

Data Quality 101

SAFETYNET: Carrier Search and Other Tools

The Carrier Search and other tools will help you collect, review, and submit data to provide a complete understanding of a carrier, driver, and vehicle. You can use the tools to confirm that carrier data in each crash or inspection record matches data in the MCMIS database and that driver and vehicle data are complete and accurate. This work directly supports FMCSA's safety compliance and enforcement programs by helping to ensure motor carriers that pose the greatest risk to safety are prioritized for interventions.

The SAFETYNET System is an automated information management system designed to support FMCSA motor carrier safety programs by monitoring the safety performance of interstate and intrastate commercial and some noncommercial motor carriers. The effectiveness of FMCSA's safety compliance and enforcement programs depend on the quality of the data you report.

Why is it important to perform a carrier search?

Unmatched and incorrectly matched records have a negative impact on data quality. Any records that are missing from the FMCSA database or applied to the wrong carrier could impact information in a carrier's SMS profile. This can prevent FMCSA from correctly identifying carriers with the highest safety risk. By verifying your data using an individual or batch carrier search, you improve data quality.

What is an individual carrier search and how is it executed?

An individual carrier search is executed by running the carrier search function on a single crash or inspection record. There are two ways that you can perform the individual carrier search:

1. If you have a crash or inspection record open, go to the Carrier tab and then click the Search box near the middle of the screen.
2. From the main crash or inspection screen, select Search then Initiate Carrier Search. You will be prompted to Search one of three kinds of records:
 - Tagged Records: this option performs a carrier search on all tagged records; if only one record is tagged it will be an individual search.
 - Current Record: this performs a carrier search on only the currently selected record.
 - All Unsearched Records in Query: this option performs a carrier search on all records identified by the current query—the records currently displayed on the screen. This will generally perform a batch search, unless you have constructed a query that finds only one record.

What is a batch carrier search and how is it executed?

A batch carrier search is performed for more than one record at a time. If you search Tagged Records with more than one record, you are performing a batch carrier search. After running a batch carrier search, you may have more than one record to resolve.

What are the outcomes of Carrier Search?

The best outcome is a matched carrier. In the case of an individual search, simply click on the Copy Search Data button, and carrier data will be populated the carrier record, if needed. If you are running a batch carrier search, the record update will happen automatically.

Sometimes SAFETYNET identifies one or more potentially correct carriers. In this case, review the information provided, such as the address and contact information, for each carrier listed. Choose the carrier with matching information. If none of the information identifies a carrier, treat the carrier as if it was a non-match.

SAFETYNET does not always find a match or potential match. In this case, it is up to the SAFETYNET analyst to perform additional research to make sure the carrier information is current.

What do I do if there is a non-match?

Research the carrier using the Internet, searching for the carrier name provided in the inspection or crash record. This may provide alternate addresses and/or spellings of the company name. If needed, do the same using the carrier's address. Call the carrier directly to ask for more information.

Another useful tool is the Driver Information Resource (DIR). Search for the driver's past inspection and/or crash records history, and check the carriers in those records. The driver could have previously worked for the carrier in question.

If you have new information, update the record and run Carrier Search again. If the carrier data from the record is verified and you still have a non-match, the carrier is likely not registered with FMCSA. If you cannot confirm that the carrier is an intrastate carrier, upload the record as it is to MCMIS.

What do I do if there is any missing driver or vehicle data?

Missing driver or vehicle data can result in applying data to the wrong driver, which hinders FMCSA's ability to analyze safety issues and identify carriers for intervention. To ensure quality data, there are other tools available to help you complete missing or incorrect driver and vehicle information that results in a non-match.

To reduce the number of non-matches, download the MCMIS census update file to your SAFETYNET system every day. This ensures that you have the most current carrier information available for the carrier search.

Tools to Resolve Missing Driver or Vehicle Data

Internet Search	The Internet can be used to search for the carrier name provided in the inspection or crash record. This can result in identifying an alternate address and/or spellings of the company name. You can also call the carrier directly for more information.
Driver Information Resource (DIR)	The DIR is a search tool that allows FMCSA and State enforcement personnel to perform a secure search of a driver's crash and inspection history by driver name or commercial driver license number. The DIR can be accessed with a UAS account at https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/DriverActivity/DriverHome.asp or through A&I, which can be accessed through the Portal at https://portal.fmcsa.dot.gov/login .
Query Central	Query Central is an online application that accesses FMCSA systems to verify carrier information. Query Central can be accessed through the Portal.
Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS)	CDLIS is a database that uses State driver licensing agencies to ensure that each commercial driver has only one driver's license and one complete driver record. This can help ensure driver and vehicle matching within the Carrier Search. CDLIS is available at http://www.aamva.org/CDLIS/ .
Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) decoder	A VIN decoder is used to determine or verify driver and vehicle information. A free VIN decoder is available at http://www.nisrinc.com/apps/cmvid/ .

If the carrier data from the record is verified and you still have a non-match, the carrier is most likely not registered with FMCSA. This is true for intrastate carriers. If you are unsure whether the carrier is an intrastate carrier or if the carrier may be incorrectly categorized, call Scott Valentine or Nelson Canas for assistance.

For more detailed information about SAFETYNET, refer to the SAFETYNET Manual. You can find the SAFETYNET Manual within SAFETYNET. Go to the SAFETYNET help menu and choose the appropriate module.

The SAFETYNET Manual is designed to help States optimize their use of SAFETYNET and thus improve the quality of their safety data. The manual offers guidance to help you enter complete and accurate data.



Contact Information

As part of our commitment to continually improving our programs, FMCSA welcomes any comments, questions, or suggestions you have. Please contact Scott Valentine at Scott.Valentine@dot.gov or call 202-366-4869.

For questions regarding FMCSA Technical Support, you can contact the Technical Support team at FMCTechSup@dot.gov or call 617-494-3003. For additional technical support, you may also contact Nelson Canas at Nelson.Canas.CTR@dot.gov or call 617-494-6019.