

March 22, 2024

MOL and MOL Sunflower Receive 17th MLIT Minister’s Award for Promotion of Barrier-Free Environments

~ Recognition for Universal Design of Japan’s 1st LNG-fueled Ferries
Sunflower Kurenai and Sunflower Murasaki ~

TOKYO—Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd. (MOL; President & CEO: Takeshi Hashimoto) and its group company MOL Sunflower Ltd. (President & CEO: Hiroto Ushio; Head Office: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) today announced that the *Sunflower Kurenai* and *Sunflower Murasaki* ^(Note 1), Japan’s first LNG-fueled ferries, received the 17th “Minister’s Award for the Promotion of Barrier-Free Environments” from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) in recognition of their barrier-free improvements and the universal design efforts of the newly built Sunflower Terminal (Beppu), which was constructed to coincide with the launch of both ferries, which entered service last year.



<Sunflower Kurenai>



<Sunflower Terminal (Beppu)>



The MLIT Minister’s Award for the Promotion of Barrier-Free Environments was established in 2007 to commend individuals or organizations that have made significant contributions to the promotion of barrier-free facilities in the field of land, infrastructure, and transportation, and to widely promote and encourage their outstanding efforts, based on the purpose of the “New Barrier-Free Law” (Law concerning facilitation of accessibility for the elderly, people with disabilities, etc.) with the objective of promoting and encouraging measures to eliminate barriers to access.

The MOL Group positions diversity, equity, and inclusion as “New drivers of growth.” The group will offer “people- and environment-friendly” cruises so that more people can enjoy the “Casual Cruise” ^(Note 2) offered by its ferry business. Through concerted efforts, the group will continually contribute to improving the wellbeing of society, sustain people’s daily lives from the blue ocean, and open the way to a prosperous future.

Details of initiatives on barrier-free and universal design

☑ *Sunflower Kurenai and Sunflower Murasaki*

Smart embarkation check-in service	The 2D barcode serves as both the boarding ticket and cabin key, eliminating the need to go to the ticketing counter when boarding the ship.
Elevator/Passage bridge	Two large elevators are installed to accommodate parking requests near the elevators when boarding the ship in passenger cars. The passage bridge for walk-on passengers directly connects to the 6th floor of the ship.
Barrier-free rooms	Doors open and close automatically when a 2D barcode is held up. Space is provided to allow wheelchairs to turn around, and an emergency call button is installed in case of an emergency.
Connecting rooms	The Japanese/western style suites and deluxe Japanese-style rooms can be connected to the adjacent Western-style rooms to allow three generations of families, including the elderly, to enjoy the cruise, (for a maximum of seven people).
Multi-purpose rooms	Toilets and showers with handrails, shower chairs, and ostomate facilities
Digital signage	Features a touch panel that is easy for wheelchair users and children to operate. The display also switches to warn of an emergency situation.
Other facilities	Baby care rooms and children's toilets are available. The buffet tables in the restaurant are at a height that is easy for wheelchair users and children to use, and the stores have wide aisles for easy access by wheelchair users.



<Suite Barrier-free>



<Barrier-Free Room (Automatic Door)>

☑ Sunflower Terminal (Beppu)

Barrier-free parking lot	Five covered barrier-free parking spaces, including two drive-through spaces, were installed adjacent to the terminal.
Bus and cab boarding area	Bus stops and cab stands will be located in front of the terminal, and the terminal shed will be extended to protect passengers during rainy weather.
Entrance	A braille map of the entire building and an intercom for customers who require personal assistance.
Ticketing counter	Low counter for wheelchairs and a counter guided by Braille blocks for the visually impaired.
Elevator	Four elevators (one for stretchers) are installed at the boarding gate on the 6th floor of the ship. Inside, the elevators feature voice guidance, low-positioned control panels, raised letter buttons, Braille displays, and handrails.
Restrooms	Barrier-free restrooms (multi-functional and wheelchair accessible) are provided, in addition to tactile maps and directional audio guides (Japanese and English).
Calm Down and Cool Down Rooms	Calm Down/Cool Down Rooms with private space for guests who are experiencing anxiety
Other facilities	Baby care room, medical power supply room, first aid room, restroom for assistance dogs, pet walking area, prayer room, and charging zone in the waiting area. Various signs will be multilingual (Japanese, English, Chinese, and Korean), with pictograms and information maps



<Barrier-free parking lot>



<Entrance>

● Initiatives from Software Perspective

Establishment of guidelines	Clarified the conduct required by law or manners during public transportation, and created guidelines that provide reasonable consideration for elderly passengers and those with disabilities.
Support from the Reservation Center	Reservation Center staff will ask if passengers need assistance when they make reservations by phone or online, and share this information with the port of embarkation and the vessel.
Implementation and participation in various training programs	Conduct various training programs and participate in workshops to learn about the basics of barrier-free and universal design, as well as reasonable accommodations, and apply this knowledge to customer service.



<Beppu City Hospitality Training for the Disabled and Elderly>

(Note 1)

● *Sunflower Kurenai* and *Sunflower Murasaki* related press releases

- December 22, 2022: [LNG-fueled Ferry Sunflower Kurenai Starts to Receive LNG Fuel Supply – Marks Japan’s 1st Truck-to-Ship LNG Bunkering with Skid –](#)
- January 16, 2023: [Japan's 1st LNG-fueled ferry, Sunflower Kurenai, Enters Service - Reducing Environmental Impact, Realizing Modal Shift and Offering 'Casual Cruise' –](#)
- April 17, 2023: [MOL Group's 2nd LNG-fueled Ferry, Sunflower Murasaki, Enters Service - New Company Plans to Operate 4 Vessels by 2025 as MOL Group Steadily Expands LNG-fueled Fleet -](#)

● Awards for *Sunflower Kurenai* and *Sunflower Murasaki*

- The Top Energy Conservation Rating “☆☆☆☆☆” for Japanese Coastal Ships
[LNG-fueled *Ishin*, *Sunflower Kurenai* and *Sunflower Murasaki* Earn Top Energy Conservation Rating for Japanese Coastal Ships | MOL \(mol.co.jp/en\)](#)
- The *Sunflower Kurenai* wins “Ship of the Year 2022” Large Passenger Ship Sector
[MOL Group Earns 2 Awards in 'Ship of the Year 2022' - World's 1st Coal Carrier Equipped with Wind Challenger, Shofu Maru, Named Ship of the Year 2022; Japan's 1st LNG-fueled Ferry Sunflower Kurenai Wins in Large Passenger Ship Sector - | MOL \(mol.co.jp/en\)](#)
- The 24th “Logistics Environment Grand Prize” Award
<https://www.ferry-sunflower.co.jp/news/article/press230616hp.html> (ferry-sunflower.co.jp)
- Kinki District Transport Bureau Barrier-Free Promotion Merit Award 2023 Excellence Award
[近畿運輸局バリアフリー化推進功労者表彰 - 近畿運輸局 \(mlit.go.jp\)](#)

- The Grand Prize in “2023 Nikkei Excellent Products and Services Awards”

[Japan’s 1st LNG-fueled Ferry, the ‘Sunflower Kurenai,’ Wins Grand Prize in ‘2023 Nikkei Excellent Products and Services Awards’](#)

- The Good Design Award 2023

[Japan's 1st LNG-fueled Ferries, MOL Group's 'Sunflower Kurenai' and 'Sunflower Murasaki,' Win Good Design Award 2023 | Mitsui O.S.K. Lines](#)

(Note 2)

The “Casual Cruise” concept is the basic idea behind the MOL Group's ferry business, enabling customers to enjoy cruising as a high-quality means of travel by using regularly scheduled routes.

MOL Group 5 [Sustainability Issues](#)

MOL Group identifies “Sustainability Issues” (Materiality) as our key issues for sustainable growth with society through realization of the Group Vision. We anticipate this initiative to contribute especially to the realization of “Human & Community -Contributing to the growth and development of people and communities-”, “Innovation -Innovation for development in marine technology-”.



Inquiries regarding this matter

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