Introduction
There has been a sustained effort on the part of Government of Ghana to create essential transport infrastructure and services to improve access to jobs, education and health facilities and also to facilitate domestic and international trade as well as strengthen regional integration (ECOWAS and Sub-Sahara Africa regions) and attract foreign investment. This socio-economic developmental scenario underscores the fact that transportation is pivotal to the overall development of Ghana. Indeed, it is a key infrastructure sector that acts as a stimulus to socio-economic growth and also accounts for a large proportion of public investment.

It is important to emphasize that to be economically and financially sustainable, transportation must be cost-effective and continuously responsive to changing demands through the creation of a more competitive transport sector. Therefore, the availability of proper transport infrastructure and efficient transport services are crucial determinants for socio-economic development and industrial development.

Management of the sector
With the key focus on the integration and coordination of all transport modes, the government established the Ministry of Transport in January, 2009 by re-aligning the functions of the erstwhile Ministries of Aviation, Harbours and Railways and the Road Transport Services.

Its vision is: “To create an integrated, cost effective, safe, secure and sustainable transportation system responsive to the needs of society, supporting growth and poverty reduction and capable of establishing Ghana as a transport hub of West Africa”.

Performance of the sector
The transport sector’s growth and performance have continued to improve in recent years due to both government efforts and pri-
vate sector investment in road rehabilitation and improvement in marine and air transport services.

The transport sector is estimated to have grown by 7.0% in 2009 compared to 8.9% in 2008.

Road

Road transport is the predominant mode of transport in Ghana, accounting for 94% of freight and 97% of passenger traffic movements.

Ghana's road construction boom followed the country's independence in 1957. The roads network at that time, though significant, was not well maintained. It began to deteriorate in the 1970s until the commencement of the structural adjustment programme in 1983. By the 1990s, Ghana had experienced marked improvement in its roads network that has led to its emergence as a hub linking the entire West African trading zone. The privatization of many of Ghana's transport and logistics enterprises has also led to greater efficiency in these areas.

It is estimated that Ghana has today about 67,291 km of road network. Of this, 12,785 km are trunk roads, 42,394 km are feeder roads and 12,112 km are urban roads. 83% of trunk roads, 36% of urban roads and 72% of feeder roads are considered being in either good or fair condition. The network size, which only 17% is paved, grows at an average of 8% per year.

Construction and maintenance of roads lie with the Ministry of Roads and Highways through the Ghana Highway Authority (GHA), the Department of Urban Roads and Department of Feeder Roads. The main sources of financing road development and maintenance are the Road Fund, the Consolidated Fund and development partners. The total cost of road infrastructure in 2008 was US$ 546 million.

Vehicle Registration

The rapid growth of vehicles in recent years is a key contributor to congestion, especially in urban areas. The total vehicle population in Ghana has been growing steadily since 2004. As at July, 2009, the total registered vehicles (cumulative) had risen to 1,096,391.

Mass transit

The public transportation is dominated by the private sector, which is competitive with no restriction to entry. Majority of operators are grouped into unions, the biggest being the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU). Several rural areas are solely dependent on privately-owned and privately run transportation.

The state-owned public transport system has the InterCity STC Transport Company, which provides intercity services, and the Metro Mass Transit Company, which operates both intercity and intra-city services. However, Mass transport operated by the state is facing many challenges. These include ageing and dilapidated infrastructure; obsolete tools and equipment; inadequate number of buses for intercity services; revenue leakage for bus companies and absence of free bus lanes resulting in poor schedule of services for intra-city service.

Railway

The railway sub-sector currently has a very small share of the national transport market, with less than 2% of freight, mainly bulk minerals, and less than 1% of passengers.

Ghana's railway network is 1,300 kilometers of mostly single track rail of 1.067m (3’ 6”) gauge located in the Southern part of the country. The services provided are freight movement on the main network, particularly the Western line (goods include mineral ores, cocoa, cement, timber, food stuff etc); passenger services on the main lines; and sub-urban services on the Accra-Nsawam and Accra-Tema line. With the exception of partial operations on the Western line and the sub-urban rail services, the other lines (Eastern and Central) are not operational. Only 36% of the network was in operation in 2008.
From a peak performance in 2003, there is a significant trend of decline in both passenger and freight carried. In 2008, the freight volume carried was a paltry 306,000 tonnes compared to 1,867,000 tonnes in 2003. Passenger traffic also fell from 2,335,000 to 950,000 during the same period. The general decline has been attributed to the physical deterioration of the railway network, decreasing number of wagons, drop of service quality, ineffective management and lack of funds.

Despite the current situation, the rail system has the potential to become a vital part of Ghana’s transport system, carrying a large portion of passengers and freight on the busiest transport corridors. As the economy grows, there will be increasing demand on the transport system, and rail can become a viable alternative to road transport, provided efficiency and reliability are improved, and ongoing investments are secured for development and maintenance of the system.

In view of this, the Government has drawn up a long-term development plan that proposes to expand the existing railway network from the Southern to Northern parts of the country. This would pave the way for linking the country to its Sahelian neighbours of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger as well as Côte d’Ivoire and Togo to west and east, respectively. There is a proposed link from Tema to Akosombo to facilitate multimodal transport between rail and Volta Lake transport. There is also another proposal to upgrade the existing lines and construct new lines for a proposed Accra-Tema suburban railway network. In the meantime, the Government is actively looking for private sector participation as a means of supporting rail sector development.

**Air**

Air transportation is a growing industry which provides valuable air transport services within Ghana and links the country to the sub-region and the rest of the world. The Ghana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) is the sole regulator of the industry whilst the planning, development and management of airport infrastructure, facilities and services is the responsibility of the Ghana Airways Company Limited (GACL).

Kotoka International Airport (KIA), which has undergone rehabilitation in phases, remains the leading and preferred airport in the sub-region. Ghana also has four regional airports namely, Kumasi, Tamale, Takoradi and Sunyani, and a number of private and public airstrips located throughout the country.

The country is served by 19 foreign airlines and 4 Ghanaian carriers: Ghana International Airlines Limited (GIAL), which operates international services and 3 domestic carriers - Aero Survey, CTK Aviation and Antrak Air which provide domestic and sub-regional services.

There are two Ground Handling companies - Aviance Ghana Ltd and Aviation Handling Services (AHS Menzies) – and two Catering Companies - Airways Catering Ltd and First Catering Ltd.

The continuous and effective implementation of some of the sector policies such as liberalizing the regulatory framework to provide a favorable environment for operators to conduct their business according to the market and commercial needs; private sector participation in the investment and management of aviation infrastructure and services and ensuring high safety; security and environmental standards in the aviation industry needs to be commended. This has contributed to the positive trends observed in relation to the aircraft movement, freight and passenger throughput.

The international air passenger throughput, for example, showed a steady year on year increase from 705,370
in 2004 to 1,186,557 in 2008 representing a boost of 68%.
Over the same period, the domestic passenger throughput increased by 241%.
Air freight throughput also increased from 46,915 tonnes in 2004 to 55,513 tonnes in 2008.

Maritime

The two main sea ports in Ghana are at Tema and Takoradi where most of the import and export trade activities are handled. The market for these sea ports are the captive traffic destined for the local economy and to some extent other West African countries namely Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali etc.
The services being handled at these ports include vessel handling, stevedoring, shore handling, transit storage facilities and related services to vessels and cargo.
The maritime industry has recently benefited from the increased participation of the private sector in the provision of port services. Some 70% of cargo in Tema is now handled by private stevedoring companies and 6 Off-Dock container terminals are run by private operators.

In recent years Ghana’s two main ports have experienced a steady rise in cargo traffic. However, the import freight volumes (Tema and Takoradi combined) decreased from 2007 to 2008 at a rate of 12.85% from 8,725,414 tonnes in 2007 to 7,729,804 tonnes in 2008. The export freight volumes followed the same trend. Exports fell from 3,706,920 tonnes in 2007 to 3,637,554 tonnes in 2008 indicating a decrease rate of 1.91%. The container traffic for imports and exports also declined in 2008 compared to 2007. The reversal in the trend in 2008 might have been due to the general global downturn that affected imports more than exports.

A number of programmes are being implemented by GPHA to increase the competitiveness of the two ports in the West African sub-region. Among them are:
• Dredging of the ports to receive larger vessels;
• Construction of a new dockyard to berth floating crafts;
• Development and extension of the ports superstructures;
• Upgrading of mechanical handling equipment;
• Development of the Boankra inland port to ease congestion;
• Improvement of port security.

Inland Water Transport

The Volta Lake transport system spans about 450 kilometers from the south to the north, with ports at Akosombo, Buipe and Yapei and major ferry crossings at Yeji, Keta Kroachi, Dambai and Kpandu.

Whilst inland water transport does not constitute a significant part of Ghana’s transport system, some routes are critical to small communities. It also provides a useful and low cost alternative to road and rail transport between the north and the south.

The Volta Lake Transport Company Limited (VLTC) is the main transport service provider on the Volta Lake. The company uses a fleet of pusher tugs and assorted barges to provide regular north-south services for general cargo and liquid bulks, and tramping service for local traders. In 2008, VLTC carried 81,790 tonnes of freight compared to 47,866 tonnes the previous year.

VLTC also operates a 300-passenger capacity vessel between Akosombo and Yeji in Northern Ghana (293km), generating an annual traffic of about 24,000 passengers.

Periodic drops in the level of the lake hamper the navigation, making it difficult to reach Buipe. Cross-lake services are also affected as a result of inability to access properly constructed landing stations. Other challenges include aging equipment and lack of navigational aids.