

COMPASS Frequently Asked Questions

COMPASS is an FMCSA-wide initiative that is focused on leveraging new technology to transform the way FMCSA does business.

Program FAQs

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1. What is COMPASS?

COMPASS is FMCSA's multi-year, Agency-wide initiative to improve its business processes, integrate them with the Agency's information technologies, and make them more seamless, secure, and supportive of the Agency's mission of saving lives.

COMPASS will begin to roll out new services this year—starting with the new FMCSA Portal, and following later this year, the elimination of most user IDs and passwords through the Single Sign-On release. These services are being launched first because the overwhelming feedback from Field staff has reflected a desire to reduce the number of user IDs and passwords required to access FMCSA systems.

The end-date for the COMPASS program will be determined mainly by Agency operational needs, changes in the regulatory climate, and budget considerations.

2. Why are we doing COMPASS?

The number of trucks and buses on the nation's highways has been increasing every year, putting greater demands on FMCSA's operations, systems, and staff. COMPASS is an FMCSA program that addresses the business and technology challenges brought on by this growth and is making the best use of new technologies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our safety activities.

Necessity is clearly a driver. While FMCSA's existing systems currently work, having a portfolio of 21 stand-alone systems has led to data quality concerns, a need for excessive user IDs and passwords, and significant operation and maintenance costs.

Another main driver is the CSA (Comprehensive Safety Analysis) 2010 program, which sees the technology being built through COMPASS as enabling access to improved data to better identify high-risk carriers and drivers, and applying a wider range of interventions to correct high-risk behavior early.

3. What's a "Portal"?

A "portal" is defined as a gateway or path on the Internet to a selection of Web sites, which can be used to control access by specific groups of users to specific types of Web-based content.

4. What's included in the Portal Access release?

In mid-2007, the COMPASS program plans to roll out the Portal Access release, which will deliver new functionality to FMCSA users, state partners, and companies in the motor carrier industry. The first step in this direction will be the launch of the FMCSA Portal that will provide a central gateway through which FMCSA will deliver its online services and information to users inside and outside the Agency.

The first services available through the FMCSA Portal will include:

- Seamless access through a single user ID and password to MCMIS (Motor Carrier Management Information System), EMIS (Enforcement Management Information System), L&I (Licensing and Insurance), and DataQs for all FMCSA users and state users of FMCSA systems
- Functionality for assigning Reviews and Safety Audits for FMCSA staff and state personnel with assignment responsibilities

- Providing companies registered with FMCSA with enhanced access to their own safety and operational data.

The FMCSA Portal will allow anyone with Internet access to utilize the FMCSA systems to which they are authorized to have access, without the need for VPN or AAMVAnet connections, or other intranet restrictions.

5. What's included in the Single Sign-On release?

In response to overwhelming feedback from users in the Field, the COMPASS program will issue the Single Sign-On release in late 2007.

The Single Sign-On release will offer seamless access to FMCSA's primary online systems and Web sites through the use of a single password and user ID. The Single Sign-On release will also allow members of the general public to submit inquiries through the FMCSA Portal and effectively provide a single source for access to FMCSA information.

Systems not under the control of FMCSA, such as CDLIS and GovTrip, will remain available through their current interfaces.

For information on FMCSA Systems and Web sites, please visit

<http://infosys.fmcsa.dot.gov/SystemsOverview.asp>.

6. Why is COMPASS doing certain things first?

For COMPASS to succeed over the long term, it needs to focus on two big priorities in the near term. The first is to meet real, tangible needs of users of FMCSA systems; and the second is to systematically implement each release in an effort to build a solid, cost-effective foundation for future development.

Based on our feedback from users in the Field, the item most mentioned about FMCSA systems is the need to reduce the number of user IDs and passwords; therefore making that the main issue being addressed. Addressing this issue early will pave the way for further improvements as COMPASS unfolds over the next few years.

7. What else is envisioned as part of the COMPASS program?

Aside from integrating the outputs of the CSA (Comprehensive Safety Analysis) 2010 effort into upcoming COMPASS releases, the COMPASS program is focused on identifying future opportunities to deliver improved functionality to make FMCSA's information technology more useful to FMCSA and state staff, as well as companies regulated by the Agency.

In the near term, the Compliance Monitoring release, currently planned for 2008, will streamline and integrate the monitoring and processing of a number of key activities, including:

- New entrant safety audits
- Mexican commercial zone applications
- Hazardous materials safety permits
- Insurance cancellation monitoring
- Compliance review ratings
- Driver medical certification
- Processing of out-of-service orders and orders to cease operations
- Commercial compliance

Future releases aim to integrate changes in areas such as registration, reviews and audits, inspections, crashes, and enforcement, following any modifications that may emerge from CSA 2010.

8. Who is responsible for delivering COMPASS?

The design and delivery of COMPASS is organized under the Office of Research and Information Technology (MC-R), led by Terry Shelton, Associate Administrator for Research and Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; with involvement and support from the Office of Enforcement and Program Delivery. The program is led by Jeff Hall as the COMPASS Program Manager. Input from Field and Enforcement staff drives the program's efforts. Field working groups that include Federal, state, and company staff, have provided considerable insights into users' information needs and the business processes involved in doing their jobs on a daily basis.

9. What will happen to FMCSA's existing systems, like MCMIS and Aspen?

Starting with the implementation of the FMCSA Portal in 2007, the COMPASS program will begin to replace all of FMCSA's information technologies and applications, along with many of the business processes that interact with those technologies. Specific FMCSA IT systems that will be retired upon final completion of the COMPASS program include:

Systems to be retired under COMPASS:

A&I	Aspen	CAPRI
CaseRite	CDLIS Access	DataQs
EDMS	EMIS	GOTHAM
HMPIP Central	ISS	L&I
MCMIS	PIQ	ProVu
Query Central	SAFER	SAFETYNET
UFA		

FMCSA Web sites are also covered under COMPASS. However, Government-wide applications like GovTrip and other Federal administrative, human resources, grant, and payroll applications are outside the scope of the COMPASS program.

Until all FMCSA systems are fully integrated, they will remain accessible, either in their current form, through the FMCSA Portal, or potentially through other interfaces that are different than what we have today. FMCSA staff, state partners, and companies will be kept informed of any upcoming changes.

10. How does COMPASS relate to Comprehensive Safety Analysis 2010?

The COMPASS program is actively integrated with the CSA (Comprehensive Safety Analysis) 2010 program, FMCSA's agency-wide initiative on safety activities and processes.

At a program level, the CSA 2010 vision and business needs are incorporated into the COMPASS Roadmap—the vision plan for the COMPASS program. Communication and the development of business requirements for both programs are being coordinated, as are stakeholder involvement efforts. Specific CSA 2010 requirements set for inclusion in COMPASS releases include:

- Creation of a central and authoritative data source
- Incorporation of technical features that will allow the system to adapt to regulatory changes and improvements in business processes, with a minimum of programming or operational delay
- Incremental rollout of CSA 2010-specified business processes through future COMPASS releases.

11. How can I get involved?

The involvement of FMCSA staff, state partners, and others who work closely with the Agency and its IT systems is vital to the success of the COMPASS program. Opportunities to participate range from:

- Testing new functionality
- Participating in discussion groups and interviews about how information technology is used by the Agency, its staff, and customers
- Reviewing communications and training materials for tone and accuracy
- Contributing suggestions about how to best move forward

If you would like to take part, please contact Bill Coleman, COMPASS Communications & Change Management Lead, at bill.coleman@dot.gov, e-mail the COMPASS mailbox at compass@dot.gov, or if you work as part of one of the FMCSA divisions, please contact your Division Administrator.