

The Latest Situation for Chinese Railway Transportation and the Direction of its Development

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Summary

In recent years, the shift of foreign capital from the coastal to the western areas has been progressing, and Chongqing and Chengdu have become central therein. From the aspect of the cost and number of days needed, the transportation to places over 1,000 km distant from the coastal areas has heightened the necessity of the shift from trucks to the more advantageous rail transport. China's international distribution is the two outward-facing distributions of distribution by sea and distribution across land borders; the putting in place of a transportation environment and a transportation network where the three distributions, adding in domestic distribution, are realized without confusion in a unified fashion has become a major issue within government strategy. However, the ongoing lack of transportation capacity through the lack of infrastructure in place and the incomplete improvement of organizational and operational methods from the period of the planned economy and the lack of human resources are impeding the modernization of distribution. The rapid putting in place of infrastructure for the sake of the resolution of the ongoing lack of transportation capacity is necessary, but concern remains on issues of safety regarding the hasty putting in place of passenger lines. Moreover the putting in place of infrastructure has taken place on the premise of the development of land bridges in the priority area of the west, in particular the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, and in the strengthening area of the Northeast.

Regarding the transportation of coal, the supply of which is planned, it is necessary to pay heed to the fact that the transportation capacity is continuing to reach saturation point, to the fact that the international transportation of coal is having an influence on domestic transportation, and to the direction of government energy policy and company reorganizations. Next, regarding the transportation of general freight, being an issue for distribution, container transport has been determined as a form of transport for realizing the securing of punctuality, the establishment of door-to-door service, and the raising of service quality. In a partnership between the Ministry of Railways and the Ministry of Transport, the "sea-rail intermodal transport" policy (transporting marine containers by rail) has been promoted in earnest, and the putting in place of container distribution centers in 18 locations and the introduction of double-stack trains is proceeding. These and the development of new land bridge routes via the upgrading and putting in place of railways in the Chongqing and Chengdu area, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and the Northeast are linked in complex fashion, and the course toward container transport is being formed. The putting in place of infrastructure, the achievement of targets for sea-rail intermodal transport, and the establishment of operations at the container distribution centers in 18 locations, etc., will be key factors.

[Translated by ERINA]