

The carriage of goods and persons from one Canadian port to another, commonly referred to as the coastal trade, is restricted to ships registered in Canada within the region from Havre-Saint-Pierre on the St. Lawrence River upstream to the head of the Great Lakes. Elsewhere in Canada, the coastal trade is restricted to ships registered and owned in a Commonwealth country.

Canadian registry. Under Part I of the Canada Shipping Act ships exceeding 15 net registered tons (42 m³) and pleasure yachts over 20 net registered tons (56 m³) must be registered; vessels of lower capacity, if not registered, must be licensed if powered by a motor of 10 hp or more. Section 6 of the act restricts ownership: an owner must be a British subject, or a body corporate incorporated under the law of a Commonwealth country with its principal place of business in that country. A ship registrable in Canada may be recorded, pending registration, by a Registrar of Shipping while still under construction.

Vessels on the Canadian shipping registry. As at December 31, 1975, there were 31,288 ships constituting 4,135,367 gross tons (11 710 057 m³) registered in Canada. This represents an increase over the previous calendar year of 797 ships.

Shipping traffic. Table 15.21 shows the number and tonnage of all vessels (except those of less than 15 registered net tons (equivalent to 42 m³), naval vessels and fishing vessels) entering Canadian customs and non-customs ports.

Freight movement through large ports take different forms, including cargoes for or from foreign countries and cargoes loaded and unloaded in coastwise shipping, i.e. domestic freight moving between Canadian points. Table 15.22 presents data by province on cargoes loaded and unloaded from vessels in international and coastwise shipping. In 1975 a total of 303.0 million tons (274.9 million t) were loaded and unloaded at the principal Canadian ports, compared with 302.1 million tons (274.1 million t) in 1974. In-transit movement in vessels that pass through harbours without loading or unloading and movements from one point to another within harbours are also numerous in many ports.

Shipping statistics, which cover traffic in and out of both customs and non-customs ports, do not include freight in transit or freight moved from one point to another within the harbour. Table 15.23 shows the principal commodities loaded and unloaded in international and coastwise shipping at the 19 ports handling the largest cargo volumes in 1975. These ports handled 80.9% of all Canada's international shipping and 61.8% of the coastwise trade. The specific commodities shown are those transported in volume and often in bulk form.

15.4.2 Ports and harbours

The ports and harbours of Canada comprise 25 large deep-water ports and about 650 smaller ports and multi-purpose government wharves on the east and west coasts, along the St. Lawrence Seaway and Great Lakes, in the Arctic, and on interior lakes and rivers.

The administration of Canadian ports is generally under the Ministry of Transport's Canadian Marine Transportation Administration. Canada's harbours are subdivided into National Harbours Board ports, harbour commission ports, public harbours and government wharves. About 2,000 fishing harbours and facilities for recreational boating are administered by the Department of Fisheries and the Environment.

The National Harbours Board, a Crown corporation, is responsible for administering the Jacques Cartier and Champlain bridges at Montreal, the grain elevators at Prescott and Port Colborne, Ont. and port facilities such as wharves and piers, transit sheds and grain elevators, at the harbours of St. John's, Nfld.; Halifax, NS; Saint John and Belledune, NB; Sept-Îles, Chicoutimi, Baie-des-Ha! Ha!, Quebec, Trois-Rivières and Montreal, Que.; Churchill, Man.; and Vancouver and Prince Rupert, BC. The number of vessels and the amount of tonnage handled at these ports in 1974 and 1975 are reported in Table 15.21.