

Air — International air freight is expanding rapidly. Regular service to U.S. and overseas destinations is available from major Canadian airports. Not all destinations are covered, however, and special charters may be required for more exotic markets. Shipping by air is more expensive than surface or sea transport, but higher costs may be offset by faster delivery, lower insurance and warehousing costs, and better inventory control.

Ocean — Exports of goods to offshore markets is most often transported by ocean carriers. The shipping of large items, bulk commodities and goods that do not require fast delivery is more economical by sea.

DELIVERING SERVICES

The challenges associated with providing services to a foreign market are no less complex, but quite different from those encountered in exporting goods. Service exporters' ability to deliver their services often depends on such factors in the target market as:

- extent and reliability of telecommunications links;
- existence of a reliable infrastructure of computers, faxes, modems, etc.;
- frequency and convenience of regularly scheduled air links between Canada and the market;
- technological sophistication, receptivity and flexibility of customers;

An international freight forwarder can provide valuable assistance in getting your goods to your foreign customers.

Shipping to foreign markets involves:

- ▶ selecting a mode of transport
- ▶ preparing documentation
- ▶ packing and marking
- ▶ arranging for shipping
- ▶ arranging for receipt of shipment at the destination

- potential support from official channels, government departments and international development agencies;
- ability to satisfy legal regulations governing work permits or professional certification.

FREIGHT FORWARDERS

A good freight forwarder takes care of all aspects of merchandise transportation, relieving exporters of this sometimes difficult task. Forwarders can provide estimates of transportation and shipping costs, and can inform you of other costs related to shipping your product to foreign markets.

Some of the specialized services freight forwarders offer include:

- selecting a suitable carrier;
- negotiating all arrangements with the carrier;
- co-ordinating the movement of cargo to the port of embarkation;
- preparing documents;
- providing advice on packing, labelling and marking;
- arranging warehouse storage and cargo insurance.

The two main types of freight forwarders are air freight forwarders and ocean freight forwarders. Many specialize in arranging shipments to certain countries or areas of the world, while others concentrate on particular types of products. Talk to local exporting companies, business associations and trade specialists to find out about freight forwarders in your area.