

THE FLEET BEAT

APRIL 2019

COMING SOON - ITEM RESPONSE THEORY

The program implemented in December 2010 called **Compliance, Safety, Accountability** (CSA) was created so the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) could more readily identify motor carriers by crash risk and target them for enforcement interventions. The idea was to improve upon the previous program (SafeStat) by using inspection results and other data to generate Behavior Analysis Safety Improvement Category (BASIC) scores, which could then trigger an intervention in the form of focused roadside inspections, compliance review or other action.

CSA certainly raised the industry's safety consciousness, and now an overhaul of CSA is coming and it's called [Item Response Theory \(IRT\)](#). IRT has long been used in commercial aviation research, but this will be its first use in the Commercial Motor Vehicle sector. IRT is a data method to evolve beyond the seven BASICs and replace it with a Safety Culture Score to prioritize enforcement intervention. This score will be generated by analyzing existing violation groups, and then industry patterns will be identified and weights will be assigned.

Under IRT there are no Severity or CSA points, but existing violations will continue to serve as the foundation of the score. As we know with CSA, a higher score (especially past a threshold) means enforcement interventions are likely. However, with IRT, a higher score is better than a lower score. **What this means for the industry is that a motor carrier's safety culture is more important now than ever.** If a motor carrier does not have adequate policies and procedures in place or there are too many violations across several categories, the company is unlikely to fare well under IRT. In other words, if you thought CSA was hard on motor carriers with bad performance, just wait until IRT rolls out.

It's important to note that IRT is not a new regulation, just like CSA was not a new regulation – both programs are merely enforcement methodologies of existing regulations. As for the implementation timeline – no precise dates are available, but IRT could get launched as soon as this fall. While the FMCSA removes the public Safety Measurement System (SMS) website during this transition, they will develop a new website to view simplified carrier snapshots. During this time motor carriers should be able to see CSA and IRT scores side-by-side and then next year CSA would get replaced with IRT.

Until then, be sure to take your safety performance very seriously... we are here to help you succeed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

MICHAEL NISCHAN, CDS, CCSP

VP Transportation & Logistics Risk Control | NATMI Instructor

michael.nischan@epicbrokers.com | 678.938.2012 | <http://www.linkedin.com/in/michaelnischan>