

# STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING YOUR NON-FATAL CRASH COMPLETENESS RATING

## How To Address Over-Reporting



The NFCC measure estimates how many non-fatal crash records a State is expected to report to FMCSA. This document provides improvement strategies to use when your State gets an NFCC rating that indicates over-reporting.

### Reporting Process

Collect

Select

Report

**To investigate over-reporting of non-fatal crash records**, look at the reporting processes for *both* fatal records and non-fatal records. *Fatal reporting matters* because the NFCC measure uses the number of State-reported fatal crash records in MCMIS to estimate how many non-fatal records the State should report. So if fatal records are missing from MCMIS, the non-fatal estimate could be artificially low, resulting in a rating that indicates over-reporting. *Non-fatal reporting matters* because there could be gaps in the State's reporting process that allow non-fatal records that don't meet FMCSA requirements into MCMIS.

Look at the whole process—Collect, Select, Report—to understand how each phase can impact others and to determine if everyone involved knows and follows FMCSA's reporting requirements.

Use the strategies listed here to start identifying areas for improvement. Your FMCSA Technical Assistant can help you to adapt them for your State's organization and to access FMCSA resources. Future updates will provide more detailed information on identifying specific problems and implementing solutions.

### What is Over-reporting?

Over-reporting occurs when a State submits significantly **more** non-fatal crash records than are expected, based on the number of *fatal* crash records submitted for the same time period. In addition to reviewing your State's overall reporting process, a key step toward improving over-reporting is making sure that all fatal crash records have been reported. See "Report" on page 2 for information about fatal reporting.

### Collect

Select

Report

Does law enforcement collect the data needed to identify qualifying vehicles?

- 1. Review the State's paper and electronic crash forms.** The form should help officers capture required vehicle data as well as qualifying conditions (fatality, transport due to injury, towed due to disabling damage).
- 2. Determine whether crash data-collection training for State and local officers is adequate.** Training should cover FMCSA reporting requirements and demonstrate how to capture data accordingly.
- 3. If either the crash form or collection training doesn't meet the standards above, find out how and when they can be modified.** Typically, it's a time-intensive process. Meanwhile, develop interim recommendations to address identified problems with the crash form and collection.
- 4. Review the procedures for electronic or paper transfer from one agency to the next.** Transfers should be monitored and controlled on both ends. (cont.)

For information on the upcoming NFCC modification go to:

<http://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/dataquality/improve>



### Feedback/Questions

Send us your questions or comments on the modified NFCC measure by using the A&I Online Feedback form at:

<http://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/Feedback/AIFeedback.asp>

# STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING YOUR NFCC RATING

## How To Address Over-Reporting (cont.)



Does the State identify and transfer potentially qualifying crash records to the MCSAP Office?

- 1. Review the criteria and procedures for identifying paper crash reports that could be FMCSA reportable.** Procedures should take into account problems with crash forms and collection errors.
- 2. Review the selection criteria and logic, as well as the programming code, for identifying and importing potentially reportable crash records to SAFETYNET.** Preferably, the MCSAP Office makes the final decision on reportability.
- 3. See also item 4 under “Collect.”**



Does the MCSAP Office adequately screen crash records before uploading?

- 1. Review the criteria and procedures for determining if a crash is reportable to FMCSA.** Procedures should take into account problems with crash forms, data collection, and record selection.

Is the State reporting all qualifying fatal crash records to FMCSA?

- 1. Review your State’s Fatal Crash Completeness rating, which compares the number of fatal crash records in MCMIS to the number in FARS.** Fewer fatal records in MCMIS than in FARS could affect the NFCC rating in a couple of ways.
  - If fatal records are missing from MCMIS, the estimate of expected non-fatal reporting will be lower, which could result in a Fair NFCC rating for over-reporting.
  - If the Fatal Crash Completeness rating is Poor, the NFCC rating will automatically be Poor or Insufficient Data.
- 2. Review the FARS/MCMIS Matching Tool and reconcile differences between MCMIS and FARS.** Your Technical Assistant can review the tool with you.
- 3. Assess your State’s process for identifying fatal crashes for MCMIS.** A common problem is that the MCSAP Office is not informed when a fatality occurs after the crash report has been submitted. You may need to establish or formalize a relationship between your State’s FARS Analyst and the MCSAP Office.

## Resources from FMCSA

Contact your FMCSA Technical Assistant.

### Collect Resources

**Crash form development:** Guidance on designing or revising crash forms, including best practices and a model crash report, is available on A&I’s Data Quality Module under Improvement Tools. A customized assessment of your State’s crash forms is also available free of charge.

**Crash data-collection training:** Find online training materials for law enforcement on A&I’s Data Quality Module under Improvement Tools. Data-collection training customized for your State is also available free of charge.

**FMCSA Visor Cards:** Handy, illustrated reference cards that provide officers with instructions for collecting FMCSA-required data are available through your Technical Assistant.

### Select Resources

**Selection criteria:** FMCSA visor card titled “Truck and Bus Crashes Reportable to FMCSA.”

**SAFETYNET coding:** The SAFETYNET Crash Data Coding and Validation Manual provides detailed guidance on SAFETYNET data elements, as well as crash data collection and reporting requirements.

**Crash data import:** Technical support to improve a State’s data extraction and translation is available free of charge.

### Report Resources

See resources under “Select.”

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