

# CVOR Program and carrier safety module reference guide

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# Carrier Safety Ratings (CSR)

## Overview

A Carrier Safety Rating (CSR) is a public label assigned to a commercial vehicle operator's registration (CVOR) record. It shows the safety performance of the operator. Anyone who uses carrier services such as insurance companies, financial institutions and shippers, can look up these ratings through Ontario's free Carrier Safety Rating Enquiry system.

- Carriers with strong safety records can use their safety ratings to promote their services.
- Carriers with poor safety ratings are easy to identify.

## Regulatory framework

The CSR system is based on NSC Standard 14 – Safety Rating. This standard creates a consistent safety-rating framework across Canada.

In Ontario, it is regulated under the:

- [Highway Traffic Act \(HTA\)](#)
- [Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators' Information O. Reg. 424/97](#)

The NSC Standard 14 explains how carrier safety ratings are determined and how sanctions are applied. All provinces and territories share driver and carrier profile information through an inter-provincial system. This shared system provides a consistent national assessment of each operator's safety rating performance and helps determine whether they can continue to operate safely.

## How a CSR is assigned

The Deputy Registrar of Motor Vehicles assigns a safety rating based on the company's safety record, including:

- collisions
- convictions
- inspections
- facility audits

Carriers can dispute a proposed safety rating. They must send the Deputy Registrar a written dispute within 30 business days of receiving the proposed rating. The dispute can include records and written submissions explaining why that safety rating should not take effect.

## Safety rating categories

Carriers are assigned one of 5 safety ratings:

- Excellent
- Satisfactory

- Satisfactory–unaudited
- Conditional
- Unsatisfactory

Operators with an acceptable facility audit may qualify for an Excellent or Satisfactory safety rating.

Operators who have not been audited will be assigned a safety rating based on their company's overall CVOR violation rate.

The highest safety rating available without an audit is Satisfactory – unaudited.

### **Excellent safety rating**

A carrier is eligible for an Excellent safety rating if it meets all of the following conditions:

- at least 24 months of demonstrated operation in Ontario with a valid CVOR certificate
- an overall violation rate of 15% or less of the overall threshold
- a collision violation rate of 10% or less of the collision threshold
- an excellent score during a ministry facility audit

To keep an Excellent safety rating, the carrier must maintain:

- an overall violation rate of 20% or less
- a collision violation rate of 15% or less

Failure to maintain these rates will result in a downgrade.

### **Satisfactory safety rating**

A carrier may get a “Satisfactory” safety rating if it meets all the following conditions:

- at least 6 months of demonstrated operation in Ontario with a valid CVOR certificate
- an on-road performance level of 70% or less of its overall CVOR threshold
- a passing score during a ministry facility audit

### **Satisfactory–unaudited safety rating**

A carrier that has not been audited will normally receive a “Satisfactory–unaudited” safety rating if it maintains an on-road performance level of 70% or less of its overall CVOR threshold.

### **Conditional safety rating**

A “Conditional” safety rating may be assigned when any of the following occur:

- the carrier's on-road performance level exceeds 70% of its overall CVOR threshold
- the carrier fails a facility audit
- a suspension or plate seizure expires
- the carrier is affiliated with another carrier that has a “Conditional” safety rating

To be upgraded from “Conditional” to a higher safety rating, the carrier must maintain an on-road performance level of 60% or less of its overall CVOR threshold. All “Conditional” safety

ratings remain in effect for at least 6 months unless the carrier is downgraded to “Unsatisfactory” safety rating.

During this period, the carrier is expected to improve safety performance. If the “Conditional” safety rating was issued because of a failed audit, the carrier must pass a second audit after 6 months to receive a new safety rating.

### **Unsatisfactory safety rating**

A carrier with an “Unsatisfactory” safety rating may be temporarily or permanently prohibited from operating. When a carrier’s overall violation rate exceeds its threshold (over 100%), the Deputy Registrar may impose sanctions and assign an “Unsatisfactory” safety rating.

A sanction is the most severe disciplinary measure. It may include fleet limitation, plate seizure or the suspension or cancellation of operating privileges.

After the sanction period, a “Conditional” safety rating will apply for at least 6 months before any upgrade is considered.

## **New operators**

When an operator applies for a CVOR certificate, a “Satisfactory–unaudited” safety rating is proposed. For the first 40 days of operation, the operator is considered unrated while the proposed safety rating is processed and comes into effect.

Most new operators will remain “Satisfactory-unaudited” for the first 6 months.

- If an operator accumulates points on the CVOR record or fails an audit, the safety rating may drop to “Conditional” or “Unsatisfactory”.

## **Disputing and deferring safety rating status**

A carrier may try to upgrade its safety rating to “Satisfactory” or “Excellent” by volunteering for and passing a facility audit. If a carrier does not pass the audit, the Deputy Registrar will propose a “Conditional” safety rating.

A carrier may apply for deferred safety rating status by disputing their proposed “Conditional” safety rating if it has:

- volunteered for the audit
- failed the audit
- an overall violation rate of 50% or less

The Deputy Registrar may defer the proposed “Conditional” safety rating for up to one year if the carrier meets both conditions:

- The carrier submits a dispute that includes a written undertaking to address the deficiencies found during the audit.

- The carrier agrees to submit to a subsequent audit within one year of receiving the proposed “Conditional” rating.

If the carrier meets these conditions, the Deputy Registrar may delay assigning a “Conditional” safety rating for up to one year.

The Deputy Registrar is the only dispute mechanism for Carrier Safety Ratings. Unlike sanctions, safety ratings cannot be appealed to the License Appeal Tribunal (LAT).

A “Conditional” safety rating will be assigned immediately if any of the following conditions occur:

- the carrier’s overall violation rate exceeds 50% of its overall CVOR threshold,
- six months pass and the carrier has not yet requested a re-audit
- the carrier fails the re-audit
- one year passes and the carrier has not been re-audited or is not awaiting a scheduled re-audit

## Overall Violation Rates

Overall violation rates (OVRs) are based on a carrier’s collisions, convictions and inspections over a 24-month period. Each event is assigned a point value. The OVR is the percentage of points accumulated compared to the carrier’s allowable threshold.

The threshold is the maximum OVR deemed acceptable for that specific operator. Thresholds vary by:

- fleet size
- number of drivers
- kilometres travelled

Larger operators with more vehicles and greater distances have higher thresholds than smaller operators.

OVRs are tracked on a 24-month sliding scale. As new events and points are added, older events drop off after 24 months.

The CVOR system calculates separate violation rates for collisions, convictions and inspections.

- For collisions and convictions, points are compared to the operator’s threshold for kilometres travelled.
- For inspections, points are compared to the threshold based on the number of units inspected.
- Collisions and convictions are weighted double compared to inspections.
- These individual thresholds are combined to produce the OVR.

When an operator exceeds its OVR threshold, progressive interventions and sanctions are applied.

For example, exceeding 35% of the allowable threshold may result in a warning letter. The CVOR system automatically triggers actions as an operator reaches different levels of their threshold.

## Thresholds, intervention and sanctions

Predetermined violation rate thresholds guide ministry interventions and sanctions. All events are monitored for risk. The ministry may intervene at any time using the action that best reflects the level of risk the carrier poses to road safety.

### **0 – 34% Overall Violation Rate (OVR)**

Most carriers fall within this range. Carriers with an OVR less than 35% should actively monitor their CVOR safety record and address any risks or safety issues as they arise.

### **35% – 49% OVR**

When a carrier's OVR reaches or exceeds 35%, the ministry may intervene and issue a warning letter. This is an opportunity for the carrier to review its safety record and other important aspects of their business such as driver training, current vehicle maintenance practices and company policies, with the goal of improving their overall safety performance.

### **50% – 84% OVR**

When a carrier's overall violation rate reaches this stage, the ministry may determine that a facility audit is warranted, depending on the carrier's performance.

If an audit is required, a ministry official will contact the carrier. The carrier must participate in the audit and to provide all documents requested.

- If a carrier does not meet the required standards or does not participate in the audit, their safety rating will be downgraded to “Conditional”.
- If a carrier's OVR reaches 70% with or without an audit, their safety rating will also be downgraded to “Conditional”.

### **85% – 99% OVR**

When a carrier's OVR reaches 85%, they may be required to attend an interview with a senior ministry official. The carrier must develop an action plan to address and eliminate all preventable safety risks. The ministry will closely monitor the progress of any action plan. If the carrier does not improve, their CVOR may be suspended or cancelled.

### **100% or more OVR**

When a carrier's OVR or any collision, inspection or conviction threshold reaches or exceeds 100%, the carrier may face suspension or cancellation of its CVOR certificate. The carrier must attend a meeting with the Deputy Registrar to explain:

- why they should retain their CVOR operating privileges
- what corrective safety measures they have implemented to improve their on-road safety performance