

## TRANSPORTATION

### AIR

Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou are the main airports in China and the Beijing airport has had major improvements including a new runway and a four storey international terminal. Urumqi, Kunming, Tianjin, Harbin and other cities are also expanding as both domestic and international airports, partly because of the increasing numbers of tourists. Overall, air traffic still plays an insignificant role in domestic transportation while only representing four percent of passenger travel, and a negligible volume of freight. The flag air carrier in China is *AIR CHINA*, which flies the main internal trunk routes and all international ones. There are six regional airlines, as well as new independent local airlines. There are regular international flights from Beijing to destinations in the United States, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Foreign airlines also operate routes to China under reciprocal agreements, the number which has increased dramatically in the last few years under the new open market.

### SHIPPING

The proportion of total cargo carried in domestic vessels or ships chartered by China has increased dramatically over recent years. But the development of the shipping industry has been hampered by the shortage of modern ports, adequate storage facilities and modern cargo handling equipment. Most foreign trade passes through nine ports: Shanghai, Qinhuangdao, Dalian, Guangzhou, Qingdao, Ningbo, Tianjin, Zhanjiang and Liangyungang. The most important port in China is Shanghai, which in 1993 accounted for over one-quarter of the tonnage handled at Chinese seaports. A major investment programme has been under way to improve facilities at the principal coastal ports of Qinhuangdao, Tianjin and Shanghai and new harbours for oceangoing vessels will be built in various other coastal cities, including Xiamen, in anticipation of the opening of direct shipping links with Taiwan. As part of the current modernisation programme China has an ambitious plan to link the five major waterways--the Yangtze, Pearl, Huai, Yellow and Han rivers--which, in turn, will be linked with the expansion of major ports. The shipping infrastructure in China will be further bolstered by the building of canals to link some of the rivers.

### RAILWAYS

Railways are a major part of the transportation system, carrying close to 50 percent of all public transport passengers and over 40 percent of all cargo. With the exception of Tibet, every province and region is connected to the rail system, however, development of new feeder lines and double tracking has been insufficient to meet the vastly expanding needs. The technological level of the service, including traction, rolling stock, telecommunications and signalling, is mostly outdated. Extension, further electrification and double tracking the system are investment priorities, including a new north-south link connecting Beijing and Guangdong.

### ROADS

By the end of 1992, official figures put the total nationwide highway length at a mere 1.1 million kilometres. Much more than half of this is in the form of earth roads and more permanent roads are generally of poor quality. Most of the highway network is concentrated in the heavily populated eastern coastal areas and road transport in the less developed areas is still a major problem.