WHITE PAPER 01 | REGISTRATION

Carrier Vetting After Motus

The most dangerous carrier check in 2026 is the one performed in the right old system.

May 19, 2026	24 months	1 identity	0 shortcuts
Motus access opened to all other customers	required registration update cycle for regulated entities	one verified entity before any authority or policy review	historical screens do not replace the current record

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Motus became FMCSA's current registration system in May 2026 for motor carriers, brokers, freight forwarders, and supporting companies.

The former Licensing and Insurance system is historical-only. FMCSA states that Motus filings are not reflected there, so an old workflow can miss current activity.

A defensible carrier file now records where each fact came from, when it was checked, and how the tendering contact was independently tied to the registered entity.

01 The source of truth moved

FMCSA launched Motus as the home for applying for a USDOT number, managing operating authority, submitting biennial updates, reinstating suspended authority, and viewing registration records. Public users can search registered entities in the new system.

FMCSA separately states that the former Licensing and Insurance system is available only to review historical records and that Motus filings are not reflected there. This is not a cosmetic website change. It changes the evidence path for a live carrier decision.

If your SOP still says open the legacy Licensing and Insurance screen and stop, the SOP is stale.

Evidence: Move into Motus, What can I do in Licensing and Insurance, Changes to FMCSA Registrations in Motus

02 Separate identity from permission

Carrier fraud thrives when teams treat an active authority number as proof that the caller controls the authority. Authority answers whether the registered entity has permission to operate. Identity answers whether the person, email, phone number, bank account, and truck being presented are tied to that entity.

Start with the current Motus entity record. Then independently verify the contact path. Do not use the phone number in a suspicious email to verify the suspicious email. Use a previously saved contact, a direct insurer or agent path, or a public record reached independently.

Layer	Check	Stop condition
Entity	Legal name, USDOT number, address, registration record	Name or address mismatch without a documented explanation
Contact	Known phone, domain, named employee, callback path	New contact insists on urgency or blocks independent callback
Authority	Current authority status and scope	Inactive, suspended, revoked, or wrong authority type
Financial filing	Current filing in Motus and direct agent confirmation	Missing filing, unexplained cancellation, or unverifiable agent
Equipment	Truck, trailer, plate, driver, and VIN path when required	Substitution with no documented chain of control

Evidence: Move into Motus, Changes to FMCSA Registrations in Motus

03 Build a record that can survive a claim or fraud review

A screenshot is useful only when it can be placed on a timeline. Save the date, time, system, record identifier, person who checked it, and any supporting confirmation. If a status changes later, the file should show what the team knew when it made the decision.

Keep current registration evidence separate from historical evidence. Legacy records can help explain lineage, prior filings, or changed details, but they should be labeled historical rather than presented as the current authority source.

1. Search the entity in Motus and save the current record details.
2. Resolve the USDOT number to the legal name and operating authority scope.
3. Compare address, phone, email domain, and payment instructions to the known file.
4. Verify required insurance or financial responsibility through the current filing path and direct agent contact.
5. Record every mismatch and its resolution before tender.
6. Recheck when the carrier changes contact, banking, equipment, authority, or policy information.

Evidence: Move into Motus, What can I do in Licensing and Insurance

04 Do not let the new portal become a new single point of failure

Motus strengthens identity verification and registration management, but no public portal can prove that the person communicating with you controls the record. The right response is layered evidence, not blind trust in a newer interface.

Treat system availability, data latency, and transition artifacts as known operational risks. If a critical fact cannot be verified, document the gap and stop the load rather than filling it with an assumption.

- Current status belongs in Motus.
- Safety performance still requires the appropriate safety records and context.
- Policy terms still require direct insurer or agent confirmation.
- Control of the authority still requires independent identity verification.
- A changed payment instruction requires a separate fraud check.

Evidence: Move into Motus, What can I do in Licensing and Insurance

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Replace legacy Licensing and Insurance links in every carrier setup checklist with the current Motus path.
2. Add a field showing the source system and timestamp for every authority and filing check.
3. Require an independent callback for new contacts, changed banking, and last-minute equipment substitutions.

QUESTIONS WORTH ASKING NEXT

- Which TMS fields still assume the former Licensing and Insurance display?
- Can your team reconstruct who verified the current record and when?

LIMITS AND CAUTIONS

- Motus workflows continue to evolve after launch. Confirm current FMCSA job aids before changing a regulated filing.
- Public registration status does not prove the identity of the person tendering capacity.
- This paper is operational education, not legal, insurance, or compliance advice.

PRIMARY PUBLIC SOURCES

1. **Move into Motus**
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration | 2026-05-18

2. **Changes to FMCSA Registrations in Motus**
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration | 2026-05-18

3. **What can I do in Licensing and Insurance**
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration | 2026-05-21

Web edition: https://prospectsentinel.com/tools/carrier-vetting-after-motus.html | Published 2026-07-23 | Public sources only