

Container Trucking 101: Understanding industry stakeholders

The container trucking (or drayage) industry in BC is complex and involves many stakeholders, which is one of the reasons why it continues to be plagued by instability. Here are the key players and their responsibilities.

BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure plans transportation networks, provides transportation services and infrastructure, develops and implements transportation policies, and administers many related acts and regulations.

Intraprovincial trucking, such as container trucks that do not originate or conclude at federal property, such as ports, fall under provincial ministry jurisdiction.

Transport Canada is the oversight ministry for Port Metro Vancouver. Together with the provincial government Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and Port Metro Vancouver, Transport Canada chairs the Trucking Steering Committee. Transport Canada shares the objective of stabilizing the container trucking sector in the Vancouver Gateway. Truck moves and activities integrated with shipping and navigation are federal jurisdiction.

Port Metro Vancouver is accountable to the Federal Minister of Transport and is responsible for managing the real estate holdings in support of the sustainable use and development of over 600 kilometers of shoreline throughout the Lower Mainland. This includes working with terminal operators to ensure the efficient movement of goods throughout the port.

Shippers are companies in the business of moving freight and service forestry and retail companies such as West Fraser, Walmart, Target, BestBuy, Loblaws and many other operations. Shippers are responsible for contracting and paying trucking companies to move containers.

Terminal operators lease Port Metro Vancouver lands and run for-profit operations that service docked ships, unloading and loading containers. Local terminals include Vanterm and Deltaport (operated by TSI Terminals Systems Inc., part of Global Container Terminals), Centerm (operated by DP World Canada Inc.), and Fraser Surrey Docks. Terminals are responsible for running efficient operations that include managing wait times.

Trucking companies, also known as full-service operators, contract with shippers and employ either their own drivers or hire independent truckers (owner-operators) on an as-needed basis. Trucking companies are responsible for contracting with shippers.

Truckers can be company-employed drivers or owner-operators of their own trucks. They can be long-haul or local drayage truckers. Some local drivers only haul containers over short distances for further transport by another carrier.