

# U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Plan for Increasing the Public Availability  
of Agency Operation Information

September 28, 2015

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## Executive Summary

This plan was developed in response to the March 20, 2015 memorandum from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) General Counsel and Chief Information Officer that requires each Operating Administration to develop a specific action plan for making “in-demand” information publicly available on an ongoing basis.

A review of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s (FMCSA’s) data and information dissemination practices shows that the Agency publicly releases data and information across its various programs and functions. This includes motor carrier safety and performance data, research and technology reports, Congressional reports, Congressional testimony, recent and historical news, budget and funding reports, regulations, rulemaking documents, and Federal Register notices. Most of the data and information are accessible on the Agency’s central Web site <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/>, the Analysis and Information Online Web site <http://www.ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/>, and the Safety and Fitness Electronic Records (SAFER) System <http://safer.fmcsa.dot.gov/>. The Agency also operates an Electronic Reading Room (ERR).

FMCSA and its respective program offices strive to continually identify information and data in-demand for publishing by regularly reviewing requests, comments and feedback, Web analytics from its various Web pages, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) logs, public, press, and Congressional inquiries to The Office of Public Affairs, The Office of Governmental Affairs, and program offices. Each program office is also committed to reviewing its current data and information release practices on an ongoing basis and providing updates and new releases in a timely and responsive manner.

While FMCSA remains committed to the continuous public release and dissemination of information on a timely and responsive basis, the Agency also ensures that private, privileged, or other sensitive data including Personally Identifiable Information (PII) protected by the Privacy Act is protected through appropriate administrative, physical, and technical safeguards.

The Agency is also working on a new set of initiatives that would promote increased public access to research study data and a new dashboard of metrics that would track the output and performance of the Agency’s customer service call centers.

# 1 Understanding In-Demand Data

## 1.1 Review of Existing Practices

The following are examples of current releases that have made FMCSA more efficient and responsive to a demonstrated need for the information.

Analysis and Information (A&I) Online <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/default.aspx>: A&I is FMCSA's online resource center for analytical data, statistics, recent studies, and reports on truck and bus safety. FMCSA proactively provides its personnel, State partners, and the general public with the following:

- Motor carrier safety and performance data through FMCSA's Safety Measurement System (SMS) <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/SMS/>.
- Summarized crash statistics for large trucks and buses involved in fatal and non-fatal crashes that occurred in the United States <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/CrashStatistics/>.
- Safety and program output data on motor carrier reviews, roadside inspections and traffic enforcement <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/SafetyProgram/Home.aspx>.
- Specific statistics for hazardous material (HM) carriers, passenger carriers, and carriers domiciled within each of the three countries covered by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/SafetyProgram/Home.aspx>.
- A searchable collection of FMCSA-developed analytical reports on truck and bus safety <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/CarrierResearchResults/>.
- A means to request and track a review of Federal and State data issued by FMCSA that the requestor may deem to be incomplete or incorrect through the DataQs module <https://dataqs.fmcsa.dot.gov/>.

For each A&I reporting module listed above, FMCSA keeps the information current through monthly data snapshot updates and releases.

Research and Technology Projects and Studies: FMCSA disseminates information on active and completed research and technology projects through the Analysis, Research, and Technology Web page on the FMCSA Web site: <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety/analysis-research-technology> and the USDOT Research Hub <http://ntlsearch.bts.gov/researchhub/index.do>. The Agency provides an active listing of the following:

- Active research projects
- Recently completed research projects
- Reports and publications
- Data and statistics

FMCSA keeps this information current through monthly updates and releases.

**Company Safety Data:** FMCSA's Safety and Fitness Electronic Records (SAFER) System offers company safety data and related services to industry and the public through the internet: <http://safer.fmcsa.dot.gov/>. Users may search FMCSA databases, register for a USDOT

number, pay fines online, order company safety profiles, challenge the accuracy of FMCSA data using the DataQs system, access the Hazardous Material (HM) Route registry, obtain National Crash and Out of Service rates for HM Permit Registration, obtain printable registration forms and find information concerning other FMCSA information systems. FMCSA keeps the information in SAFER current through daily, weekly, and monthly updates and releases.

**Regulations, Rulemaking, and Federal Register Notices:** The Regulations Web page on FMCSA central Web site provides a link to regulations issued by FMCSA and published in the Federal Register: <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations>. It also provides links to rulemaking documents, *Federal Register* notices, and information related to FMCSA regulatory enforcement activities. FMCSA's Office of Policy updates and provides this information to the public. The Web page is updated within one (1) month of finalizing and clearing new information for public release.

**Grant Programs:** FMCSA disseminates information on its Grant Programs through the Grants Webpage on the Agency's central Website <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/mission/grants>. The Agency's safety grant funding opportunities are primarily available to State and local government agencies in 1 of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. FMCSA keeps this information current through quarterly updates and releases.

**Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA):** FMCSA conducts PIAs for all IT systems, rulemakings, and programs that impact an individual's privacy. Each PIA identifies, evaluates, and documents the privacy risks created by the agency activity and provides the public with information on how the associated privacy risks are mitigated. All PIAs are posted on the DOT Privacy Office website at <http://www.transportation.gov/individuals/privacy/privacy-impact-assessments> to provide transparency to the public.

**Application Programming Interface (API):** In support of the White House Open Government Plan & Executive Order, FMCSA created two (2) API's to facilitate the creation of safety related products and mash-ups by outside developers. The SaferBus API released March 2012 and QCMobile API released March 2014 provide for machine-to-machine communication of FMCSA's motor carrier safety information. Providing data in this manner encourages participation and collaboration, making developers partners in supporting our mission. The API's are available at FMCSA's mobile developer website: <https://mobile.fmcsa.dot.gov/developer/home.page>.

## 1.2 Improving Current Practices

FMCSA's program offices identify in-demand information and data for publishing by regularly reviewing (a) requests for data from users, (b) comments and feedback from users, (c) Web analytics for its various Web pages, (d) FOIA logs, (e) public, press, and Congressional inquiries to Public Affairs, Governmental Affairs, and program offices. Each program office is responsible for regularly tracking, updating, and publishing information and data within their jurisdiction.

## **2 Meeting Mandatory Posting Requirements**

### **2.1 Congressional Reports**

FMCSA's Congressional reports are posted centrally on the Agency's Web site (within one (1) month of publication): <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/mission/policy/reports-congress>. FMCSA's Office of Policy is responsible updating and providing this information to the public.

### **2.2 Congressional Testimony**

FMCSA disseminates and provides access to Congressional testimony, recent news, historical news items, events, and speeches via the newsroom on its central Website: <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/newsroom/testimony>. FMCSA's Office of Communications is responsible updating and providing this information to the media and public.

### **2.3 2.3 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request Logs**

FMCSA will publish a log of its FOIA requests on an annual basis. The FOIA logs will be published in FMCSA's FOIA Electronic Reading Room (ERR) under Category 4: [Frequently Requested Records](#). FMCSA's log of FOIA requests received in fiscal year 2015 will be published within 2 weeks of fiscal year's end.

### **2.4 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Electronic Reading Room (ERR)**

FMCSA will continue to ensure that FMCSA's statutorily-mandated FOIA ERR records are current (four categories, including "frequently requested records") as outlined in 5 U.S.C. § 552. The Agency will annually review the ERR at fiscal year's end and update as needed.

## **3 Additional Items for Publishing**

### **3.1 Funding and Apportionment Tables**

FMCSA currently publishes its annual budget estimates with funding and apportionment tables related to all of its programs on its central Web site: <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/mission/budget>. FMCSA's Office of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is responsible for updating and providing this information to the public.

### **3.2 Correspondence Logs**

FMCSA determined that the logs will be published on an ad hoc basis, when information can be consolidated. Information within the ERR "frequently requested records" category will be published on an annual basis.

## 4 Protecting Sensitive Information from Release

FMCSA ensures that private, privileged, or other sensitive data including PII protected by the Privacy Act is protected by following the Fair Information Principles<sup>1</sup> as best practices for the protection of information associated with the FMCSA systems. Records in FMCSA systems are safeguarded in accordance with applicable rules and policies, including all applicable USDOT automated systems security and access policies.

FMCSA also has a comprehensive information security program that contains management, operational, and technical safeguards that are appropriate for the protection of PII. These safeguards are designed to ensure the security, integrity, and confidentiality of PII, protect against any reasonably anticipated threats to the security or integrity of PII, and protect against unauthorized access to or use of PII.

FMCSA's security safeguards incorporate standards and practices required for Federal information systems under the Federal Information System Management Act (FISMA) and are detailed in Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) Publication 200, Minimum Security Requirements for Federal Information and Information Systems, dated March 2006, and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication (SP) 800-53 Rev. 4, Recommended Security Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations, dated April, 2013.

## 5 New Initiatives

The following is a description of a new information and data for release that will result in a new disclosure and is responsive to a demonstrated need for the information.

**Customer Service Dashboard:** FMCSA is developing a new dashboard of metrics that would track the output and performance of the Agency's customer service call centers. FMCSA's Call Centers are the front door operations for the Agency, interacting with thousands of customers every day. Dashboard tracking is one step to ensure that FMCSA is providing professional, accurate, and timely service to its customer base. FMCSA anticipates that the customer service dashboard will be released and disseminated via the Agency's Website by August, 2016.

**Public Use Datasets:** In an effort to promote increased public access to the results of research funded by the Federal Government, FMCSA is implementing a new initiative that requires data utilized in its research studies to be properly anonymized and made available as public-use data sets. For example, data collected by the Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Driver Restart Study

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<sup>1</sup> The Fair Information Practice Principles are a set of eight principles that are rooted in the tenets of the Privacy Act of 1974. The principles are specifically spelled out in Appendix A of the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace which is available at [https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/NSTICstrategy\\_041511.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/NSTICstrategy_041511.pdf).

will be made available for research purposes. The study is designed to measure and compare the fatigue and safety performance levels of truck drivers in a naturalistic driving environment. Upon completion, study data will be reviewed for any personally identifiable information (PII), thoroughly cleaned and de-identified, and then reviewed by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) for compliance with Federal, institutional, and ethical guidelines before being released in a public-use dataset.

## **6 Conclusion**

In fulfilling its mission to reduce the frequency and severity of commercial motor vehicle crashes on our nation's highways, FMCSA proactively releases and disseminates data and information across a broad range of program areas. Each responsible program office within FMCSA is committed to continually updating, reviewing, and improving the process for releasing program-related data and information to the public.