

Foreword..

The efforts for an integrated investment planning in the transport sector has always been handicapped by the inadequacy of updated data on the performance levels of major mechanized modes of transport. To address this gap, Planning Commission in the past had organized 'total transport system studies' on two occasions in 1978 and 1986, which provided important inputs for the respective Five-year Plans.

However, almost two cataclysmic decades have passed since the last study was conducted, making the findings of the earlier studies rather dated. Further, major quantitative and qualitative changes have taken place in the transport sector during the intervening period in terms of volume, demand-supply linkages, traffic flows and modal options. While the overall demands for both freight and passenger transport have grown, there is also a growing apprehension that the gap between the actual and optimal modal mix is progressively increasing.

It is against the above backdrop that the Planning Commission initiated the present study under the Central Plan Scheme - '50th Year Initiatives in Planning'. With the envisioned objective of:

- ◆ *Generating inter-modal transport resource costs and traffic flows covering four major modes of mechanised transport - Railways, Highways, Coastal Shipping and Airways; and*
- ◆ *Determining an optimal inter-modal mix and allocation of transport investment to assist the planners in designing a transport vision for tomorrow.*

While the objective behind the present study mirror reflects the earlier studies, it is much more comprehensive in terms of focus and canvass of execution, including the addition of a new mode viz. Airway and intra-regional traffic in road within the scope. The mandate of conducting the study was assigned to RITES, which had executed the two earlier studies in the past.

During the three year execution period of the study, the Study Team has drawn heavily from the support and directions from the Steering Committee constituted for the Study and Transport Wing of the Planning Commission. Additionally, RITES had also constituted an internal Project Advisory Board comprising eminent field experts, retired senior government officials and academicians for value added guidance. Furthermore, the execution of the Study could not have been possible without the proactive support and assistance from a large number of Central and State Government departments, which is gratefully acknowledged.

While a number of intermittent reports were made during the course of the Study, the present Report is the final submission on the study in terms of its envisioned objective. A study like this runs the risk of high expectations of the field centric experts in terms of micro issues related to specific modes. In this context, it may be stated that in preparing the report an honest effort has been made to adhere to the core focus of the Study.

Considering the extensive profile and complexities involved, the Study Team is extremely grateful for the proactive support received from a wide cross section of organisations, field experts, captains of industry and academicians in terms of suggestions and comments, which has helped in fine-tuning the contents of this Final Report on this landmark study.