Intermodal transportation enables freight and passengers to cross between different modes of transportation efficiently and can improve mobility, reduce congestion, and cut costs. In 1991 Congress called for a National Intermodal Transportation System and created the Office of Intermodalism within the Department of Transportation (DOT). However, as GAO and others have reported, there are barriers to planning and implementing intermodal projects.

GAO's report examines (1) barriers that inhibit intermodal transportation; (2) actions DOT has taken to address these barriers and support Congress' goal; and (3) additional actions, if any, that DOT could take to better address barriers. GAO analyzed information from DOT and transportation experts and talked with transportation officials from various states and localities throughout the country.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that the Secretary of Transportation direct one office or administration to lead and coordinate intermodal efforts at the federal level by improving collaboration and the availability of intermodal guidance and resources.

DOT agreed to consider GAO's recommendation and provided technical comments that GAO incorporated, as appropriate.


To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Katherine Siggerud, 202-512-2834, siggerudk@gao.gov.