

CSA (Compliance, Safety, Accountability) is a major safety measurement and reporting initiative of the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)**. Drivers can eliminate many CSA violations with a thorough pre-trip inspection, which ensures the driver's safety as well as the safety of everyone else on the road.

So how long should an inspection take? There is no minimum or maximum requirement, but seasoned professionals indicate that a full inspection done well should take you approximately 30 minutes. The most common issues found during a roadside inspection are related to brakes, lights, tires, and steering.

In terms of efficiency, pre-inspections may seem to add a big chunk of time that could otherwise be spent on the road. However, consider the consequences for not doing an inspection or for doing an inspection hastily:

- Penalties from law enforcement
- Breakdowns
- Opportunity costs from being out of service
- Higher risk for accidents

One very important observation that Transportation and Logistics Risk Control experts offer is that most vehicle-to-truck fatal crashes are not typically the truck driver's fault. Even so, the first thing legal counsel will do is investigate the compliance of inspections. If they find anything—even if it had nothing to do with the actual crash—they will try to paint a picture of an unsafe fleet and sell the concept of negligence during the legal proceeding.

If legal counsel is successful, the motor carrier would be responsible to pay for a crash that they did not cause, sometimes resulting in punitive damages of \$2 million or more.

Well-conducted pre-trip inspections promote safety and protect your company from unnecessary risk.