



# Cargo-Related BASIC Factsheet



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## Cargo-Related Overview

**What is the Cargo-Related BASIC?** The Cargo-Related Behavior Analysis and Safety Improvement Category (BASIC) is one of seven categories that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) program 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). At present, the Cargo-Related BASIC can only be seen by enforcement personnel or by a motor carrier that is logged into its own safety profile. It is not available to the public. The Cargo-Related BASIC specifically addresses the requirements within the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) Parts 392, 393, 397, and Hazardous Materials (HM) Regulations to properly prevent shifting loads, spilled or dropped cargo, overloading, and unsafe handling of HM on a commercial motor vehicle (CMV). Some example roadside safety violations that may cause a motor carrier to rank poorly in this BASIC include improper load securement (see the specific securement requirements by commodity type in 49 CFR Part 393.116-393.136), cargo retention, and HM handling.

**How do motor carriers know where they stand?** CSA's Safety Measurement System (SMS) assigns motor carriers a percentile rank for each BASIC based on violations cited during roadside inspections and investigations, which they can see by logging into the **SMS Website**. Once logged into the SMS Website, motor carriers with safety compliance problems in the Cargo-Related BASIC will see a warning symbol in that BASIC. They can also view the records of their companies' roadside inspections and request a review of any records they feel are inaccurate. Violations of the regulations related to the Cargo-Related BASIC raise the percentile rank, which indicates lower safety compliance.

**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: evidence of driver training on load securement, HM incident reports, an HM Security Plan, HM shipping papers, a Cargo Tank Manufacturer's Certificate, and evidence of HM training. 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 a motor carrier's safety problems.

**How can motor carriers and their drivers improve safety performance in the Cargo-Related BASIC?** Drivers should know how to comply with the regulations related to the Cargo-Related BASIC and how to properly prevent shifting loads, spilled or dropped cargo, overloading, and unsafe handling of HM, to ensure their safety and the safety of others. The Cargo-Related BASIC is based on the regulations that require motor carriers and drivers to properly secure their loads outlined in 49 CFR Subpart I – Protection Against Shifting and Falling Cargo and 49 CFR 397 Transportation of Hazardous Materials.

Motor carriers should educate their drivers about how to safely and lawfully transport cargo and HM, and to make sure drivers understand that any cargo-related problems must be addressed proactively to prevent unsafe situations. This education should include how to properly distribute and adequately fasten cargo to their motor vehicles as required in the FMCSRs. Motor carriers should answer drivers' questions and direct them to the information they need, including FMCSA's Website and the CSA Website.

Motor carriers should know that violations related to the Cargo-Related BASIC adversely affect a motor carrier's SMS results for 24 months; time and/or clean inspections (i.e., inspections with no Cargo-Related violations) can improve a motor carrier's BASIC percentile rank. 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 under CSA.

**Please NOTE: This BASIC is slated to be modified/removed in the coming months. For information on the pending changes, read the Changes Overview document. Motor carriers may log in to the SMS Preview to view their record under the new changes.**



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CSA is FMCSA's enforcement 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>

