

Service Bulletin - Surface and Marine Transport Survey of the Couriers and Local Messengers Industry



2006 (preliminary data) and 2005 (revised data)

Highlights

- The 20,120 active establishments in the industry in 2006 generated \$7.8 billion in operating revenue, up 5% from \$7.4 billion in 2005.
- Operating expenses reached \$7.1 billion, an increase of 5% compared to 2005. The largest increases in operating expenses were in other operating expenses with a 13% increase, followed by the rental and leasing expenses with an 8% increase and the cost of energy and supplies with a 6% increase.
- The industry's operating margin reached \$688 million, an increase of 10% over 2005. Also, the operating ratio (operating expenses divided by operating revenue) moved down from 0.92 to 0.91.
- The couriers segment showed \$6.4 billion in operating revenue, an increase of 7% compared to 2005. This segment's operating margin reached \$476 million, up by 8%. Its operating ratio stayed at 0.93.
- The local messengers segment totalled \$1.4 billion, a decrease of 3% compared to the previous year. However, this segment showed an operating margin of \$212 million, a gain of 14%. Its operating ratio also improved, moving from 0.87 to 0.85, its lowest level since 2001.
- Overall, establishments belonging to large and medium-sized businesses (businesses with revenue of \$1 million or more) delivered over 671 million pieces, generating just over \$6.0 billion in delivery revenue.
- Courier establishments delivered 91% of the total number of pieces and the total delivery revenue. Couriers also dominated next day/overnight services, with 97% of the total revenue, and two-day or more and other services, with close to 100% of the total revenue. Local messengers mainly specialize in same-day services, producing 94% of all the revenue generated by this type of service.
- Ontario has remained the dominant region in the industry in terms of delivery revenue based on shipment collection location, generating almost half of the revenue for Canada (47%).
- Shipments to Canadian destinations accounted for 81% of total delivery revenue.
- Establishments belonging to large and medium-sized businesses had over 47,000 employees and hired over 14,000 independent operators. They also used around 33,000 vehicles and other equipment.

About this publication

This bulletin provides information on the couriers and local messengers industry. It starts by focussing on the results of the 2006 annual survey (preliminary data). It includes an industry profile and tables of operations data with short analytical comments. Secondly, this bulletin provides revised data tables for reference year 2005. This publication concludes with a survey quality statement, a description of the survey methodology and data quality.

Notes to Users

The data on characteristics published in this bulletin (number of packages, origin and destination, equipment and employment) apply solely to establishments belonging to businesses that generated annual revenue of \$1 million or more from their courier and local messenger activities. More specifically, this definition applies to tables 4 to 6 and 10 to 12.

Analysis

Industry Profile – 2006 (preliminary data)

In 2006, the couriers and local messengers industry included 20,120 establishments, and it provided a variety of services from letter delivery by bicycle messenger to high-tech equipment delivery to foreign countries by air¹.

The industry includes very large businesses that are often subsidiaries of multinationals, integrated Canadian trucking companies and small independent contractors. Because of this wide range of activities and business size, the sector is not homogenous. It is not unusual for businesses of the same size in the same segment to have very different management philosophies, especially with regard to the use of employees versus the use of contractors or equipment leasing versus purchasing.

The industry generated operating revenue of about \$7.8 billion in 2006, a 5% increase over the revised data of 2005 (see Table 1). By their very nature, couriers and local messenger services provide support or intermediary services (derived demand). Thus, the industry's economic health is largely dependent on general economic conditions. Although certain industries, such as financial institutions, law firms and pharmaceutical distributors, use their services on a daily basis, almost every business uses courier or local messenger services at some time or another.

In the current business context, which is mainly characterized by rapid change fuelled by technological innovation, the industry is facing new challenges and business opportunities at the same time. For example, included among these changes are the gradual acceptance of electronically signed documents, the use of encryption methods for electronic mail and, more generally, the rapid growth of corporate e-commerce and electronic retail shopping in the past decade (for example, see the box "Importance of electronic retail shopping in Canada").

Importance of electronic retail shopping in Canada

According to data from Statistics Canada's Survey of Electronic Commerce and Technology (SECT), online sales recorded their fifth consecutive year of double-digit growth in 2006, as e-commerce gained momentum among Canadian retailers.

Private and public sector online sales combined surged 40% to \$49.9 billion. Online sales by private firms increased 42% to \$46.5 billion, while those by the public sector rose 17% to \$3.4 billion.

Retail trade was one of the fastest growing sectors. Retail firms sold goods and services online worth \$4.7 billion in 2006. This was nearly double the revised figure in 2005, and it accounted for 10% of all private sector online sales².

1. In the past, the term "carrier" was used synonymously with establishment. For purposes of clarity (and to avoid any confusion with the terms "business" or "company"), the term "establishment" is henceforth used. An establishment represents the smallest entity for which there is data on the value of production, cost and quantities of input used in production. This means that one company can represent several establishments, especially if it has facilities in several provinces. Additionally, please note that an independent contractor is also an establishment if it generates and declares revenue related to local messenger services (see Data quality, concept and methodology section for further details).
2. For further information on the results of the 2006 Survey of Electronic Commerce and Technology (SECT), go to: <http://dissemination.statcan.ca/Daily/English/070420/d070420b.htm>.

Industry operating expenses totalled over \$7.1 billion, an increase of 5% compared to 2005.

In the industry as a whole, salaries, wages and benefits constituted the largest operating expenses with 35% of the total, followed by other purchased services with 31%, then costs of energy and supplies with 14% of the total.

In comparison, in 2005 the largest increases in operating expenses were in other operating expenses with an increase of 13%, followed by the rental and leasing expenses with an increase of 8%, and the cost of energy and supplies with a 6% increase.

The operating margin, which represents the difference between revenue and expenses, is a good indicator of an industry's economic health. The operating margin for the couriers and local messengers industry is \$688 million, a 10% increase over 2005. At the same time, the operating ratio (operating expenses divided by operating revenue) improved slightly from 0.92 to 0.91. Overall, this means the industry's establishments made 9 cents of profit for every dollar spent, one cent more than in 2005.

In geographic terms, because it is a service industry, the couriers and local messengers industry accurately reflects business activity in Canada. Thus Ontario accounted for 45% of the total operating revenue, followed by Quebec with 19% and British Columbia with 11% of the total revenue. Together, the first four provinces (Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta) were responsible for 88% of the total operating revenue.

Additional Information from Other Statistics Canada Sources

In terms of gross domestic product, the couriers and local messengers industry contributed \$2.5 billion to the Canadian economy in 2006 (chained 1997 dollars)³. This represents a growth of 1.8% with 2005.

Based on the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours (SEPH), the industry as a whole employed more than 44,000 workers. The couriers segment accounted for 88% of this total, employing about 39,000 people, while the local messengers segment accounted for 12% with about 5,000 employees⁴. Note that these figures exclude independent workers (independent contractors), which can account for a significant number, especially in the local messengers segment.

When we look at the industry as a whole, based on the Couriers and Messengers Services Price Index (CMSPI), prices in Canada rose an average of 7.8% between 2005 and 2006. More specifically, prices increased by 8.6% in the couriers segment and by 4.8% in the local messengers segment (local delivery services)⁵.

One Industry, two distinct segments

The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) sub-divides this industry into two distinct, but complementary segments: couriers and local messengers^{6, 7}.

Couriers provide national and international delivery services, using surface or air transportation, or a combination of both. In the context of their activities, courier businesses usually use an established network of terminals extending beyond Canada's borders.

In 2006, there were about 1,582 courier establishments in Canada that generated almost \$6.4 billion in operating revenue, an increase of 7% over 2005 (see Table 2). While this segment accounted for only 8% of all the industry's establishments, couriers generated 82% of the total operating revenue. Courier establishments had an average operating margin of about \$301,000 per establishment, down 4% compared to 2005. This segment's operating ratio was 0.93.

3. CANSIM database, Statistics Canada, Table 379-0017. GDP by industry provides information for current economic analysis, from an industry point of view.

4. CANSIM database, Statistics Canada, Table 281-0024, (data unadjusted for seasonal variation). The Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours is Canada's only source of detailed information on the total number of paid employees, payrolls and hours at detailed industrial, provincial and territorial levels.

5. CANSIM database, Statistics Canada, Table 329-0053 (calculated annual average). The Couriers and Messengers Services Price Index (CMSPI) is a monthly price index measuring the change over time in prices for courier and messenger services provided by long and short distance delivery companies to Canadian-based business clients.

6. For purposes of the survey, segment categorization is based on self-identification by the establishments. Due to its more "generic" or commonly used name, the number of establishments in the couriers segment may be overestimated to the detriment of those in the local delivery services segment (see Data quality, concept and methodology section for a full definition).

7. Note that, starting in 2004, only establishments belonging to incorporated companies are classified under the couriers segment. All of the establishments belonging to "unincorporated companies" (owner operators) are classified as such under the local messengers segment.

Local messengers provide messenger and delivery services within a restricted geographic area, like a city or a metropolitan area. This segment also includes all independent contractors (or owner operators) working as sub-contractors for courier businesses.

In 2006, there were 18,538 local messenger establishments in Canada that generated operating revenue of \$1.4 billion, a decrease of 3% compared to 2005. This segment accounted for 92% of the total number of establishments, but only 18% of the industry's operating revenue. Additionally this segment had an average operating margin of \$11,000, up 12% compared to 2005. Note that the modest average operating margin is mainly attributable to the fact that this segment includes a majority of independent workers⁸. Finally, its operating ratio was 0.85.

Looking at the distribution of expenses by segment, we observe that salaries, wages and benefits were the most significant operating expense items for couriers (39%), followed by other purchased services (29%). In contrast, for local messenger services other purchased services were the most significant expense item (43%), followed by cost of energy and supplies (20%). This situation is due to the fact that local messenger services regroup a large contingent of independent workers who do not explicitly pay themselves a salary.

Differences by revenue size

The presence of a few very large firms causes the industry to be highly concentrated, especially the courier segment⁹. For the purpose of this study, establishments were classified according to revenue size¹⁰.

Large businesses are businesses with annual revenue of \$25 million or more. There were 296 establishments in total, generating operating revenue of \$5.7 billion, up 7% from 2005. While they only account for 1% of the total number of establishments, large businesses were responsible for 73% of total operating revenue. On average, this group had an operating margin of \$1.5 million per establishment (see Table 3).

Medium-sized businesses are businesses with annual revenue from \$1 million to less than \$25 million. There were 199 such establishments that generated \$753 million in operating revenue. This represents a 4% decrease from 2005. This group accounted for 1% of the total number of establishments and generated 10% of the total operating revenue. On average, this group had an operating margin of \$171,000 per establishment.

Finally, **small businesses** are businesses with annual revenue of less than \$1 million. This group included 19,625 establishments and generated operating revenue of \$1.3 billion, up 4% from last year. Although they accounted for 98% of the total number of establishments, small businesses were only responsible for 17% of the total operating revenue. On average, this group, which is mainly composed of independent contractors, had an operating margin of \$10,000 per establishment.

Types of services and volume of business

Couriers and local messengers encounter competition from the national postal service industry, common air and highway carriers, which also deliver small shipments (less-than-truckload or "LTL"). However, their door-to-door delivery services are characterized by a wide variety of expedited and non-expedited services associated with different features, such as a required signature, delivery time guarantee, many security procedures and electronic tracking of shipments.

8. Please note that, aside from the fact that courier work is the principal activity of independent workers included in the survey population, the duration of the activity (e.g.: 6 months vs. all year) or its intensity (full-time or part-time) is not taken into account here. This limitation is due to the use of taxation data.

9. Some of the factors responsible for concentration in this sector include barriers to entry, such as economies of scale and scope (in terms of finances, expertise or innovation), size of required investment (e.g.: use of cargo aircraft, warehouse operations management, etc.), and the need to operate an extensive network of transfer points effectively under time constraints.

10. It is important to remember the entity under study in this survey is the "establishment" and any data regarding a "business" entity is provided for information only. Because they are derived from secondary sources due to their associated level of complexity (one business can have several establishments with activities in more than one province or industry) and the fact that they do not undergo a specific quality analysis, data related to businesses must, therefore be used with caution.

In the industry as a whole, establishments belonging to large and medium-sized businesses (with revenue of \$1 million or more) delivered nearly 671 million packages, generating slightly more than \$6.0 billion in delivery revenue (see Table 4).

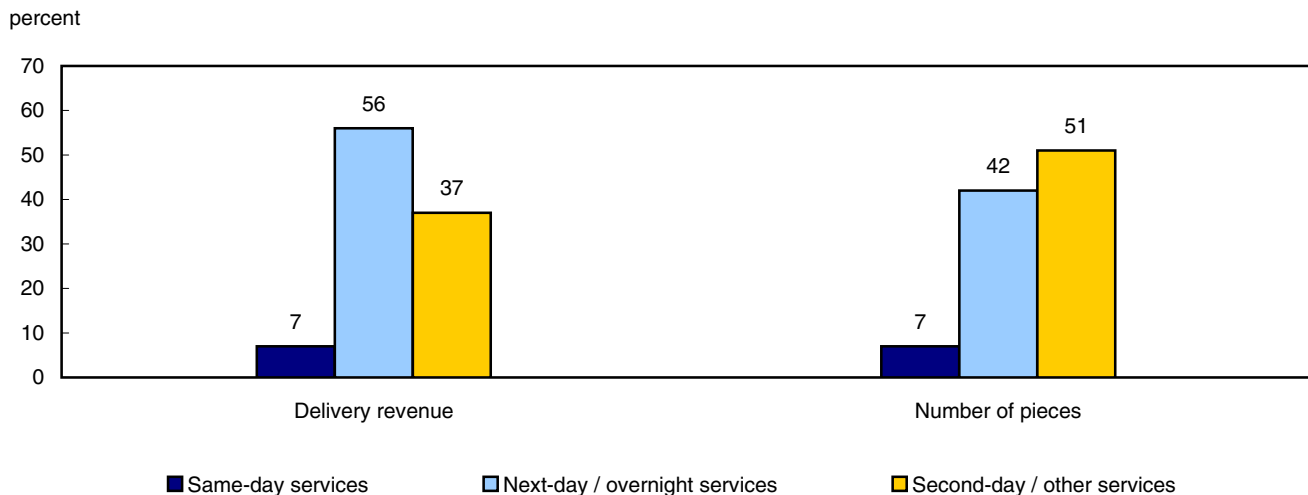
Globally, the services provided are grouped here into two categories, based on the time frame for delivery:

1. **Expected services** (or express shipments) include same day and next day or overnight delivery;

- Same day services are the main activity of specialized local messenger businesses. For this reason, this segment accounted for 94% of the total delivery revenue and 96% of the total number of packages delivered (see Chart 1). This type of service is usually limited to a specific metropolitan area; deliveries are made by bicycle or using light vehicles and are associated with a delivery time guarantee.
- Next-day/overnight services are mainly performed by couriers. In fact, this segment accounted for 97% of the total delivery revenue and 96% of the total number of packages delivered. Deliveries are typically made using highways and air transportation (on chartered flights).

Chart 1

Next-day / overnight show the biggest share on delivery revenue



Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Source(s): Survey of the Couriers and Local Messengers Industry, Canada, 2006 Preliminary.

2. **Non-expedited services** consist of other services -- two days or more.

- Other services -- two-days or more are almost exclusively provided by couriers, as this segment accounts for virtually all the total delivery revenue and total number of packages delivered. Generally, deliveries are made using highway, air (on regular flights) or, rarely, maritime transportation.

In the industry as a whole, each piece delivered generated an average of \$8.94 in delivery revenue. Next-day and overnight services generated the largest average revenue per piece (\$11.87), while other services -- two-days or more generated the smallest average revenue per piece (\$6.49).

The higher average price per piece observed in the expedited services category is a result of the fact that market price of this type of service is higher. However, it is important to note that other factors also contribute to the higher average price per piece, such as the type of item being shipped (e.g.: letter, package, etc.) and the weight of the shipment. For example, one might think that it is more common to see heavy packages sent by non-expedited services and letters and small packages sent by expedited services.

Origin and destination of deliveries

Ontario has continued to generate the most activity in the industry, having been the origin of 47% of the country's delivery revenue (see Table 5). Quebec came next with 18%, followed by the Prairies with 15%. Although there was no major difference at this level between the segments, it is nonetheless interesting to note that British Columbia and the Prairies accounted for a relatively higher portion in the local messengers segment while it was somewhat the opposite in Quebec and Ontario.

Also, shipments to Canadian destinations accounted for 81% of total delivery revenue.

Fleet and equipment in service

Since time really is money in this industry, couriers and local messengers must rely on dependable and well performing vehicles and equipment to provide the means for delivery services.

In the industry as a whole, establishments that are part of large and medium-sized businesses (businesses with revenue of \$1 million or more) have almost 33,000 vehicles and various pieces of equipment (see Table 6).

Couriers depend to a large extent on relatively expensive fleets of vehicles and equipment, ranging from simple trucks to cargo aircrafts. The most popular vehicles in this segment were minivans and cube vans (63%), followed by trailers (14%) and other equipment (8%). This segment had close to 26,000 items of equipment in all.

Deliveries by local messengers are most often made by light vehicle. As a matter of fact, the most popular types of equipment in this segment were automobiles (38%) followed by stepvans and cube vans (29%) and five-ton trucks (17%). The segment had about 7,000 items of equipment in all.

Employment

Establishments associated with large and medium-sized businesses had slightly more than 47,000 employees (see Table 6). Of this number, 94% worked in the couriers segment, while 6% worked in the local messengers segment.

These establishments also reported that they used the services of more than 14,000 independent operators. Those were split almost half and half between the two segments.

Statistical Tables

Table 1
Revenue and expenses by province and territory, Canada 2006^p

	Newfoundland and Labrador	Prince Edward Island	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick	Quebec	Ontario	Manitoba
Estimated number of establishments in population	225	47	470	294	3,136	8,208	940
	thousands of dollars						
Revenue							
Revenue from sales of goods and services	x	x	x	x	1,483,069	3,401,901	254,572
Other operating revenue	x	x	x	x	34,536	120,455	6,156
Total operating revenue	81,028	11,549	205,337	183,261	1,517,605	3,522,356	260,728
Non-operating revenue	x	x	x	x	1,337	2,514	258
Total revenue	x	x	x	x	1,518,942	3,524,869	260,985
Expenses							
Salaries, wages and benefits	28,009	4,598	77,692	58,160	515,028	1,131,690	79,515
Cost of energy and supplies	9,640	1,471	31,194	24,764	215,919	416,180	31,178
Rental and leasing expenses	5,298	696	17,699	13,198	98,785	219,064	13,755
Repair and maintenance expenses	1,931	273	4,365	4,583	33,753	73,474	6,260
Property and business taxes	821	68	2,666	1,962	15,373	30,216	2,099
Other purchased services	23,910	1,984	46,127	52,143	406,841	1,029,275	83,269
Depreciation expenses	2,045	231	4,753	4,616	31,041	74,659	7,931
Other operating expenses	2,679	914	7,088	6,408	92,906	234,848	15,941
Total operating expenses	74,333	10,235	191,583	165,835	1,409,645	3,209,407	239,949
Non-operating expenses	313	50	574	355	4,920	10,667	1,677
Total expenses	74,647	10,285	192,157	166,191	1,414,564	3,220,074	241,626
Net operating margin	6,695	1,313	13,754	17,426	107,960	312,949	20,779
Operating ratio	0.92	0.89	0.93	0.90	0.93	0.91	0.92
	Saskatchewan	Alberta	British Columbia	Yukon	Northwest Territories	Nunavut	Canada
Estimated number of establishments in population	693	2,516	3,555	21	14	1	20,120
	thousands of dollars						
Revenue							
Revenue from sales of goods and services	185,096	911,828	855,070	5,343	6,408	x	7,577,204
Other operating revenue	2,801	31,774	33,950	x	x	x	237,671
Total operating revenue	187,897	943,602	889,020	x	x	x	7,814,875
Non-operating revenue	63	1,067	635	x	x	x	6,052
Total revenue	187,960	944,669	889,654	x	x	x	7,820,927
Expenses							
Salaries, wages and benefits	63,880	276,628	279,550	1,712	x	x	2,518,614
Cost of energy and supplies	27,072	107,902	114,100	1,294	x	x	981,879
Rental and leasing expenses	13,956	54,358	57,904	324	x	x	495,232
Repair and maintenance expenses	4,927	21,392	22,327	170	x	x	173,724
Property and business taxes	2,182	7,484	7,668	42	x	x	70,642
Other purchased services	45,654	277,647	247,117	891	x	x	2,216,174
Depreciation expenses	5,535	23,568	14,009	234	x	x	168,906
Other operating expenses	9,083	66,938	54,531	155	x	x	492,287
Total operating expenses	172,290	835,917	806,745	4,822	x	x	7,126,999
Non-operating expenses	881	5,744	5,506	x	x	x	30,794
Total expenses	173,170	841,661	812,251	x	x	x	7,157,793
Net operating margin	15,607	107,685	82,275	x	x	x	687,876
Operating ratio	0.92	0.89	0.91	x	x	x	0.91

Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Source(s): Also available on CANSIM tables 402-0001, 402-0002 and 402-0003.

Table 2
Revenue and expenses by activity, Canada 2006^a

	Activity		Total
	Couriers	Local messengers	
Estimated number of establishments in population	1,582	18,538	20,120
	thousands of dollars		
Revenue			
Revenue from sales of goods and services	6,211,586	1,365,618	7,577,204
Other operating revenue	206,511	31,161	237,671
Total operating revenue	6,418,096	1,396,779	7,814,875
Non-operating revenue	3,985	2,067	6,052
Total revenue	6,422,081	1,398,846	7,820,927
Expenses			
Salaries, wages and benefits	2,324,575	194,039	2,518,614
Cost of energy and supplies	745,083	236,796	981,879
Rental and leasing expenses	431,417	63,815	495,232
Repair and maintenance expenses	128,968	44,756	173,724
Property and business taxes	63,744	6,898	70,642
Other purchased services	1,701,210	514,964	2,216,174
Depreciation expenses	119,902	49,004	168,906
Other operating expenses	427,401	64,887	492,287
Total operating expenses	5,942,299	1,184,699	7,126,999
Non-operating expenses	14,758	16,036	30,794
Total expenses	5,957,058	1,200,735	7,157,793
Net operating margin	475,797	212,080	687,876
Operating ratio	0.93	0.85	0.91

Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Source(s): Also available on CANSIM tables 402-0001, 402-0002 and 402-0003.

Table 3
Revenue and expenses by enterprise size, Canada 2006^a

	Enterprise Size			Total
	Large \$25 million and over	Medium \$1 million to less than \$25 million	Small less than \$1 million	
Estimated number of establishments in population	296	199	19,625	20,120
	thousands of dollars			
Revenue				
Revenue from sales of goods and services	5,533,208	747,690	1,296,306	7,577,204
Other operating revenue	201,661	4,891	31,120	237,671
Total operating revenue	5,734,868	752,580	1,327,426	7,814,875
Non-operating revenue	2,298	1,056	2,698	6,052
Total revenue	5,737,166	753,637	1,330,124	7,820,927
Expenses				
Salaries, wages and benefits	2,129,744	169,548	219,322	2,518,614
Cost of energy and supplies	629,627	72,914	279,338	981,879
Rental and leasing expenses	400,436	22,286	72,510	495,232
Repair and maintenance expenses	109,062	12,895	51,767	173,724
Property and business taxes	61,909	2,609	6,124	70,642
Other purchased services	1,464,488	388,978	362,708	2,216,174
Depreciation expenses	102,514	14,058	52,334	168,906
Other operating expenses	383,703	35,344	73,240	492,287
Total operating expenses	5,281,485	718,632	1,126,882	7,126,999
Non-operating expenses	10,108	1,905	18,781	30,794
Total expenses	5,291,593	720,537	1,145,663	7,157,793
Net operating margin	453,384	33,948	200,544	687,876
Operating ratio	0.92	0.95	0.85	0.91

Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Source(s): Also available on CANSIM tables 402-0001, 402-0002 and 402-0003.

Table 4
Revenue, number of pieces and average revenue per piece by type of services, enterprises \$1 million and over, Canada, 2006^p

	Activity				Total	
	Couriers		Local Messengers		All Carriers	
Estimated number of establishments in population	349	...	146	...	495	...
	thousands of dollars	percent	thousands of dollars	percent	thousands of dollars	percent
Delivery revenue						
Same-day services	25,370	0	388,926	76	414,296	7
Next-day / overnight services	3,250,255	59	110,631	22	3,360,885	56
Second-day / other services	2,215,261	40	10,808	2	2,226,069	37
All delivery services	5,490,886	100	510,364	100	6,001,250	100
	thousands		thousands		thousands	
Number of pieces						
Same-day services	1,943	0	43,292	75	45,236	7
Next-day / overnight services	270,499	44	12,678	22	283,177	42
Second-day / other services	341,562	56	1,466	3	343,028	51
All delivery services	614,004	100	57,437	100	671,441	100
	dollars		dollars		dollars	
Average revenue per piece						
Same-day services	13.05	...	8.98	...	9.16	...
Next-day / overnight services	12.02	...	8.73	...	11.87	...
Second-day / other services	6.49	...	7.37	...	6.49	...
All delivery services	8.94	...	8.89	...	8.94	...

Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Table 5
Origin and destination of shipments, enterprises \$1 million and over, Canada, 2006^p

	Couriers		Local Messengers		Total	
	thousands of dollars	percent	thousands of dollars	percent	thousands of dollars	percent
Estimated number of establishments in population	349	...	146	...	495	...
Origin of shipments						
Maritimes	264,126	5	18,937	4	283,063	5
Quebec	1,027,074	19	67,978	13	1,095,052	18
Ontario	2,614,057	48	213,467	42	2,827,525	47
Prairies	763,184	14	122,885	24	886,069	15
British Columbia	618,484	11	84,731	17	703,215	12
Territories	X	X	X	X	x	x
Origin outside Canada	X	X	X	X	x	x
Total Delivery Revenue	5,490,886	100.0	510,364	100.0	6,001,250	100.0
Destination of shipments						
Canada	4,332,085	79	508,431	100	4,840,516	81
United States	X	X	X	X	x	x
All other countries	X	X	X	X	x	x
Total Delivery Revenue	5,490,886	100	510,364	100	6,001,250	100

Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Table 6
Fleet and equipment in service and employment, enterprises \$1 million and over, Canada, 2006^p

	Couriers		Local Messengers		Total	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Estimated number of establishments in population	349	...	146	...	495	...
Fleet and equipment in service						
Bicycles	0	0	441	6	441	1
Automobiles	1,509	6	2,636	38	4,145	13
Cube / Step Vans	16,174	63	1,981	29	18,155	55
Road Tractors	1,588	6	286	4	1,874	6
Trailers	3,604	14	206	3	3,810	12
5 - Ton Trucks	550	2	1,157	17	1,707	5
Warehouse equipment	301	1	82	1	383	1
Other equipment	2,136	8	145	2	2,281	7
Total number of vehicles and equipment	25,860	100	6,937	100	32,797	100
Employment						
Number of employees	44,586	86	2,831	29	47,417	77
Number of independent contractors	7,231	14	7,027	71	14,258	23
Total employment	51,817	100	9,858	100	61,675	100

Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Table 7
Revenue and expenses by province and territory, Canada 2005^r

	Newfoundland and Labrador	Prince Edward Island	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick	Quebec	Ontario	Manitoba
Estimated number of establishments in population	213	42	478	304	3,052	7,895	896
	thousands of dollars						
Revenue							
Revenue from sales of goods and services	x	x	189,460	163,652	1,423,065	3,184,005	230,711
Other operating revenue	x	x	3,264	2,126	31,975	107,286	5,417
Total operating revenue	70,073	9,939	192,714	165,775	1,454,341	3,291,120	236,040
Non-operating revenue	x	x	73	33	1,153	1,886	78
Total revenue	x	x	192,787	165,808	1,455,493	3,293,006	236,118
Expenses							
Salaries, wages and benefits	25,925	3,466	72,268	53,766	494,516	1,079,241	75,601
Cost of energy and supplies	8,676	910	29,082	21,988	200,809	375,067	26,243
Rental and leasing expenses	4,877	481	16,841	12,334	94,055	194,625	12,937
Repair and maintenance expenses	1,923	264	4,975	4,003	39,440	76,088	6,319
Property and business taxes	760	53	2,601	1,901	14,380	29,922	1,810
Other purchased services	18,711	2,358	43,801	46,979	393,953	975,872	74,237
Depreciation expenses	1,696	295	4,424	4,425	29,795	69,249	6,956
Other operating expenses	2,493	890	7,184	5,961	78,945	199,607	11,634
Total operating expenses	65,062	8,717	181,176	151,356	1,345,892	2,999,671	215,738
Non-operating expenses	223	217	497	401	5,238	10,325	1,195
Total expenses	65,285	8,935	181,673	151,756	1,351,130	3,009,996	216,933
Net operating margin	5,011	1,221	11,538	14,420	108,449	291,449	20,302
Operating ratio	0.93	0.88	0.94	0.91	0.93	0.91	0.91
	Saskatchewan	Alberta	British Columbia	Yukon	Northwest Territories	Nunavut	Canada
Estimated number of establishments in population	720	2,456	3,546	11	11	1	19,625
Revenue							
Revenue from sales of goods and services	182,631	851,960	893,935	4,431	6,297	x	7,208,852
Other operating revenue	2,696	30,414	27,664	x	x	x	212,659
Total operating revenue	185,303	882,371	923,252	x	x	x	7,422,165
Non-operating revenue	53	1,030	2,370	x	x	x	6,778
Total revenue	185,356	883,402	925,622	x	x	x	7,428,943
Expenses							
Salaries, wages and benefits	62,675	258,798	286,242	1,504	x	x	2,416,237
Cost of energy and supplies	25,175	97,000	137,850	1,297	x	x	924,786
Rental and leasing expenses	13,559	52,466	57,054	164	x	x	460,184
Repair and maintenance expenses	5,264	21,104	24,490	251	x	x	184,375
Property and business taxes	2,088	7,012	7,242	44	x	x	67,871
Other purchased services	49,667	263,679	267,460	581	x	x	2,139,155
Depreciation expenses	4,976	20,733	23,349	207	x	x	166,328
Other operating expenses	7,626	65,044	56,474	201	x	x	436,153
Total operating expenses	171,030	785,835	860,161	4,249	x	x	6,795,089
Non-operating expenses	746	4,404	6,470	x	x	x	29,697
Total expenses	171,777	790,239	866,631	x	x	x	6,824,786
Net operating margin							
Operating ratio	14,273	96,537	63,091	x	x	x	627,076
Note: Data may not sum up due to rounding.	0.92	0.89	0.93	x	x	x	0.92

Source(s): Also available on CANSIM tables 402-0001, 402-0002 and 402-0003.

Table 8
Revenue and expenses by activity, Canada 2005*

	Activity		
	Couriers	Local messengers	Total
Estimated number of establishments in population	1,408	18,217	19,625
	thousands of dollars		
Revenue			
Revenue from sales of goods and services	5,781,905	1,426,948	7,208,852
Other operating revenue	192,231	20,427	212,659
Total operating revenue	5,974,932	1,447,234	7,422,165
Non-operating revenue	5,300	1,479	6,778
Total revenue	5,980,231	1,448,711	7,428,943
Expenses			
Salaries, wages and benefits	2,177,635	238,602	2,416,237
Cost of energy and supplies	671,692	253,094	924,786
Rental and leasing expenses	395,142	65,042	460,184
Repair and maintenance expenses	127,884	56,491	184,375
Property and business taxes	58,206	9,665	67,871
Other purchased services	1,630,380	508,775	2,139,155
Depreciation expenses	113,141	53,187	166,328
Other operating expenses	359,651	76,502	436,153
Total operating expenses	5,533,731	1,261,358	6,795,089
Non-operating expenses	13,837	15,859	29,697
Total expenses	5,547,569	1,277,217	6,824,786
Net operating margin	441,200	185,876	627,076
Operating ratio	0.93	0.87	0.92

Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Source(s): Also available on CANSIM tables 402-0001, 402-0002 and 402-0003.

Table 9
Revenue and expenses by enterprise size, Canada 2005^r

	Enterprise Size			Total
	Large \$25 million and over	Medium \$1 million to less than \$25 million	Small less than \$1 million	
Estimated number of establishments in population	314	207	19,104	19,625
	thousands of dollars			
Revenue				
Revenue from sales of goods and services	5,170,265	777,177	1,261,410	7,208,852
Other operating revenue	185,191	9,465	18,002	212,659
Total operating revenue	5,355,455	786,642	1,280,068	7,422,165
Non-operating revenue	1,153	951	4,674	6,778
Total revenue	5,356,608	787,594	1,284,741	7,428,943
Expenses				
Salaries, wages and benefits	1,996,802	177,703	241,732	2,416,237
Cost of energy and supplies	580,766	85,361	258,659	924,786
Rental and leasing expenses	374,236	26,910	59,039	460,184
Repair and maintenance expenses	104,038	17,519	62,818	184,375
Property and business taxes	55,285	4,106	8,480	67,871
Other purchased services	1,395,220	403,180	340,755	2,139,155
Depreciation expenses	97,947	15,007	53,374	166,328
Other operating expenses	311,695	42,142	82,317	436,153
Total operating expenses	4,915,988	771,927	1,107,174	6,795,089
Non-operating expenses	8,250	3,491	17,956	29,697
Total expenses	4,924,238	775,418	1,125,130	6,824,786
Net operating margin	439,467	14,715	172,894	627,076
Operating ratio	0.92	0.98	0.86	0.92

Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Source(s): Also available on CANSIM tables 402-0001, 402-0002 and 402-0003.

Table 10
Revenue, number of pieces and average revenue per piece by type of services, enterprises \$1 million and over, Canada, 2005^r

	Activity				Total	
	Couriers		Local Messengers		All Carriers	
Estimated number of establishments in population	339	...	182	...	521	...
	thousands of dollars	percent	thousands of dollars	percent	thousands of dollars	percent
Delivery revenue						
Same-day services	18,183	0	440,816	80	459,000	8
Next-day / overnight services	3,099,692	60	75,578	14	3,175,270	55
Second-day / other services	2,061,205	40	35,838	6	2,097,043	37
All delivery services	5,179,080	100	552,233	100	5,731,313	100
	thousands		thousands		thousands	
Number of pieces						
Same-day services	1,341	0	56,115	78	57,456	9
Next-day / overnight services	293,070	49	9,464	13	302,534	45
Second-day / other services	298,609	50	6,346	9	304,955	46
All delivery services	593,020	100	71,926	100	664,946	100
	dollars		dollars		dollars	
Average revenue per piece						
Same-day services	13.56	...	7.86	...	7.99	...
Next-day / overnight services	10.58	...	7.99	...	10.50	...
Second-day / other services	6.90	...	5.65	...	6.88	...
All delivery services	8.73	...	7.68	...	8.62	...

Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Table 11
Origin and destination of shipments, enterprises \$1 million and over, Canada, 2005^r

	Couriers		Local Messengers		Total	
	thousands of dollars	percent	thousands of dollars	percent	thousands of dollars	percent
Estimated number of establishments in population	339	...	182	...	521	...
Origin of shipments						
Maritimes	291,654	6	18,771	3	310,425	5
Quebec	969,704	19	82,392	15	1,052,095	18
Ontario	2,395,854	46	204,783	37	2,600,637	45
Prairies	703,841	14	141,521	26	845,362	15
British Columbia	583,544	11	103,617	19	687,161	12
Territories	23,737	0	0	0	23,737	0
Origin outside Canada	210,748	4	1,149	0	211,897	4
Total Delivery Revenue	5,179,080	100	552,233	100	5,731,313	100
Destination of shipments						
Canada	4,051,575	78	548,644	99	4,600,219	80
United States	x	x	x	x	x	x
All other countries	x	x	x	x	x	x
Total Delivery Revenue	5,179,080	100	552,233	100	5,731,313	100

Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Table 12
Fleet and equipment in service and employment, enterprises \$1 million and over, Canada, 2005*

	Couriers		Local Messengers		Total	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Estimated number of establishments in population	339	...	182	...	521	...
Fleet and equipment in service						
Bicycles	0	0	412	5	412	1
Automobiles	1,159	6	2,966	38	4,125	14
Cube / Step Vans	12,564	61	2,769	35	15,333	54
Road Tractors	1,340	6	218	3	1,558	5
Trailers	3,069	15	327	4	3,396	12
5 - Ton Trucks	377	2	871	11	1,248	4
Warehouse equipment	296	1	95	1	391	1
Other equipment	1,857	9	181	2	2,038	7
Total number of vehicles and equipment	20,660	100	7,839	100	28,499	100
Employment						
Number of employees	44,751	87	3,221	30	47,972	77
Number of independent contractors	6,847	13	7,484	70	14,331	23
Total employment	51,598	100	10,705	100	62,303	100

Note(s): Data may not sum up due to rounding.

Table 13
Expense item mapping

Expense items	Questionnaire cell(s)
Salaries, wages and benefits	C3041
Cost of energy and supplies	C4069, C3399, C4066, C4101
Rental and leasing expenses	C4120, C4125, C4130, C4140
Repair and maintenance expenses	C4180, C4210, C4220
Property and business taxes	C4410
Other purchased services	C3080, C3088, C4230, C4315, C4070, C4085, C4325, C4350, C4365, C4370
Depreciation expenses	C4520
Other operating expenses	C4555, C4564, C4569
Total operating expenses	C4599
Non-operating expenses	C4630
Total expenses	C4699

Table 14
Result of the global data quality indicator for the variable "Total revenue"

	NAICS Code		
	492	492110	492210
Newfoundland and Labrador	Excellent	Excellent	Good
Prince Edward Island	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Nova Scotia	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
New Brunswick	Excellent	Excellent	Acceptable
Quebec	Excellent	Excellent	Very good
Ontario	Excellent	Excellent	Very good
Manitoba	Excellent	Excellent	Very good
Saskatchewan	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Alberta	Excellent	Excellent	Very good
British Columbia	Excellent	Excellent	Good
Yukon	Excellent	Excellent	.
Northwest Territories	Excellent	Excellent	.
Nunavut	Excellent	Excellent	.
Canada	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

Data quality, concepts and methodology

Introduction

The 2006 Couriers and Local Messengers Industry Survey results represent fiscal year estimates of financial and operating statistics for the industry.

Classified under the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) code 492, this industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in providing courier delivery services, or messenger and delivery services of small parcels within a single urban area. The type and size of parcels carried, the speed of delivery, and premium services such as guaranteed delivery and track and trace service are the main features of their activities.

Results from this survey provide information on the major categories of revenue and expenses as well as information on the volume of business, origin and destination of shipments and number of vehicles in service.

These results contribute to national and provincial/territorial economic production estimates in Canada. They are also used by private sector businesses for industry performance measurement and market development.

The survey is currently administered as part of the Unified Enterprise Survey Program (UES). The UES program has been integrating, gradually over time, approximately 200 separate business surveys into a single master survey program. The UES aims at collecting more industry and commodity detail at the provincial level than was previously possible while avoiding overlap between different survey questionnaires. The redesigned business survey questionnaires have a consistent look, structure and content. The combined results produce more coherent and accurate statistics on the economy. The unified approach makes reporting easier for firms operating in different industries because they can provide similar information for each branch operation. This way they avoid having to respond to questionnaires that differ for each industry in terms of format, wording and even concepts. Each year, Statistics Canada integrates more existing surveys into the UES program.

Data source

Responding to this survey is mandatory. Data is collected directly from survey respondents and extracted from administrative files.

In addition to the mail-out/mail-back questionnaire approach, the survey was also conducted using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) for data collection, capture, edit and follow-up.

Instrument design

The questionnaire was designed for the first time for the 1997 survey and thoroughly reviewed for the 1999 survey. Its main users and respondents were consulted. Since then, minor changes have been made when necessary as part of an ongoing improvement process.

The questionnaire satisfies the statistical requirements of national accounts and the department of transport in financial information, as well as operation businesses and associations.

Concepts and definitions

Concepts

It is impossible to collect, aggregate and analyze data with a direct link to the infinite range of business structures that exist. This is why Statistics Canada developed a statistical model in which each business, from multinational conglomerates to corner stores, can be evenly represented.

The statistical entity used in Unified Enterprise Surveys (UES) is the establishment, which represents the smallest group of production entities that produce a set of homogeneous goods and/or services and whose activities do not

go beyond provincial borders. One of the main advantages of using the establishment entity is the ability to collect relatively detailed data at the provincial level.

The establishment is the level at which the accounting data required to measure production is available (principal inputs, revenues, salaries and wages). The establishment, as a statistical unit, is defined as the most homogeneous unit of production for which the business maintains accounting records. From these records it is possible to assemble all the data elements required to compile the full structure of the gross value of production (total sales or shipments, and inventories), the cost of materials and services, and labour and capital used in production.

The enterprise is associated with a complete set of financial statements. The enterprise, as a statistical unit, is defined as the organizational unit of a business that directs and controls the allocation of resources relating to its domestic operations, and for which consolidated financial and balance sheet accounts are maintained from which international transactions, international investment positions and consolidated financial positions for the unit can be derived. It corresponds to the institutional unit as defined for the System of National Accounts.

The population of interest

The population of interest is all establishments classified to NAICS 492. This industry group is further split into two groups:

- **4921 – Couriers:** This group consists of establishments primarily engaged in providing air, surface or combined courier delivery services. Courier establishments of the Post Office are included.
- **4922 – Local Messengers and Local Delivery:** This industry group comprises establishments primarily engaged in providing messenger and delivery services of small parcels within a single urban area. Establishments engaged in the delivery of letters and documents, such as legal documents, often by bicycle or on foot; and the delivery of small parcels, such as take-out restaurant meals, alcoholic beverages and groceries, on a fee basis, usually by small truck or van, are included.

Definitions

Financial variables

Revenue

- Revenue from sales of goods and services are generated from delivery services and from the sales of other goods and services like cargo services and custom brokerage.
- Other operating revenue includes notably franchise fees, repair and maintenance revenue.
- Total operating revenue is the sum of all operating revenue.
- Non-operating revenue comprises income from interest and dividends.
- Total revenue is the sum of operating and non-operating revenue.

Expenses

- Salaries, wages and benefits refer first to salary and wages payments, including notably vacation pay and commissions, for all employees for whom a T4 Supplementary Form is completed. This category also includes the employer portion of employee benefits for such items as Canada Pension Plan contributions or Employment Insurance premiums.
- Cost of energy and supplies both include 1) expenses for purchasing fuel for vehicles and airplanes (e.g. gas, diesel fuel, propane, natural gas, fuel for jet airplanes, etc.), 2) other energy costs, such as electricity, natural gas and other energy types, and 3) supply expenses, including office and other operating supplies.
- Rental and leasing expenses are those costs incurred to rent or lease office space, motor vehicles, computers or any other machinery and equipment.

- Repair and maintenance expenses are payments made to purchase maintenance and repair services for buildings, motor vehicles or any other machinery and equipment.
- Property and business taxes include all types of property and business taxes, as well as the different operating permits. Provincial health and education payroll taxes are excluded from this category.
- Other purchased services includes items such as payments to owner-operators, goods transportation, telephone and other telecommunications costs, insurance premiums, advertising and sales promotion.
- Depreciation charges are charges related to depreciation and amortization of buildings, vehicles and other machinery and equipment.
- Other operating expenses include items such as royalties and franchise fees, bad debts and inventory adjustments. Provincial health and education payroll taxes are included in this category.
- Total operating expenses is the sum of all operating expenses.
- Non-operating expenses relates to interest expenses on loans or the interest component of a capital lease.
- Total expenses is the sum of operating and non-operating expenses.

Net operating revenue

- Operating margin is the difference between operating revenue and operating expenses.
- Operating ratio is the ratio of operating expenses over operating revenue.

In order to specify the expense categories, Table 13 shows the cells of the questionnaire used to derive its exact value.

Other variables

Pieces are equivalent to envelopes, boxes, parcels or packages. Pieces carried by courier and local messenger companies generally weigh less than 100 kg.

A shipment is the movement of one or more pieces from a pick-up location or origin to a delivery location or destination.

The origin is classified by region in Canada.

The destination is classified as Canada , United States or other countries.

Delivery services can be broken down into three sub-categories:

1. Same-day services refer to shipments delivered the same day they are picked up;
2. Next-day/overnight services refer to shipments delivered one day after pick-up;
3. Second-day/other services refer to shipments delivered two days or more after pick-up.

The average revenue per piece is the revenue generated from delivery services divided by the number of pieces carried.

Methods

The data is produced as part of Statistics Canada's Unified Enterprise Survey (UES) program.

Sampling

Target population

The target population for this survey is all establishments classified under NAICS 492 and operating for at least one day during the reference year 2006.

Frame

The frame is the list of establishments from which the portion eligible for sampling is determined and taken. The frame provides basic information about each firm, including address, industry classification and information from administrative data sources. The frame is maintained by Statistics Canada's Business Register Division and is updated using administrative data.

In addition, a census of unincorporated establishments (T1) from individual income tax declarations provided by the Canada Revenue Agency was used to ensure that independent contractors (self-employed workers) were included since they can easily be left out of the Business Register's coverage due to their small size.

Sampling plan

Two sources of data were used to derive the estimates:

- 1) a probability sample survey of courier and local messenger establishments with an annual gross business revenue above survey thresholds;
- 2) taxation data assembled from samples of T1 slips of unincorporated enterprises and T2 slips of incorporated companies provided by the Canada Revenue Agency to estimate for: 1) a group of establishments with annual gross business revenue above survey thresholds (tax replacement program).¹¹

It should be noted that only financial information is obtained from taxation data; e.g. revenue and expenses such as depreciation and salaries, wages and benefits. So-called "characteristic" data, such as equipment or the origin and destination of deliveries, of the units are imputed while considering their own characteristics (province, industry type, revenue, etc.).

Sampling unit

The sampling unit used in the probability survey is the establishments of one enterprise that operates in the same industry and province. This sampling unit is called a "cluster of establishments".

Sampling rate

The overall sampling rate was at 29%.

Data collection

Questionnaires were mailed at the beginning of the year 2007 (January) to establishments selected in the sample. Establishments having received a questionnaire were asked to report information for their most recent 12-month fiscal period. The collection period ended in September 2007.

¹¹ The purpose of the tax replacement program is to replace part of the sample with taxation data in order to reduce the response burden for respondents. In 2006, it corresponded to 55% of the simple and single businesses, and 2) all establishments with an annual revenue below survey thresholds.

Data processing

Response rate

At the national level, the global response rate, which combines survey data and taxation data, for all the variables was 76% at the industry level (492). This rate was 75% for couriers (NAICS 4921) and 81% for local messenger services (NAICS 4922).

Imputation

Reported data was examined for completeness and inconsistencies using automated edits coupled with analytical review. Another automated system was used to input data for refusals, non response and unable to contact, partially with the assistance of taxation data. This imputation process was also coupled with a manual analytical review.

Allocation

In a number of cases, respondents reported results that combined sampling units from more than one province, which created the need for data allocation by province. Auxiliary information was used to allocate the data reported on the combined report among the various provinces where the enterprise was in operation. This source of information used for allocation purposes provides an adequate distribution of revenue and expenses by province and territory.

Estimation

The sampling weights derived from the sample survey design were modified and improved using updated information. This was possible because, during the passage of time since the sample was selected, the Business Register was updated further with more complete information. The final set of weights reflects as closely as possible the changing characteristics of the population in this industry. The final estimates were derived by combining the survey estimates and the taxation data estimates.

Data quality

All surveys are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors. Statistics Canada uses a variety of methods to minimize all types of errors. Efforts were taken to minimize the non-sampling errors of omission, duplication, reporting and processing.

Quality evaluation

Prior to dissemination, combined survey results are analyzed for comparability; in general, this includes a detailed review of individual responses (especially for the largest companies), general economic conditions, historic trends, and comparisons with other data sources.

Global quality indicator

The quality of the final estimates is measured by a global quality indicator which takes into account the coefficients of variation (CV) and the response rates. The quality of the final estimates is classified as follows:

Coefficient of variation

Global quality indicator

For a response rate of 90.10:

0,00 to 0,05	Excellent
0,05 to 0,10	Very good
0,10 to 0,15	Good
0,15 to 0,25	Acceptable
0,25 to 0,35	Use with caution
±0,35	Unreliable

For a response rate of 67.90:

0,00 to 0,05	Very good
0,05 to 0,10	Good
0,10 to 0,15	Acceptable
0,15 to 0,25	Use with caution
0,25 to 0,35	Use with caution
±0,35	Unreliable

For a response rate of 40.67:

0,00 to 0,05	Good
0,05 to 0,10	Acceptable
0,10 to 0,15	Use with caution
0,15 to 0,25	Use with caution
0,25 to 0,35	Use with caution
±0,35	Unreliable

For a response rate of 0.40:

0,00 to 0,05	Use with caution
0,05 to 0,10	Use with caution
0,10 to 0,15	Use with caution
0,15 to 0,25	Unreliable
0,25 to 0,35	Unreliable
±0,35	Unreliable

Based on these ratings and as depicted in Table 14, total revenue estimates for the overall industry (NAICS 492) are judged to be excellent at the national, provincial and territorial levels for 2006. For Couriers (NAICS 4921) the estimates were also judged to be excellent at all levels. For Local Messengers (NAICS 4922), the quality of the estimates was judged to be excellent at the national level and from excellent to acceptable at the provincial and territorial levels.

Overall, the 2006 preliminary estimates are viewed as providing an accurate and reliable portrait of the Couriers and Local Messengers industry in Canada. The global quality indicators are available upon request.

Disclosure control

Statistics Canada is prohibited by law from releasing any data which would divulge information obtained under the *Statistics Act* that relates to any identifiable person, business or organization without the prior knowledge or the consent in writing of that person, business or organization. Various confidentiality rules are applied to all data that are

released or published to prevent the publication or disclosure of any information deemed confidential. If necessary, data are suppressed to prevent direct or residual disclosure of identifiable data.

Data release

Data for some of the tables can also be found in CANSIM, tables 402-0001 to 402-0003.

Statistical updates

Conceptual and methodological changes were made at the beginning of the reference year 2004^r to improve the quality of the estimates:

- Corrections were made following our process to validate data with key survey respondents (large businesses) and had a significant effect on the revenues and expenses of the Courier segment.
- The definitions of the industry segments were updated. As a result, the establishments belonging to incorporated enterprises are now classified under the Courier segment, while all owner-operator (or unincorporated enterprise) establishments are found under Local Messenger Services.
- Coverage of the unincorporated survey units (T1) with revenues below survey thresholds was perfected following the introduction of a new methodology developed to optimize use of taxation data. One of its advantages is it provides better coverage of small establishments.
- A revision of the mapping process for survey and taxation variables were made, which affected the relative importance of some expense categories to a certain extent.

Although all these changes contribute to the overall survey quality and are part of normal practice aimed at continuously improving our practices, we are aware of their impact on the historical data and we regret any inconvenience this may cause our users.

Release date: July 2008

Symbols

The following standard symbols are used in Statistics Canada publications:

.	not available for any reference period
..	not available for a specific reference period
...	not applicable
0	true zero or a value rounded to zero
0 ^s	value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
P	preliminary
r	revised
x	suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the <i>Statistics Act</i>
E	use with caution
F	too unreliable to be published

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Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued cooperation and goodwill.