

- **Average Transit Mile:** Solo (500-600 miles a day) / team (1,000-1,200 miles a day).
- **Axles:** A rod or spindle that passes through the center of tires. There are three types, including:
  - **Steers:** No more than 12K weight.
  - **Drive:** No more than 34K weight.
  - **Tandem:** No more than 34K weight.
- **Bill of Lading (BOL):** The legally binding contract between the shipper and the carrier, broker, or agent that defines all aspects of the freight shipping arrangement, including what is being shipped and to whom.
- **Blind Shipment:** When the shipper and receiver are unaware of one another. The BOL lists the party that paid for the shipment as the shipper or receiver of the freight shipment.
- **Bobtail:** Slang term used to describe a tractor driven without its trailer.
- **Brokerage Insurance Bond:** The BMC-84 (also known as a freight broker bond) is a surety bond that protects shippers/motor carriers, which the Federal Motor Carrier Association (FMCSA) requires to obtain brokerage authority.
- **Bulkhead:** A partition or wall inserted between products in a trailer to create separate temperature zones.
- **Capacity:** How many carriers are available at a particular moment.
- **Carrier:** Provides transportation services. Usually, an owner and operator of the equipment (i.e., trucking company).
- **Carrier Safety Ratings:** Safety ratings assigned to motor carriers as designated by the FMCSA. (See: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.)
  - **Satisfactory:** Motor carrier has adequate safety management controls and can be used.
  - **Conditional:** Motor carrier does not have adequate safety management controls and cannot be used.
  - **Unsatisfactory (inactive):** Carrier can no longer operate a commercial motor vehicle.
- **Centralized Shipping:** When there is a single point of contact or transportation department that handles logistics for the whole company; one central decision-maker. (See: Decentralized Shipping.)

- **Certificate of Insurance:** A COI is a document certifying that one has met the specified requirements by an insurance company.
- **Chassis:** A special trailer or undercarriage used to transport ocean containers over the road.
- **Chocks:** A type of barrier, usually a block, placed behind the wheel of a truck to prevent movement.
- **Commodity:** Article of commerce (goods, merchandise) that is shipped. An accurate description of freight commodities is essential for accurate quoting and preventing rebills.
- **Consignee:** The individual who is financially responsible for receiving a freight shipment. This person is also usually the receiver of the load.
- **Container (Shipping Container):** Standard-sized rectangular box used to transport freight by ship, rail, or highway. International shipping containers are 20' or 40', conform to International Standards Organization (ISO) standards, and are designed to fit in ships' holds. Domestic containers are up to 53' long, of lighter construction, and are designed for rail and highway use only.
- **Cross-Dock:** The practice of unloading a trailer and immediately loading an outbound truck/trailer with little to no storage in between.
- **Deadhead:** The distance the carrier drives empty to pick up a shipment.
- **Decentralized Shipping:** When there are multiple distribution centers (DCs), and each center has an individual decision-maker. (See: Centralized Shipping.)
- **Declared Value:** The value of a shipment for resale, as declared by the shipper or owner.
- **Dedicated Team:** A team of drivers who take turns driving a truck to comply with in-service hours while getting the cargo there more quickly. (See: Electric Logging Device.)
- **Dedicated Truck:** Refers to a driver pulling freight for one specific customer only, where only that load is on the truck. No partial shipments can be added.
- **Department of Transportation (DOT):** Oversees US federal highway, air, railroad, maritime, and other transportation administration functions.
- **Detention/Demurrage:** Charge by the carrier for excess retention of their equipment. Typically caused by untimely loading or unloading.

- **Distribution Center (DC):** A location where goods and materials are stored until they are ready to be moved to their end destination.
- **Door-to-Door:** Synonymous with Thru Trailer Service (TTS) but can also mean simply handling the shipment from the shipper to the consignee.
- **DOT Number:** License administered to for-hire carriers by the Department of Transportation. (Not the same as Motor Carrier #.)
- **Double Brokering:** When a broker or carrier accepts a load with the intention of booking another carrier on the shipment. In most cases, this is forbidden.
- **Double Drop:** A flatbed with the lowest deck. Generally used for oversized or over-height loads.
- **Drayage:** Transporting goods over a short distance (e.g., from a ship to a warehouse).
- **Driver Touch:** The carrier's driver will need to assist with loading or unloading the product. Additional fees will apply when this service is requested.
- **Drop Trailer:** When a carrier "drops" their trailer at the shipper/receiver to be loaded or unloaded. They leave with the truck; only the trailer stays at the facility.
- **Dunnage:** Filler material placed in empty spaces to keep cargo from moving or falling. Typically lumber, foam padding, or inflatable bags.
- **Duty Status:** Drivers must maintain a daily 24-hour logbook (Record of Duty Status) documenting all work and rest periods. It must be kept current to the last change of duty status. The driver must retain records of the previous seven days and present them to law enforcement officials on demand.
- **Electric Logging Device (ELD):** Used within commercial trucking to provide an accurate and simple means of keeping HOS records that drivers and fleet operators are required by law to maintain. Record service hours and duty status every 24 hours.
- **Escorts:** Vehicles assisting in the movement of large, over-dimensional loads. Escorts ensure the truck has plenty of space to move and alert drivers of a shipment coming towards them. Help stop traffic with beacon lights and/or flags.
- **Excess Value:** Amount of declared value of a shipment above the carrier's limit of liability.

- **Expedited:** The process of shipping at a faster rate than normal. Usually includes team drivers, overnight, and/or air services.
- **Factoring Company:** When a carrier sells their invoice to a third party. The carrier accepts a discounted rate in return for immediate payment.
- **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA):** Operates within the DOT with a mission to prevent commercial motor-vehicle-related fatalities and injuries by enforcing safety regulations and improving safety information systems.
- **Flatbed:** A level bed platform with no sides or top. Commonly used for oversized shipments like equipment, machinery, and lumber. May need straps, tarps, or chains. (See: Straps.)
- **Flat Truck:** Similar to a flatbed but has sideboards on each side that allows the commodity to be stacked.
- **Freeze & Chill:** Temperature-controlled equipment used to transport perishable goods.
- **Freight Broker:** Individual or company that serves as a liaison between another individual or company that needs shipping services and an authorized motor carrier. Freight brokers do not transport freight themselves and typically do not own trucks or shipping equipment.
- **Freight Class:** In LTL shipping, the category of freight as defined by the National Motor Freight Traffic Association (NMFTA). Identifies the size, value, and difficulty of transporting. Determines the carrier's shipping charges.
- **Freight Forwarder:** Facilitates shipping of goods for a third party. A freight forwarder typically handles international goods, is defined as a carrier, and can be held responsible for claims and cargo loss.
- **Fuel Surcharge (FSC):** Due to the fluctuation of fuel costs associated with moving freight, the Energy Information Administration of the US Department of Energy publishes a US National Average Fuel Index every week. Transportation companies will often include an FSC to the freight cost based on cents per mile or percentage of the line haul amount.
- **Gross Vehicle Weight Rating:** The vehicle's maximum operating weight as specified by the manufacturer. Includes the driver, fuel, engine, body, chassis, and cargo but excludes the weight of a trailer.



- **Hazmat:** Hazardous materials as classified by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The US DOT strictly regulates the transport of hazardous material. A transporter of hazardous waste is subject to several regulations under RCRA, outlined in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 263.
- **Hot Shot:** Trailers or flatbeds that are a smaller size and can be pulled by larger pickup trucks. Typically, 24-40' in length, hot shots cannot handle as much weight as a regular tractor-trailer. Common for moving smaller loads or LTL shipments.
- **Hours of Service (HOS):** Regulations that limit when and how long drivers may drive. (See: Electronic Logging Device.)
- **Interchange Agreement:** Agreement and/or contract between two companies to switch or take control of a trailer to pick up and deliver shipments. Common along border towns between Mexican and US companies to cross the border.
- **Intermodal:** A single trailer or container that encounters multiple forms of transportation along its route, such as truck/ship or truck/rail.
- **Invoice:** A payment request. It accompanies the POD as proof the work was completed.
- **Just in Time (JIT):** Manufacturing system which depends on frequent, small deliveries of parts and supplies to keep on-site inventory to a minimum.
- **Lane:** Refers to the route run by the carrier to complete a shipment. Many companies will have a lane that they run regularly called a "dedicated lane."
- **Layover:** When a driver is detained overnight or for 24 hours while waiting to pick up or deliver a shipment. Fees are typically incurred when a carrier must layover.
- **Less-Than-Truckload (LTL):** Quantity of freight that does not require a full dedicated trailer due to the size or value. LTL is more cost-effective than securing a full truckload (FTL) rate. Often a carrier will place several LTL shipments on the same truck.
- **Line Haul:** The rate per mile in dollars and cents for transporting items.
- **Load Lock:** Metal adjustable bars or straps that hold pallets in place while in transit.

- **Loose Truck Market:** More trucks than product move from a region (pay less per load; more margin).
- **Loss or Damage:** The loss or damage of freight while in transit or a carrier's possession.
- **Lumper Charge:** A fee charged to the carrier when a shipper utilizes third-party workers to help unload trailer contents. (The customer typically pays for this in the end.)
- **Motor Carrier Number (MC #):** License administered to for-hire carriers by the Federal Motor Carrier Administration (FMCSA). Commonly referred to as USDOT numbers.
- **National Motor Freight Classification (NMFC):** A standard comparison of commodities moving in interstate, intrastate, and foreign commerce. There are 18 commodity classes based on an evaluation of four transportation characteristics: density, stowability, handling, and liability. These characteristics establish a commodity's transportability.
- **Overages, Shortages, and Damages (OS&Ds):** These must be reported at the time of delivery.
- **Over-Dimensional (Wide Load):** Cargo that is larger than the legally defined limits for width, length, height, and/or weight and cannot be broken down into smaller units.
- **Over the Road (OTR):** The transport of goods by road, usually a truck.
- **Owner-Operator:** A truck driver who owns and operates their truck(s).
- **Pallet:** A wooden or plastic platform on which goods are placed for movement to and from facilities.
- **Pallet Exchange:** A fee charged by the loading facility if a carrier does not bring pallets to exchange with the shipper.
- **Pallet Jack:** A tool used to lift and move pallets and other heavy packages and products.
- **Partial:** Multiple shipments from several customers are consolidated to utilize the entire truck. Transit times can be longer than dedicated truckloads due to numerous stops.

- **Permits:** Permission obtained from municipalities allowing carriers to transport freight that exceeds the legal weight and size limits. These typically vary by state and location.
- **Placard:** Warning signs placed on all four sides of a trailer denoting that they are carrying hazardous materials.
- **Progressive Number (PRO #):** A number assigned by the carrier to reference the shipment. Also used for tracking.
- **Proof of Delivery (POD):** Signed documents (usually a Bill of Lading) that show a shipment was received at the delivery location.
- **Pup Trailer:** Short semitrailer, usually between 26' and 32' long, with a single axle.
- **Purchase Order (PO):** This must be provided for a carrier to be loaded with a product. No carrier can be loaded without it. Also occasionally required at the receiver. Also called the pickup number.
- **Ramps:** Carried by some open deck truckers to help facilitate the loading and offloading of shipments. Mostly found on step decks trying to haul cars and other drivable equipment.
- **Rate Confirmation:** A document that confirms the agreed-upon amount for service cost between the shipper and carrier. Carriers typically require this document before they agree to pick up a load for a customer or 3PL.
- **Receiver:** The location the load is delivered to.
- **Reefer:** Slang for a refrigerated or temp-controlled trailer with insulated walls and a self-powered refrigeration unit. Most commonly used for transporting food.
- **Removable Gooseneck (RGN):** A specialized type of heavy-haul flatbed trailer that can provide drive-on drive-off accessibility. The trailer deck is attached to a "gooseneck," which can be raised and lowered then removed from the trailer for transportation.
- **Seal:** Metal or plastic product placed on the trailer's latch once loaded. If the trailer has been breached in transit, that seal will be compromised, and the product may not be accepted.
- **Sharpen the Pencil:** The customer wants you to lower your quote to potentially win the lane.

- **Shipper:** Consignor, exporter, or seller named in the Bill of Lading, who may or may not be the same as the party responsible for initiating a shipment.
- **Sliding Tandem:** Mechanism that allows a tandem axle suspension to be moved back and forth at the rear of a semitrailer to adjust the weight distribution between the axles and fifth wheel.
- **Spread Axle (Spread Tandem):** Tandem axle assembly spaced further apart than the standard spacing of 54".
- **Standard Carrier Alpha Code (SCAC):** Unique 2-4 letter code used to identify transportation companies.
- **Straps:** Strong vinyl straps used to secure and tie down freight to a trailer.
- **Tandem Axle:** Pair of axles and associated suspension usually located close together.
- **Tanker:** Cylinder designed to haul liquids like fuel or oil.
- **Tender:** The contract between a broker and their customer. The tender gives you all the information needed to get a shipment completed.
- **Third-Party Logistics (3PL):** A third-party or contract logistics company that outsources part of its logistics services. 3PLs can handle any of the following: inventory and warehouse management, transportation management, or order management.
- **Thru Trailer Service (TTS):** When cargo remains on the same trailer during an international shipment. This is the opposite of a trans-load and is generally considered safer by most companies.
- **Tight Truck Market:** More product to move from a region than trucks are available (pay more per load; less margin).
- **Trans-Load:** The movement of a product from one trailer to another trailer that occurs during an active shipment.
- **Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC):** Needed to gain unescorted access to secure areas of Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA) regulated facilities and vessels.
- **Truckload (TL; FTL):** The transportation of goods that will fill up a 48' or 53' trailer by volume or weight. Full truckload shipping typically is contracted to one customer gaining full and exclusive use of the carrier's trailer.



- **Truck-Mounted Crane:** A self-propelled loading and unloading machine mounted on a truck body.
- **Truck Order Not Used (TONU):** When a shipper orders a truck to pick up but cancels after the truck has been dispatched. There is typically a fee to compensate the carrier for their time.
- **Van:** An enclosed boxlike motor vehicle with rear or side doors and side panels used to transport goods.
- **Volume:** The number of loads per week, month, or year a customer ships from one facility to another.
- **Waybill:** A description of goods sent with a common carrier.
  - System Access: Points where freight enters and leaves the transportation system.
  - Freight Consolidation & Distribution
  - Mode Transfer (e.g., rail to truck)
  - Vehicle Transfer (within a single mode, freight may transfer from one vehicle to another)
  - Storage and Warehousing
  - Fleet Maintenance