle has passed an inspection in accordance with Sec. 396.17.

Though the decal replaces the inspection report on the vehicle, the inspection report must continue to be retained where the vehicle is housed or maintained for 14 months as discussed earlier in this edition of Q & A.



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*The mission of the American Transportation Association, Inc. is to enhance the ability of its members to efficiently and profitably improve the safety of its members through educational opportunities, compiling and distributing needed information and conducting Advocacy.*

## Compliance, Safety, Accountability

Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) is a Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) program. Its goal is to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities on the nation's highways by assessing the safety performance of motor carriers and drivers.

To assess the safety performance of motor carriers and drivers, data is collected. Most of the data is collected during roadside inspections. The rest of the data comes from crash reports and investigations conducted by FMCSA.

So, why is CSA important to the professional driver? Scores are generated from the data collected. These scores can have either a positive or negative impact on both the driver and his/her company.

### Know the BASICS

The data collected from roadside inspection reports, crash reports, and FMCSA investigations is analyzed, numerically scored, and organized into one of seven critical safety areas called Behavior Analysis and Safety Improvement Categories (BASICS). The seven BASICS are:

1. **Unsafe driving.** Addresses careless or dangerous operation of commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) by drivers.
2. **Hours-of-service compliance.** Covers operation of CMVs by drivers who are ill, fatigued, or in



noncompliance with the hours-of-service regulations.

3. **Driver fitness.** Addresses operation of CMVs by drivers who are unfit due to a lack of training, experience, or medical qualifications.
4. **Controlled substances and alcohol.** Covers operation of CMVs by drivers who are impaired due to alcohol, illegal drugs, and/or misuse of prescription or over-the-counter medications.
5. **Vehicle maintenance.** Addresses failure to properly maintain a CMV and prevent shifting loads.
6. **Hazardous materials compliance.** Addresses the unsafe handling of hazardous materials on a CMV.
7. **Crash indicator.** Covers history or patterns of high crash involvement, including frequency and severity. It is based on law enforcement crash reports.

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## Compliance, Safety, Accountability *(continued from page 1)*

The goal is to maintain low scores in all seven of the BASICS. The lower the scores, the less chance of intervention. An intervention is corrective action taken by FMCSA. Interventions range from a warning letter, to an out-of-service order.

### The roadside inspection

The roadside inspection is where the majority of driver and carrier data is gathered. Because of this, it is important to have as many positive roadside inspections as possible.

Drivers can assist in ensuring positive roadside inspections by keeping paperwork current and easy to read. Also, their vehicles should be in the best condition possible. This includes following a solid preventive maintenance program.

In addition to a preventive maintenance program, drivers should conduct thorough pretrip and post-trip inspections, and make sure vehicle problems are repaired as soon as possible.

The driver is representing both himself/herself and the company during a roadside inspection. Drivers need to be prepared and act professionally.

### Scores

Each month CSA's Safety Measurement System (SMS) measures the data collected from the previous 24 months for motor carriers and previous 36 months for drivers and calculates scores in each of the BASICS.

Violations are given a value of one to ten with the higher value indicating a more severe violation. Examples of low value violations include:

- A form and manner violation on a record of duty status; and
- Driving with a defective or missing mud flap.

Examples of high value violations include:

- Operating a commercial motor vehicle while ill or fatigued;
- Reckless driving; and
- Operating commercial motor vehicle while texting.

In addition to being given a value, violations are time weighted. Recent violations are given a higher weighting than those in the past.

Motor carrier scores generated in the SMS are then entered into a database and compared to the scores of other motor carriers. This is how FMCSA then identifies intervention candidates.

FMCSA does not use the SMS to assign formal safety ratings to drivers. Safety investigators do investigate drivers with egregious violations when investigating a motor carrier.



### DataQs

DataQs is a system that allows carriers and drivers to challenge data FMCSA has on file about them and lists on its websites. DataQs is commonly used by motor carriers to request copies of roadside inspection reports and/or ask for corrections to the data found on the reports. DataQs is often used by drivers to dispute or ask for correction to data listed on their Pre-Employment Screening (PSP) records.

A motor carrier or driver must register to use DataQs. Once registered, a motor carrier or driver must provide the appropriate information for a request to be processed.

DataQs then forwards the request and all of the information provided to the agency that entered the data being challenged by the motor carrier or driver. At this point, an investigation is conducted. Once the investigation is completed, the motor carrier or driver is notified of the investigation's results via the DataQs system. If necessary, changes/corrections will be sent to FMCSA.

The DataQs website is: [https:// dataqs.fmcsa.dot.gov](https://dataqs.fmcsa.dot.gov).

### What is PSP?

The Pre-Employment Screening Program (PSP) is a voluntary program that allows carriers, individual drivers, and industry service providers access to commercial drivers' safety records from FMCSA's Motor Carrier Management Information System (MCMIS).

A PSP record contains a driver's most recent five years of crash data and the most recent three years of roadside inspection data from the MCMIS database. The record displays a snapshot in time, based on the most recent MCMIS data uploaded to the PSP system. A new snapshot is uploaded approximately once per month.

It is a good idea for all drivers to review their PSP records from time to time to ensure accuracy.

A copy of the PSP record is available via the PSP website: <https://www.psp.fmcsa.dot.gov/psp>.



## Member Benefits



## Safety and Compliance Programs

### Monitoring and Fleet Safety

**Safety Alert** offers 24 hour driver monitoring and fleet safety included for the number of vehicles on policy schedule at inception of policy.



### Transportation Compliance

**J.J. Keller & Associates, Inc.** can provide deep discounts on driver qualification files, reasonable suspicion drug testing facilities, and other services. J.J. Keller & Associates, Inc. is a leader in transportation compliance.



## Business Solutions

### Payroll and Human Resource Outsourcing

With almost 60 years of experience, **ADP** is the oldest and largest provider of payroll and human resource services. Now ATA members can enjoy special pricing on services such as payroll, tax filing, direct deposit, applicant prescreens and more.



*American Transportation Association is constantly discovering more ways to enhance your membership and provide new services designed to save you money. To learn more about these benefits or to enroll in programs, visit [www.amtrangroup.com](http://www.amtrangroup.com) or call 877-562-8951.*

### Safety By Association

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