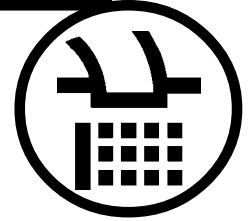


Industrial Traffic Managers



Occupational Brief Title Codes:

- D.O.T.: 184.167-102
- G.O.E.: 07.01.02
- S.O.C.: 11-3071
- O*NET™ 3.1: 11-3071.01
- N.A.I.C.S.: Any Industry
- H.O.C.: ESC

Work Classification Based Related

D.O.T. Occupations:

- Airport Managers
- Flight Reservations Managers
- Import-Export Agents
- Pipeline Superintendents
- Train Dispatchers
- Warehouse Managers

Interests Based Related

G.O.E. Occupations:

- Administrative Clerks
- Administrative Secretaries
- Court Clerks
- Customer Services Supervisors
- Labor Expeditors
- Office Managers
- Procurement Clerks
- Town Clerks

Skills Based Related

O*NET Occupations:

- First-Line Supervisors, Administrative Support
- Mates-Ship, Boat, and Barge
- Public Transportation Inspectors
- Purchasing Agents and Buyers, Farm Products
- Railroad Conductors and Yardmasters
- Storage and Distribution Managers
- Surveyors
- Travel Guides

Noteworthy Quote:

“Logistics is still evolving, and that makes the profession exciting. The learning curve is still very steep, and the profession still attracts a lot of out-of-the-box thinkers. It hasn’t yet developed a rigid culture or a standardized “by-the-book” way of doing things.”

Maria A. McIntyre, Executive Vice President/COO, Council of Logistics Management, Oak Brook, Illinois

Industrial traffic managers (in'dus-tri-al 'traf-ic 'man-ag-ers) are responsible for the efficient movement of raw materials into a plant and the shipment of finished products to buyers or consumers.

Before the 1940's trains moved about 75 percent of all freight in the United States. Railroad traffic departments took care of schedules, set the prices for freight service, and figured charges for single shipments. Today, the moving of freight is more diverse. Tractor trailer trucks on highways, barges on rivers and canals, ships on both inland and ocean waters, and airlines move freight throughout the United States as well as overseas.

Freight shipments often go by several kinds of carriers in a single trip. Truck trailers filled with freight may go piggyback on railroad flatcars for part of a trip and then hitch up to a truck tractor for transport on roads. Some shipments go from one city to another city by air and then switch to trucks for delivery to stores, warehouses, or other outlets.

Many industries have traffic managers or logistics departments. They decide on the carriers, the routes, and the most economical rates. Industrial traffic managers see to the physical distribution of goods both within their own company and with outgoing goods.

Work Performed

Industrial traffic managers oversee workers in shipping and receiving. They are in charge of the movement of goods within the company as well as materials and products coming in and going out of the company. They organize the efforts of traffic departments, and set up the routing or rerouting of shipments. They direct staff who handle incoming and outgoing orders, trace lost or late shipments, and deal with claims for lost or damaged goods.

In planning shipments, industrial traffic managers think about the kind and amount of materials for shipment. They consider the quantity of goods and their form. Goods may be liquid or solid, light or heavy, fragile or sturdy. Industrial traffic managers also consider the makeup of the products: whether they are inflammable or corrosive, for instance. They consider the distribution of weight in the loading.

Then they consider methods of shipping. They think about which is the most economical, the quickest, and the safest. They figure inventory costs into the price of transport. Goods may go by railroad, truck, pipeline, barge, or air freight.

These managers gather data on costs, routes, tariffs, and classifying of goods. They make and check reports, charts, graphs, and tables in order to make plans or changes. They oversee the preparing of goods for shipment and keep track of the shipment and receipt of goods.

To control costs, they keep an up-to-date file of freight rates and transport times. They negotiate with carriers and agencies for rate changes. They often negotiate long-term contracts that guarantee minimum quantities of freight in exchange for lower freight rates. They also keep up with government rulings on freight and transport.

Industrial traffic managers may serve as consultants to other departments in their company. They may advise on ways to ship incoming goods, on the advisability of buying a new warehouse, on whether to move the plant to a new site. They may offer their views on the advantages or drawbacks of the company operating its own fleet of trucks.

Since shipping and transportation methods are often subject to state and federal laws, industrial traffic managers must keep well-informed on these regulations as well as other legal questions affecting shipping by their company. Industrial traffic managers may sometimes deal with insurance claims. In representing their company's interests, they may testify before the Interstate Commerce Commission or another agency. Industrial traffic managers attend planning meetings, travel, and write reports.

Working Conditions

Industrial traffic managers work in an office. They also move around within a plant or warehouse, to other offices in the firm, and to branch offices and warehouses. Since they work closely with shipping and receiving workers, their offices are sometimes in or near these departments.

Industrial traffic managers often work under stress. They contend with endless details, lost shipments, mechanical breakdowns, bad weather, or other mishaps. At the same time they must make sure the company has the supplies and materials it needs, and that finished goods go to the right customers and get there on time and in good condition.

Hours and Earnings

Most industrial traffic managers work about eight hours a day, five days a week. They may work overtime during large shipments or busy shipping seasons.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in the year 2000, industrial traffic managers earned an average of \$57,240 a year. Earnings ranged from a high of more than \$96,100 a year to a low of less than \$33,190 a year. Salaries reflect the geographic location, education, and experience of these managers, the kind of goods they work with, and the size of the firms they work for.

Education and Training

High school students interested in this work should take mathematics, chemistry, bookkeeping, and data processing. A good command of English is essential.

Most industrial traffic managers have a bachelor's degree. Employers prefer to hire those with a major in transportation and logistics or supply chain management. Many colleges and universities in the United States offer programs in transportation management. Industrial engineering courses can be helpful. Some law studies will also prove useful.

The first two years of college include courses in mathematics such as college algebra, geometry, and calculus. Students also take basic sciences, English composition,

report writing, and public speaking. Other studies include economics, accounting, computer programming, and statistics. Command of a foreign language is useful.

In the third and fourth years students concentrate on transportation and logistics management. Studies may include economics of transportation, principles of management, physical distribution management, transportation regulations, transportation (carrier) management, industrial organizational behavior, management of information systems, business logistic systems, purchasing and materials management, international transportation, national transport policy, industrial engineering, and industrial management.

Industrial traffic managers must have several years on the job in order to become skilled in dealing with a system of varying rates, regulations, routes, and schedules. A good background in geography is necessary because traffic managers must know the maps of the United States and the world.

Licensing, Certification, Unions and Professional Societies

The Council of Logistics Management (CLM) is an organization concerned with transportation, warehousing, inventory, materials, and logistics management. The CLM works in cooperation with private industry and various organizations to further the understanding and development of the logistics concept. This is accomplished through a continuing program of organized activities, research, and meetings that develop the theory and understanding of the logistics process, promote the art and science of managing logistics systems, and foster professional dialogue and development within the profession.

The American Society of Transportation and Logistics, Inc., is a professional society of individuals interested in the management of transportation, physical distribution, and logistics. The society offers membership to persons who are eighteen or more years old, have good references, and have completed two years of study in an accredited college or have had five years of experience in transportation or physical distribution management. The society conducts examinations for qualified traffic and transportation employees. It awards the designation CTL (certified in transportation and logistics) to those who pass the examinations. The society also offers two correspondence courses, *Introduction to Commercial and Transportation Contracts* and *Transportation: Distribution, Costs, and Analysis*. Both courses can be used as a waiver for part of the AST&L certification program.

Personal Qualifications

Industrial traffic managers must be able to define problems, and to solve them. To do so, these managers should have organizational skills, good judgment, and

initiative. They must have patience, a memory for details, and mathematical aptitude. The rates and schedules of freight carriers, volumes of government rulings, maps of shipping routes, and other records and details require persons who can read and understand complex language and charts.

An even temper will help industrial traffic managers get along well with all kinds of people, from clerks to top company directors. In their dealings with others they must have a good command of English and be able to think, write, and speak clearly.

Occupations can be adapted for workers with disabilities. Persons should contact their school or employment counselors, their state office of vocational rehabilitation, or their state department of labor to explore fully their individual needs and requirements as well as the requirements of the occupation.

Where Employed

Most industrial traffic managers work for large manufacturing firms. Some are employees of chain stores or other large firms that ship and distribute a huge volume of goods. Expert traffic managers may serve as consultants.

Industrial traffic managers work for truck companies, public/contract warehousing operations, airlines, railroads, and barge and steamship lines. Some traffic specialists work for import-export companies, port authorities, chambers of commerce, or government agencies.

Employment Outlook

In 2000 there were about 109,000 workers employed as transportation, storage, and distribution managers. The outlook for increased employment is good. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the employment of these workers is expected to increase as fast as the average for all occupations through 2010. New employees will replace those who retire or transfer to other work. The demand for more experts in transportation, business logistics, and physical distribution is growing.

Industry is steadily becoming decentralized for reasons of competition, better location, cheaper labor, or other causes. As a result, the movement of goods among companies or among branches of the same company is increasing. Many companies buy and sell goods worldwide.

The rising costs of shipping and the ever-changing government rulings demand experts who can manage industrial traffic smoothly at the lowest cost. New freight transportation regulations have increased the need for managers skilled in the buying and selling of freight transportation services.

First consideration for job openings will go to college graduates with a major in traffic management or transportation. Those who can work with computers on the

logistics of freight shipments will have an advantage in finding employment.

Entry Methods

College graduates may ask their college placement office for job leads. Some firms send recruiters to college campuses to hire outstanding graduates. Want ads in newspapers or in trade magazines are other sources of both beginning and advanced positions. Professional organizations may offer a resume file service for their members. Job listings are often posted by organizations on the Internet.

Newly hired trainees may begin as traffic clerks, shipping clerks, expeditors, or dispatchers. In these positions they learn the specific company policies and operations.

Advancement

As a rule, persons with a college background advance faster than those with less schooling. Industrial traffic managers can also improve their status by passing a written test of the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC). They may then represent parties in hearings before the ICC.

Some industrial traffic managers advance by moving to a larger company where job responsibilities are more complex. Experienced industrial traffic managers may advance to become materials managers. They may also become self-employed freight traffic consultants. They may offer their services to companies with no traffic department or to firms that need special help. They may give advice on plant locations, inventory management, private fleet operations, and import and export shipping.

For Further Research

American Society of Transportation & Logistics, Inc., 320 East Water Street, Lock Haven, PA 17745-1419. Visit their Web Site at: www.astl.org

Cahners Publishing Company, 275 Washington Street, Newton, MA 02158.

Traffic Management. Monthly. Subscription \$75.00.

Chapman & Hall, 115 Fifth Avenue, Fourth Floor, New York, NY 10003-1004.

International Logistics. Donald F. Wood, Anthony Barone (Contributor), Paul Murphy, and Daniel L. Wardlow. 370 pages. \$86.95 hardbound.

Council of Logistics Management, 2805 Butterfield Road, Suite 200, Oak Brook, IL 60523. Visit their web site at: www.clm1.org

Careers in Logistics. Single copy free.

Free Press, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020.

The Logistics Handbook. James F. Robeson (Preface) and William C. Copacino (Editor). 954 pages. \$100.00 hardbound.

The McGraw-Hill Companies, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020.

Materials Handling Handbook. David E. Mulcahy (Editor). 768 pages. \$99.50 hardbound.

Penton Publishing, 1100 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44114-2543.

Transportation & Distribution. Monthly. Subscription \$45.00, single issue \$5.00.

American Trucking Association, ATA Logistics Council, 2200 Mill Rd., Alexandria, VA 22314. Visit their Web Site at: www.truckline.com

Acknowledgments

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