



Canadian  
Supply Chain  
Sector Council

Conseil canadien  
sectoriel de la chaîne  
d'approvisionnement

## OCCUPATIONAL STANDARD

(For use in the development of supply chain related job descriptions, performance evaluations, career development plans, etc.)

<b>Position:</b>	<b>CARGO AND FREIGHT AGENT</b>
<b>Description of Position (As defined by the CSCSC Stakeholder Community)</b>	<i>Cargo and Freight Agents arrange for cargo shipments and prepare associated shipping documentation. They are traditionally employed by freight forwarding and shipping companies, however, they are also employed across all sectors requiring either internal or external supply chain services.</i>
<b>Position Development</b>	Progression to supervisory and management positions is possible through experience and additional training.
<b>Required Qualifications:</b>	<b>(Education, Training, Related Work Experience)</b>
<b>Education</b>	Completion of secondary school is usually required.
<b>Training</b>	On-the-job training is usually required and provided. Agents may require a restricted radio operator's license.
<b>Related Work Experience</b>	Related airline, marine, or land transportation operations experience is considered an asset.
<b>Tasks:</b>	
<b>Cargo and Freight Agents perform some or all of the following tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiate and arrange transport of goods with shipping or freight companies, and quote fare and rates for cargo shipment</li> <li>• Weigh cargo, compute freight costs, calculate charges for services and insurance, process bills of lading, prepare cargo manifests, and maintain all shipping documentation</li> <li>• Advise and answer customer inquiries</li> <li>• Notify customers of the arrival of freight, and arrange for delivery</li> <li>• Trace lost or misdirected cargo and associated records</li> <li>• Operate equipment to transfer cargo within range of cranes/hoists</li> <li>• Operate winches or other hoisting devices to load and unload cargo</li> <li>• Operate mechanical towers to load cargo</li> <li>• Operate equipment to transfer bulk materials</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect hoses and operate equipment to transfer liquid materials</li> <li>• Perform other activities such as lashing and shoring cargo, opening containers and crates, filling warehouse orders, assisting in taking inventory and weighing and checking materials</li> <li>• Check import/export documentation to determine cargo contents, and classify goods into different fee or tariff groups</li> <li>• Enter shipping information into a computer</li> <li>• Retrieve stored items and pack goods for shipping</li> <li>• Develop constructive and cooperative working relationships</li> <li>• Communicate with people outside the organization, representing the organization to customers, the public, government, and other external sources</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Technology:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer Hardware and Associated Computer Software (e.g. applications specific to transportation sector and the movement of cargo, electronic mail, word processing, spreadsheet, database management systems, information processing)</li> <li>• Communication Devices</li> <li>• Scanning Equipment (e.g. bar code scanning equipment)</li> <li>• Packaging Tools (e.g. staplers, strapping machines, hammers)</li> </ul>
<b>Required Competencies:</b>	<b>(Knowledge, Skills, Personal Attributes)</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>	A Cargo and Freight Agent should have knowledge of transportation principles and methods, customer and personal service, mathematics, English language, and other languages as required.
<b>Skills</b>	A Cargo and Freight Agent should have the following skill sets: reading comprehension, active listening and learning, critical thinking, speaking, negotiation, complex problem solving, time management, mathematics, and coordination.
<b>Personal Attributes</b>	<b>(Abilities, Work Values, Work Styles)</b>
<b>Abilities</b>	The following abilities are important to the role of Cargo and Freight Agent: oral expression and comprehension, written expression and comprehension, speech clarity and recognition, inductive and deductive reasoning, and problem sensitivity.
<b>Work Values</b>	Individuals who will succeed in this position value working independently, are comfortable making decisions, and enjoy providing service to others and working with co-workers in a friendly environment.

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<b>Work Styles</b>	The following work styles are attributable to a Cargo and Freight Agent: attention to detail, independence, dependability, integrity, cooperation, persistence, adaptability/flexibility, stress tolerance, initiative, and achievement of challenging goals.
<b>Essential Skills Profile:</b>	Essential Skills are the skills needed for work, learning and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change. For more detailed essential skills profiles please refer to the ESDC website:  <a href="http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/les/index.shtml">http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/les/index.shtml</a>
<b>Reading Text</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read faxes, interoffice bulletins, memos, electronic mail, letter requests, government communications, licenses, contracts, regulations, policy manuals, special instructions on courier packages, computer manuals, procedures, policies, shipping forms, bills of lading, supervisor instructions, etcetera</li> </ul>
<b>Document Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize, complete and/or read import/export forms, phone lists, customer lists, agency lists, freight labels, signs, telexes, order forms, shipping forms, packing slips, bills of lading, weight charts, schedules, timetables, maps, insurance forms and tables, container size diagrams, etcetera</li> <li>• Enter information on tables, schedules or other table-like text</li> </ul>
<b>Writing Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May write way bills, bill of lading forms, insurance, damage or loss forms, incident or informational logs, price quotes, letter responses to requests for information, etcetera</li> <li>• May enter information into specialized computer programs</li> </ul>
<b>Numeracy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply money math</li> <li>• Apply scheduling, budgeting and accounting math</li> <li>• Apply measurement and calculation math</li> <li>• Utilize numerical estimation</li> </ul>
<b>Oral Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive messages over two-way radios from vessels</li> <li>• Call suppliers to find out prices, availability of equipment and supplies or to confirm the shipment of goods</li> <li>• Interact with customers to give them information on special rates, schedules, delivery times, shipping costs, insurance and regulations</li> <li>• Interact with customers to determine needs, negotiate contracts, clarify shipping order details and address cargo safety</li> <li>• Interact with co-workers to share information, discuss challenges and co-ordinate work activities</li> <li>• Interact with staff to provide instructions and monitor work</li> <li>• Participate in meetings to discuss such matters as the direction of</li> </ul>

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	<p>the company, upcoming workloads, procedures, delegation of responsibilities and health and safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interact with supervisors regarding procedures, schedules, policies, quotes, discounts, repairs, customer relations or to request assistance</li> </ul>
<b>Thinking Skills</b>	<b>(Problem Solving, Decision Making, Job Task Planning and Organizing, Significant Use of Memory, Finding Information)</b>
<b>Problem Solving</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locate lost cargo by obtaining information from the customer and determining the point of transportation delay</li> <li>• Resolve conflicting workload situations</li> <li>• Address vehicle breakdowns by arranging for alternate transport</li> </ul>
<b>Decision Making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide whether to give refunds to dissatisfied customers</li> <li>• Decide vehicle dispatches for specific jobs and optimize route plans</li> <li>• Decide whether to accept or reject a shipment that is hazardous</li> </ul>
<b>Job Task Planning and Organizing</b>	The tasks of some Cargo and Freight Agents are determined by the flow of customers or by their supervisors. Within this framework, they order tasks according to priorities that are provided to them, such as serving walk-in customers before phone customers. The tasks of other Cargo and Freight Agents may require significantly more planning and organizing by the worker as they are related to arrival, unloading and departure times that are subject to frequent changes.
<b>Significant Use of Memory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember shipping rates, fares and destination codes, contract numbers of regular customers, customers needs or preferences</li> </ul>
<b>Finding Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locate fares in manuals, find out rates, and investigate route options</li> <li>• Look up telephone numbers in the telephone book, for example, when consignees' numbers are missing on the way bill</li> <li>• Check a hazardous goods manual to see if items must be shipped in a specific manner</li> </ul>
<b>Working with Others</b>	Cargo and Freight Agents mainly work independently, coordinating some activities with other workers. However, many work as team members, cooperating with co-workers and sharing information.
<b>Continuous Learning</b>	There is a need for ongoing learning to acquire and maintain competencies in a cross-section of the industry's many skills areas as this may impact on Cargo and Freight Agents' employability. There is a strong tradition of on-the-job training. Some workers also have the opportunity to participate in formal training activities. Safety training, such as Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System courses, is emphasized as the working environment may be hazardous.
<b>Additional Information</b>	<b>(Physical Aspects, Attitudes)</b>

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<b>Physical Aspects</b>	Cargo and Freight Agents may sit or stand and walk or use other body positions such as bending or kneeling to serve customers and to perform such physical tasks as measuring and helping load freight.
<b>Attitudes</b>	Cargo and Freight Agents should be safety conscious, attentive to their surroundings to avoid dangerous situations, be friendly, knowledgeable, patient, pleasant, well-organized and detail-oriented.
<b>Future Trends Affecting Essential Skills:</b>	Changes which may affect the Essential Skills used by these workers in the future include the increased demand for computer skills and the ongoing learning that this entails.

<b>Government of Canada Defined - Related NOC Code &amp; Description</b>	<p><b>6524 – Ground and water transport ticket agents, cargo service representatives and related clerks</b></p> <p>Ground and water transport ticket agents, cargo service representatives and related clerks, quote fares and rates, make reservations, issue tickets, process cargo shipments, check baggage and perform other related customer service duties to assist travellers. They are employed by bus and railway companies, freight forwarding and shipping companies, boat cruise operators and other public transit establishments and by travel wholesalers.</p>
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