

# WHAT TO FIX IN 2026?

## Are you at full Compliance?

Compliance is a word frequently used in the motorcoach industry typically relating to preparing for regulatory audits. The phrase being “audit-ready” is like the course taken in school for preparation to pass a test, but not necessarily to gain an understanding of the content.

Compliance is more than checking a box for regulations, it should be a key part of any motorcoach company’s culture.

Compliance and being audit- ready goes beyond the realm of FMCSA. What preparation has been done for OSHA, EPA, Department of Justice, or Department of Homeland Security as well as IFTA and IRP? What about compliance with 29CFR 1910.178? If a forklift is used, this is mandatory. How many employees are OSHA 10 trained? How many maintenance and cleaning crew members are trained in proper procedures in the event of fuel spills or restroom dumping practices? How many employees are trained to interact with passengers or employees regarding the Americans with Disability Act? All these topics and more are part of COMPLIANCE.



The email just arrived, followed by a phone call from a federal official confirming an in-person visit is coming. What is the immediate reaction? Is there confidence that “you got this” or are questions now forming as to what may be asked for review and also what could be found? Where does compliance stack up in the day-to-day routines and the company safety culture?



“Operational visibility keeps organizations prepared for inspections, audits, and evolving compliance requirements before challenges emerge.”

### FMCSA

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is the most common visit a motor carrier will encounter. Passenger carriers are required by Congress to be reviewed and have a safety rating presented every 3 years. These comprehensive safety investigations (not compliance reviews) are thorough, detailed dives into how company safety programs and policies are practiced and the effectiveness. Everything is on the table for analysis and document to determine true safety fitness..

### OSHA

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is a government agency that oversees the workplace safety and health practices of a company under the auspices of the Department of Labor. OSHA is the federal agency that oversees these regulations. However, there are some states, like Maryland's MOSH (Maryland Occupational Safety and Health) that use stricter guidelines and regulatory body than the federal agencies. These agencies typically only visit under two circumstances.

These are a workplace injury / accident or a voluntary inspection requested by a company. Check by state to see if these fall under a state agency or following federal standards. Also ask for an educational survey that can be done during the onsite visit and exactly how employees work. The OSHA 10 training is a great way to get employees introduced to the safety standards and expectations.

### EPA

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is a federal agency that oversees environmental regulations and standards. EPA does not often visit a company unless there has been a complaint or incident that requires investigation. Incidents like fuel spills, improper restroom dumping, groundwater contamination, noise pollution (neighbors thinking the operation is too loud) may initiate a visit and investigation directly to the business.

These are very infrequent but usually end up being very expensive due to testing and potential hefty fines for noncompliance.



“Connected operations simplify complex compliance requirements while improving accessibility, security, reporting accuracy, and confidence.”

### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

The Department of Justice (DOJ) is the governing body that oversees the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). ADA is far more than having a lift installed in a bus in the fleet. Training is required for proper interaction with a passenger with a disability.

Is the company website or a customer-facing app set up to be used by a person that is blind or deaf? Does the charter team know the information to gather for a person with a disability and the appropriate way to ask those questions? Is requests for accessible equipment being documented and how many are being fulfilled? Finally, are the drivers prepared to speak and act comfortably working with passengers with disabilities?

### US DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and it's subagencies like FEMA, are becoming more present in the motor coach industry all the time, from hazard and threat assessments

to helping to build a security plan. FEMA makes the Intercity Bus Security Grant Program (IBSGP) available to over the road bus companies to enhance the security on intercity bus travel. A company security plan is a requirement to participate in the grant.

### IFTA AND IRP

The International Fuel Tax Association (IFTA) and the International Registration Plan (IRP) exist to simplify the registration fee and fuel tax distributions among North American jurisdictions.

For years, this was a simple annual IRP report and quarterly IFTA reports. Recently, states have been using these two reports to capture potential lost revenues. Audits are becoming more common and fines and penalties in the thousands of dollars have been reported by companies.

Always verify data and double check reports before submitting them.



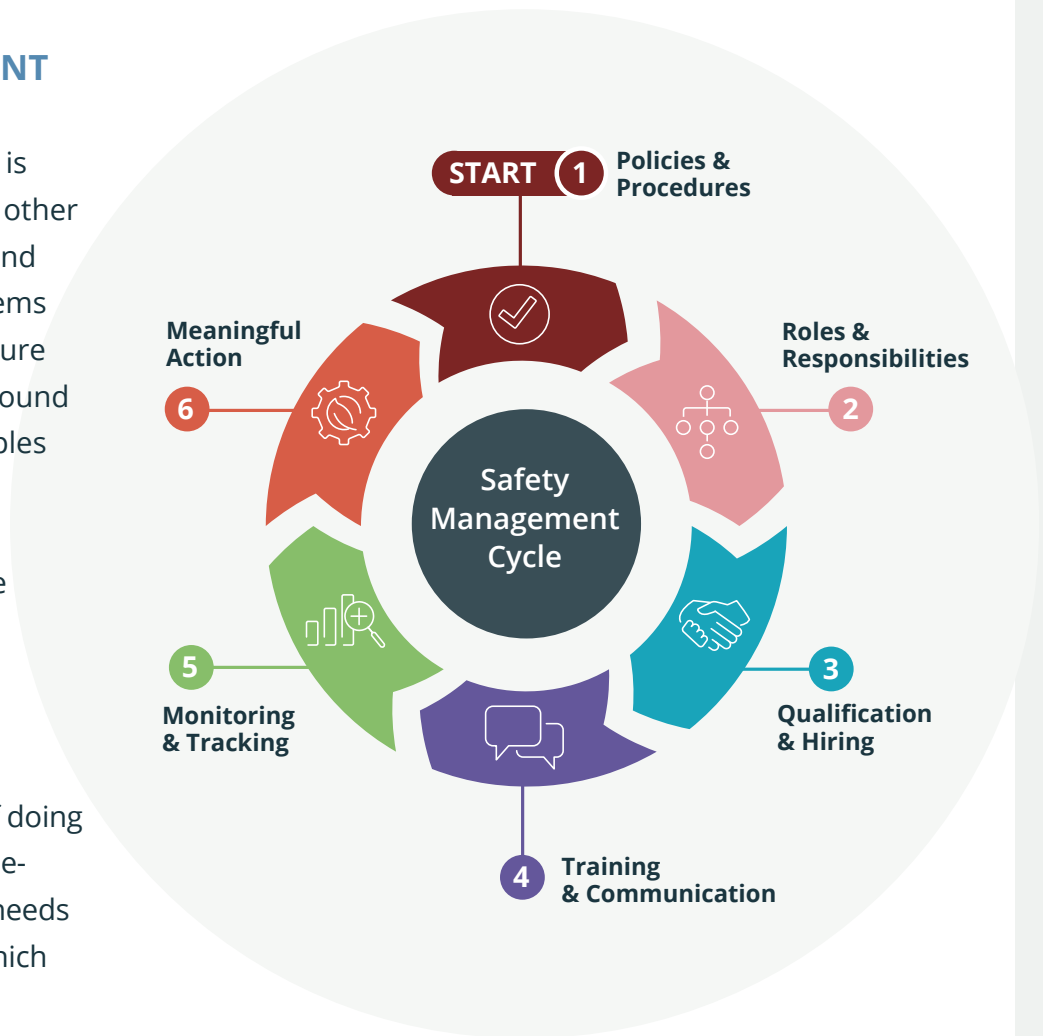


“A proactive Safety Management Cycle helps organizations identify weaknesses early and improve safety performance through continuous evaluation.”

## THE SAFETY MANAGEMENT CYCLE

The Safety Management Cycle is the tool that FMCSA as well as other investigative agencies use to find patterns within company systems to find where the points of failure occur. The cycle is centered around safety, however, the six principles of the cycle can be applied to most every industry and is a great tool to create or improve a company culture.

Compliance in the motorcoach industry is not a one stop shop or a “set it and forget it” part of doing business. It is more than a three-year visit from FMCSA. It truly needs to be part of the fabric from which a motorcoach company is cut.



**Smarter Data. Faster Insights. Stronger, Continuous Support.**

For more information on this topic or if you have suggestions for future topics, please reach out to Mike McDonal at [mmcdonal@saucontech.com](mailto:mmcdonal@saucontech.com).