

although a number of them operating in Washington State and a few operating under the name of broker in the greater Vancouver area offer transborder services. The use of a broker by a Western Canadian shipper would normally involve full load shipments to the U.S.. However, consolidation services may be provided.

In the United States any applicant found by the Interstate Commerce Commission to be "fit, willing and able" qualifies for a broker's license. Since all broker licenses cover the transportation of general commodities throughout all 50 states, a contract carrier's (including private carriers and independent truckers) permit to serve a broker fits in under the broker's authority and enables such carriers to handle any traffic that a broker tenders to them. Under these generally unrestricted conditions, brokers are beginning to number in the thousands and shippers would do well to seek references before making any commitments.

An important distinction between transportation brokers and other intermediaries and carriers is that, at least at present, brokers bear no liability for damage to or loss of freight. Finally, because the broker is an intermediary, their speed of transportation is as good as the type of mode used.

Further information on transportation brokers is available from the sources listed on page 76 of this report. A listing of transportation brokers participating in the B.C./Alberta market is found on page 56.

#### Shippers' Agents

Shippers' agents are another form of intermediary between shippers and carriers. Although shippers' agents will use any mode to satisfy a client's needs, their main area of activity is in intermodal transportation. Many are effectively retail extensions of the railroads, offering single trailer rates to two individual shippers then shipping two trailers on a railway flatcar. In fact, some rail carriers report that the majority of their TOFC traffic is generated by shippers' agents who in effect can be thought of as freight travel agents for shippers. Shippers' agents can obtain lower rates based on high traffic volumes through contracts with railways and pass these on to shippers.

Shippers' agent services include:

- 1) arranging door-to-door service for TOFC customers;
- 2) providing special equipment (e.g., refrigerated trailers);
- 3) providing complete door-to-door service from major distribution/consolidation points to major distribution centres;
- 4) paying the carrier involved directly and presenting one invoice to the shipper;
- 5) contacting customs to verify the documents required for exporting goods; and,