

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Does FMCSA want only crashes involving commercial motor vehicles?

A: No. FMCSA wants all the crashes that meet the criteria in Enclosure 1, including those where a non-commercial vehicle is the only one that meets the criteria.

Q: Which non-commercial vehicle crashes does FMCSA want?

A: Crashes reported should include those involving Federal, State and local government-owned vehicles - such as transit buses, school buses, garbage trucks, military vehicles and snowplows - and vehicles rented or leased by individuals to transport personal goods. Here are a few examples:

- A school-owned vehicle transporting students to and from school or school-related activities
- A government-owned motor vehicle transporting property or people
- A U-Haul or Ryder truck, rented/leased to move one's own household goods

Q: Can you give me some examples of situations that should not trigger a crash report for FMCSA?

A: A few examples include:

- A horse rancher transporting hay bales for his own use from his pasture on one side of the road to his stables on the other side in a truck with a GVWR over 10,000 pounds
- A homeowner carrying recyclables to a drop-off point in a personally-owned pickup truck with a GVWR over 10,000 pounds.
- A large family of 10 persons taking a trip in the family's 12-person van
- A personally-owned pick-up truck hauling a boat or horse trailer, with a GCWR in excess of 10,000 pounds
- A family operating a recreational vehicle

Q: Should a crash be reported to FMCSA if the driver of the vehicle that meets the criteria in Enclosure 1 does not have a Commercial Drivers License (CDL)?

A. Yes. A driver of a truck between 10,001 to 26,000 pounds or a bus with 9 to 15 seats is not required to have a Commercial Drivers License (CDL). However, crashes for these vehicles are included in the criteria in Enclosure 1 and should be reported to FMCSA.

Q: Does FMCSA want crashes for trucks and buses used by a business to transport its own property or people?

A: Yes. Crashes should be reported for both business-owned vehicles transporting their own goods (private) and vehicles transporting goods for others for compensation (for-hire). An example of a private operation is a retail furniture store using its own truck with a GVWR over 10,000 pounds to deliver its products to customers.

Q: Should a crash report be included if the only outcome is (a) a vehicle with a flat tire that must be towed from the scene because there is no spare or (b) a vehicle with a damaged headlight that must be towed because it is nighttime and no replacement headlight is available?

A: No for both cases. Since the first vehicle could have been driven away if a spare tire was available and the second vehicle could have been driven away if a replacement headlight was available, these vehicles were not “disabled”ⁱ as a result of the crash.

Q: What is FMCSA’s timeliness requirement for reporting crashes?

A: The States should be reporting a crash to FMCSA within 90 days of the crash.

ⁱ Defined in the American National Standard Institute – “Manual on Classification of Motor Vehicle Traffic Accidents” (ANSI D16.1, Section 2.3.11)