

Risk Mitigation for Dealers Purchasing Vehicles

National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS)

As an Iowa vehicle dealer, you can access the same information the Iowa titling system uses by getting a vehicle history report. These reports have key information supplied by the NMVTIS. Viewing the vehicle history report can prevent surprises when you title and register the vehicle in Iowa. We recommend this business practice so you know what you're buying and what you'll be selling to your customers. It's especially important for vehicles bought from out-of-state or at auctions.

Reports Including NMVTIS

- NMVTIS is the only vehicle history database in the nation in which all states, insurance carriers, and junk and salvage yards are required by federal law to report.
- Dealers and the general public can access NMVTIS data through many vehicle data providers.
- Reports from these providers require fees and may be obtained as individual reports or through bulk reporting subscriptions.
- These reports provide dealers and consumers with information on the vehicle's title, most recent odometer reading, brand history, and in some cases historical theft data.
- Only Approved NMVTIS Data Providers are authorized to display the NMVTIS logo and sell a vehicle history report to consumers using NMVTIS data.
- Reports from each data provider will look different and may combine information from NMVTIS with other information that the data provider pulls from other resources.
- There is no standard layout to the NMVTIS data points used in reports. The NMVTIS data might not be grouped together in the report, but you may find the NMVTIS logo and/or language like "NMVTIS partner" somewhere in the report.



NMVTIS Data

Data on NMVTIS reports will be combined with other vehicle data, such as service history, type of use, and inspections. NMVTIS provides five standard data points to all of the Approved NMVTIS Data Providers. This is similar information used by Iowa county treasurers and DOT staff to determine the status and characteristics for issuing a new Iowa title. The five data points are:

- 1 Current State of Title & Last Title Date:** Verifies the validity of the current title.
- 2 Brand History:** Generally, Iowa statutes require brands to be carried forward from previous titles for consumer protection and awareness. This information will provide a dealer with visibility of brands that may be carried forward to an Iowa title, such as "junk," "salvage," "flood," etc.
- 3 Odometer Reading:** Identifies any discrepancies in vehicle odometer readings or labels like "not actual" mileage.
- 4 Total Loss History:** Identifies vehicles with severe damage that may be unsafe for consumers or present difficulties titling the vehicle in Iowa.
- 5 Salvage History:** Identifies vehicles that may appear to be on a "clean" title but would result in a salvage or rebuilt title in Iowa.

Resources for Understanding NMVTIS

Department of Justice

[Understanding an NMVTIS Vehicle History Report](#)

[List of Approved NMVTIS Data Providers](#)

American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA)

[NMVTIS for General Public & Consumers](#)



How does your NMVTIS report relate to enhanced reviews conducted by the Iowa DOT's Motor Vehicle Division (MVD)?

Example 1

Coming into Iowa on an out-of-state (OOS) title

- The vehicle is on an OOS title and the purchaser obtained the vehicle from an auction.
- During the title and registration transaction, MVD's system flags this transaction for further verification of proper title designation/brand.
- MVD personnel will contact the auction and/or the insurance company who covered the claim to determine the percent of damage.
- Minor damage noted on a vehicle data report is still a flag for the purchaser to note prior damage, but it is usually not enough to result in a salvage title or junk certificate, unless also noted elsewhere in the report.

Example 2

Total Loss

- A dealer purchased a vehicle from an auction.
- The report only notes minor to moderate damage, but also clearly flags the customer of the total loss claim.
- During the title and registration transaction, MVD's system flags this transaction for further verification of proper title designation/brand.
- MVD personnel will conduct an enhanced review of the percentage of damage, as noted in example 1.
- The vehicle was deemed to be over 70% loss (86% total) and issued an Iowa salvage title.
- The dealer will conduct a salvage theft exam before obtaining a Rebuilt-IA title.

Example 3

Junked in Florida; went through Kentucky to get salvage title

- A common scenario is when a vehicle should have been junked and turned over to a demolisher or a parts recycler. There are states that will allow the vehicle to be driven again in their state only.
- While this may appear to be a regular title on a vehicle being sold at auction, the report may show a history of total loss damage, a junk certificate, or the subsequent salvage title.
- When there is a junk certificate noted in the vehicle history, the only option for an Iowa purchaser is to get an Iowa junk certificate.

Example 4

Stolen Vehicle

Although NMVTIS does not provide theft status to providers, info on stolen vehicles may still appear on vehicle data reports.

- The report gives an alert to the customer that the vehicle is, or has been reported, stolen.
- The customer can inquire further on the vehicle's stolen status using the contact information given on the report.
- If this vehicle were to run through MVD's system for title and registration, it would trigger an enhanced review.
- This transaction would be put on hold until law enforcement could review the details of the stolen report.