Forwarder evaluation checklist

ASG Academy | v1.0 | Blank shipment record | Source entries checked 20 October 2026

Compare the same cargo, endpoints and service scope. Keep a dated answer and supporting document for each item. This checklist does not approve a provider, determine a license requirement or replace the shipment contract.

Record	Your shipment / provider details
Legal entity / office	_____
Cargo revision / route	_____
Quote reference / date / validity	_____
Reviewer / checked date	_____

1 / Ask for evidence

Check	Question and evidence to retain
Origin coverage	Who collects the cargo, from which point, with which local contact? Keep pickup and receiving instructions.
Service and price scope	Which origin, main-carriage and destination services are included? Retain currency, rate basis, validity and exclusions.
Customs responsibilities	Who is the exporter, importer and authorised broker or declarant? Keep the actual entity and document responsibilities.
Document handling	Who issues each transport document, who checks the draft and who gives release instructions? Keep the revision record.
Exceptions and claims	Who responds to delay, damage or missing cargo? Retain escalation contacts and the applicable notice / claims terms.
Tracking and handoffs	Which milestones are reported, by whom and how? Ask for a sample report with private information removed.

Open questions / owner / due date: _____

_____

Roles and handoff record

2 / Confirm the actual role

A forwarder coordinates agreed transport services. A carrier undertakes carriage. A customs broker conducts authorised customs work. The same business group can offer several roles through different entities; verify the entity and scope on your actual documents.

For U.S. ocean trades, FMC distinguishes Ocean Freight Forwarders and NVOCCs. U.S.-based OFFs and NVOCCs require licensing; non-U.S.-based NVOCCs may use a registration or qualifying license route. Check current FMC guidance and the legal entity before drawing a conclusion. Do not apply this ocean-specific summary to every air or road shipment.

Handoff	Evidence / contact to record
Cargo ready to collection	Factory confirmation, package count, dimensions, gross weight, appointment and collection contact.
Collection to transport	Provider receipt, booking reference, carrier / NVOCC entity, draft document and release instructions.
Arrival to import entry	Arrival notice, importer, broker / authorised filing arrangement and required data owner.
Customs to final delivery	Release / availability status, delivery appointment, receiving contact and exception record.

3 / Resolve before booking

Unresolved question: _____

Responsible contact / due date: _____

Evidence received / revision: _____

Reviewer / date / remaining conditions: _____

Official source entries

FMC: OTI roles

FMC: licensing and foreign registration

FMC: OTI public lookup

CBP: customs brokers and importer responsibility

Record the current lookup date and exact entity. A source link is not evidence that a specific provider was checked.