



FMCSA Safety Program Effectiveness Measurement: Carrier Intervention Effectiveness Model, Version 1.3—Report for FY 2020 Interventions

BACKGROUND

The Carrier Intervention Effectiveness Model (CIEM) provides the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) with a tool for measuring the safety benefits of State and Federal carrier interventions conducted under the Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) enforcement program. The CSA program includes an array of carrier intervention types that replace the universally implemented compliance review previously used by the Agency. The new enforcement program was designed to improve the level of safety in the operation of commercial motor vehicles.

Using a phased approach, FMCSA began implementing the CSA program in 2010. The CIEM considers the following CSA intervention types when assessing safety benefits:

- Warning letters.
- Offsite State/Federal investigations.
- Onsite focused State/Federal investigations.
- Onsite comprehensive State/Federal investigations.
- Other Non-ratable Reviews.

This approach yields national-level measurements of the effectiveness of FMCSA’s current carrier interventions. Table 1 shows the safety benefits of all interventions, as calculated by the CIEM, for fiscal year (FY) 2020. In FY 2020, carrier interventions resulted in an estimated 6,819 crashes prevented, 3,461 injuries prevented, and 217 lives saved.

Table 1. Estimated crashes prevented, injuries prevented, and lives saved from FY 2020 interventions.

Fiscal Year	Crashes Prevented	Injuries Prevented	Lives Saved
2020	6,819	3,461	217

MODEL APPROACH

The model computes combined motor carrier crash rates, defined in terms of crashes per carrier power unit (PU), for carriers receiving interventions (treatment group carriers) for defined periods before and after interventions. The difference between these carriers’ pre- and post-intervention period crash rates represents the change in their safety performance during this timeframe. To control for systemic differences in crash rates between small and large carriers, and in how such carriers respond to interventions, the model estimates safety improvement within carrier size groups, defined in terms of carrier PU counts. To remove the effect of external factors from the model calculations, the difference between the calculated pre- and post-intervention period crash rates is adjusted by the change in crash rates experienced by carriers not receiving interventions during the same timeframe. In addition, a set of carefully designed filters is used to identify and remove carrier data records with missing or outlier data, prior to running the model estimates.

The model incorporates statistical significance testing and considers only size group changes in crash rates that are statistically significant. Statistically significant results, expressed in terms of crashes prevented, injuries prevented, and lives saved, are then extrapolated to incorporate carriers that received interventions but were not included in the initial model calculations due to missing or inaccurate data.



MODEL FINDINGS

Version 1.3 of the model was run for carriers receiving the specified intervention types in FY 2020. Table 2 presents information on the number of carriers receiving interventions in FY 2020 and the two preceding fiscal years, by intervention type. Columns B through D give counts for each of the intervention types conducted, and columns E through G give the number of carriers receiving these intervention types as their first intervention.

Overall, the set of FMCSA intervention types considered by the model was associated with a reduction in motor carrier crash rates in FY 2020 (as in prior years). Table 3 shows the percent crash rate reductions from the pre- to the post-intervention period, by carrier size group, for carriers receiving interventions in fiscal years 2018, 2019, and 2020. Consistent with prior years' results, crash rate reductions were generally more pronounced in the smaller carrier size groups.

Table 2. Carrier interventions by type, and number of carriers by first intervention.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Intervention Type	Number of Interventions FY 2018	Number of Interventions FY 2019	Number of Interventions FY 2020	Number of Carriers Receiving Interventions (by first intervention) FY 2018	Number of Carriers Receiving Interventions (by first intervention) FY 2019	Number of Carriers Receiving Interventions (by first intervention) FY 2020
CSA Warning Letter	26,970	25,652	22,250	26,884	25,574	22,204
Offsite Focused Investigation	238	1,013	5,058	223	891	4,640
Onsite Focused Investigation	7,573	6,177	3,938	6,892	5,668	3,591
Onsite Comprehensive Investigation*	5,925	5,494	2,908	5,484	5,130	2,793
Other Non-ratable Review	534	342	127	468	313	116
Total	41,240	38,678	34,281	39,951	37,576	33,344

* Onsite Comprehensive Investigations were previously referred to as Compliance Reviews by the Agency, and the original terminology still appears in 49 CFR part 385. Note: Investigations listed here include both State and Federal investigations.



Table 3. Net percent reductions in crash rates after a carrier received an intervention, By Carrier Size Group, FYs 2018-2020.

By Carrier Size Group	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
1 (1–5 power units)	51.4%	50.3%	50.6%
2 (6–20 power units)	39.8%	34.1%	31.4%
3 (21–100 power units)	21.0%	18.7%	10.7%
4 (101+ power units)	3.1%	1.6%	1.1%

The model also estimates safety benefits associated with individual intervention types. (Carriers receiving more than one type of intervention during the fiscal year are assigned an intervention type, based on the nature of the

first intervention it received during that year). Benefits associated with each intervention type are presented in Table 4 for FY 2020. These findings do not necessarily speak to the relative effectiveness of the individual intervention types due to the different safety profiles of carriers receiving each intervention type.

In summary, the FY 2020 data on pre- and post-intervention safety performance provide evidence for the effectiveness of FMCSA’s carrier interventions, as in previous years. Future implementation of the model will enable FMCSA to continue to measure the impacts of carrier interventions conducted by the Agency.

To read the complete report, please visit:
<https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/73459>

Table 4. Estimated crashes and injuries prevented, and lives saved, by investigation type, FY 2020.*

Intervention Type	All Carriers Receiving Interventions: Number of Carriers	Crashes Prevented	Injuries Prevented	Lives Saved
Onsite Focused	3,591	666	338	21
Onsite Comprehensive	2,793	410	208	13
Offsite Focused (non-ratable)	4,640	377	192	12
Other Non-ratable Review	116	0	0	0
Warning Letter	22,204	5,363	2,722	171

* Note: Due to various model calculations being performed at a finer level of granularity for these estimates, estimated safety benefits associated with each intervention type do not add up to the total benefits shown in Table 1. Much of this disparity may be explained by smaller sample sizes in the size groups when calculating safety benefits associated with particular intervention types, which potentially impacts the statistical significance of the results obtained in each size class.

