

Cargo handling facilities at Seattle, Tacoma, and Portland are claimed to be excellent with facilities to handle virtually any kind of shipment (including the consolidation of LTL shipments). Even more important however, is the ease, speed and convenience of clearing customs on southbound truck or rail shipments to the U.S. Several U.S. brokers operating out of Vancouver note that if a problem should arise on clearing a Canadian shipment through U.S. customs, it is much preferred that the problem occur at the Canada/U.S. border nearby, rather than at Anchorage, Alaska.

Another alternative for routing goods from British Columbia and Alberta to Alaska involves the shipment by rail of goods from inland points to Prince Rupert where they are rolled onto a barge, shipped over water then rolled off onto railway tracks at Whittier, Alaska. Again, this marine service is less expensive than the direct overland trucking option but somewhat slower. Port to port transit time is four days onto which must be added vessel load/unload time and rail transportation to Prince Rupert. Provided a shipper is conscious of sailing schedules, it is possible to ship a carload from (for example) Edmonton to Alaska over a one week time frame. Sailings from Prince Rupert to Whittier are scheduled on ten day intervals. This alternative will only be attractive to those shippers who can offer carload lots weighing over 100,000 lb. as in the case with rail carload shipping discussed earlier. However, part load shippers can contact a freight forwarder offering pool car services to Alaska via Prince Rupert.

For those shippers wishing to haul goods to Alaska in their own trucks, a car/truck ferry service operates from Prince Rupert to Skagway. One way fares rather than rates are charged on a per vehicle basis depending on length. For example, the current one way fare from Prince Rupert to Skagway for a vehicle over 60 feet in length is \$1,721 U.S. (approximately \$2,350 Cdn.). Remember, you will have to add this fare onto your internal cost of trucking goods privately.

If you choose to use one of the marine services operating from Seattle, your goods can clear customs there, which may offer a convenience to shippers in the Vancouver area in the event problems arise. If the rail/barge or car/truck ferry options from Prince Rupert are chosen, the goods will clear customs at Skagway, Alaska.

The following table shows the magnitude of rates that shippers in Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver can expect to pay for shipments to Anchorage, Alaska under several alternative means of transport.