
Exporters' use of trucking has expanded significantly in recent years although other modes remain viable options with the inauguration of new services and other innovations. Over long distances, for example over 1,000 km, rail generally becomes rate competitive with road transport, while maritime services often are economically ideal for many bulk products.

Individual shipping decisions are influenced by a combination of rates, transit times and the overall service package, although transport industry officials report that exporters are generally more concerned with freight rates than with transit times. The exception is air transport which maintains its niche as the primary mode for shipments which must reach the customer in a very short time frame.

Trucking:

- Motor carrier services are well-developed and adaptable although certain Mexican transport regulations and customs delays continue to be bothersome.
- Refrigerated cargo moves almost entirely by truck.
- There is currently no customs preclearing system in place for motor transport across the Mexico-U.S. border.
- Regulations governing the Mexican transport industry were liberalised in the early 1990's. Cabotage rules apply and trucking operations within Mexico must still be performed by a Mexican driver and tractor. To improve service to exporters and to reduce delays at the border, some Canadian trucking lines have established interchange agreements with Mexican trucking companies. These agreements reduce delays as trailer transfer is greatly facilitated, and leads to improved customer service in Mexico.

Rail:

- The customs preclearing system for entry of rail cars into Mexico ("despacho previo") has greatly improved rail efficiency and border-crossing times. Railway cars, and in some cases locomotives, now cross into Mexico with a minimum of delay. As a result, rail shipments can clear the border as fast or faster than truck shipments.