

August 14, 2024
Kyushu Railway Company

Notice Regarding Serious Problem Related to Safety Assurance at JR Kyushu Jet Ferry Inc.

Kyushu Railway Company (hereinafter, “JR Kyushu”) hereby reports on a serious problem related to safety assurance at JR Kyushu Jet Ferry Inc. (hereinafter, “JR Kyushu Jet Ferry” or the “company”), which operates the *Queen Beetle*. Details are provided below.

1. Overview

In February 2024, the company failed to report to the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) even though flooding of the hull was observed, and failed to include it in the daily logbooks and maintenance logs that report the presence of daily abnormalities, and created a separate control book regarding the flooding.

Furthermore, in May 2024, an alarm sensor was moved to a different position.

2. Details

<2023>

- Feb. 11 A flooding alarm in the bow compartment was activated, confirming flooding in that compartment.
- Feb. 12 After diver's check confirmed cracks and emergency measures were taken, operation continued without reporting to Kyushu District Transport Bureau and JR Kyushu.
- Feb. 14 During a visit to the Kyushu District Transport Bureau to explain the arrangement of a dock and the repair plan, the bureau instructed the company to suspend operations until a temporary inspection had been received and completed, and that information was reported to JR Kyushu at the same time.
- Feb. 15 A report was made to the Japan Coast Guard
- Feb. 15–17 MLIT conducted an audit of JR Kyushu Jet Ferry.
- Feb. 23 The vessel was docked for emergency repairs.
- Mar. 1 An extraordinary inspection was completed.
- Mar. 3 An “Analysis of the Incident and Future Countermeasures” was submitted to the Director-General, Maritime Bureau, MLIT, which indicates a policy for immediate improvement, and the MLIT approved the resumption of operations.
- Mar. 5 Operations resumed.
- Jun. 9 The vessel was docked for permanent repairs.
- Jun. 20 Permanent repairs were completed.
- Jun. 21 Operations resumed.

- Jun. 23 The company received an “Order to Ensure Safety of Transportation” from the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.
- Jul. 20 JR Kyushu Jet Ferry submitted an improvement report (the “Four Pillars” of a basic policy for safety assurance) to the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.
- <2024>
- Jan. 4 Flooding was confirmed, but no cracks were found. After reporting this to the Kyushu District Transport Bureau, the company monitored progress.
- Jan. 12 The Kyushu District Transport Bureau instructed the company to suspend operations and undergo temporary inspections, as the situation had not improved.
- Jan. 13 Operations were suspended and the vessel was moved into the dock (docking from January 17).
- Jan. 22 An extraordinary inspection was completed.
- Jan. 25 Operations resumed.
- Feb. 12 A small amount of flooding was observed, but this was not reported to the Kyushu District Transport Bureau.
- Ditto A control ledger was created to record the amount of flooding. Thereafter, when flooding was observed, the amount of flooding was noted in the control ledger, but no abnormalities were recorded in the logbook, maintenance log, etc.
- Feb. 20 A check of the boat's hull revealed a suspicious spot above the waterline.
- Apr. 3 The decision was made to dock the vessel on July 16 to perform emergency measures.
- May 27 A check upon the vessel's return to Hakata Port confirmed increased flooding.
- May 28 The position of the alarm sensor was moved up to prevent the flooding alarm from sounding.
Arrangements to move the docking date forward to early June commenced.
- May 30 The company reported the situation to the Kyushu District Transport Bureau due to a further increase in flooding, which had triggered a flooding alarm.
- May 30 Operations were suspended, and the vessel was docked.
- Jul. 4 An extraordinary inspection was completed.
- Jul. 11 Operations resumed.
- Aug. 6 MLIT audited JR Kyushu Jet Ferry. When interviewing the crew, it was discovered that flooding had not been reported to the Kyushu District Transport Bureau.
- Aug. 7 MLIT interviewed the president of JR Kyushu Jet Ferry and other directors and confirmed the particulars of the incident.

3. Other

MLIT's audit is ongoing, and the timing and details of the disposition decision have not yet been determined.