



Jan. 24. 2019

Marubeni Corporation

ZMP Inc.

Narita International Airport Corporation

Verification Testing of Autonomous Vehicles Within Restricted Areas
at Narita International Airport

AIRO Inc. (hereinafter, “AIRO”), a joint venture company of Marubeni Corporation (hereinafter, “Marubeni”) and ZMP Inc. (hereinafter, “ZMP”), will carry out verification testing using autonomous vehicles (hereinafter, “Verification Testing”) within restricted areas at Narita International Airport, which is operated by Narita International Airport Corporation (hereinafter, “NAA”). The testing will be conducted over a 3 day period from January 28th – 30th, 2019.

AIRO was established between Marubeni, a company with extensive knowledge and experience in the airport business, and ZMP, a company that aims to achieve mass production through R&D as a pioneer in the development of autonomous driving technology, in order to work towards a solution to the serious labor shortage in the airport ground handling industry resulting from the decrease in the working age population and from increased demand for air transport due to a robust inbound tourism industry. Marubeni and ZMP responded to a public call for participants in an initiative by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) and were selected to conduct the testing of autonomous driving within restricted areas at airports. AIRO was created specifically for this initiative, which is the first of its kind in Japan, and has been moving forward with preparations for the Verification Testing.

The plan for the Verification Testing is to run autonomous vehicles developed by ZMP along routes that mirror actual routes used in the ground transportation work of the ground handling staff of Swissport Japan, a Marubeni Group Company. The Verification Testing will be used as an opportunity to collect data and to confirm the issues at play in the use of autonomous vehicles within restricted areas at airports—areas in which the environment and rules differ from those of public roads.

In order to support ground handling work, a vital element in ensuring the safe travel of aircrafts, NAA strives to uphold the world’s highest standards in airports and is working together with MLIT in a public-private partnership on the utilization of new technologies such

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as autonomous driving technology and is also providing its cooperation in the Verification Testing by providing safety support.

The Verification Testing, based on its results, will act as a springboard for the utilization of autonomous driving technology within restricted areas at Narita International Airport.

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