

Yurikamome

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New Transit Yurikamome (新交通ゆりかもめ *Shinkōtsū Yurikamome*), formally the **Tokyo Waterfront New Transit Waterfront Line** (東京臨海新交通臨海線 *Tōkyō Rinkai Shinkōtsū Rinkai-sen*) is an automated guideway transit service operated by the Tokyo Waterfront New Transit Corporation, connecting Shimbashi to Toyosu, via the artificial island of Odaiba in Tokyo, Japan, a market in which it competes with the Rinkai Line.

The line is named after the black-headed seagull (*yurikamome* in Japanese), a common denizen of Tokyo Bay and the official prefectural bird.

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Technology

The Yurikamome is Tokyo's first fully automated transit system, controlled entirely by computers with no drivers on board. However, the line is not the first in Japan, as Kobe's Port Liner opened in 1981, 14 years before the Yurikamome.

The Yurikamome is sometimes mistakenly called a monorail, but the trains run with rubber-tired wheels on elevated concrete track guided by the side walls.

Stations

Since 2006, all the stations use the recorded voices of different voice actors for their announcements.^[1]

Tokyo Waterfront New Transit Waterfront Line



Yurikamome train, March 2006

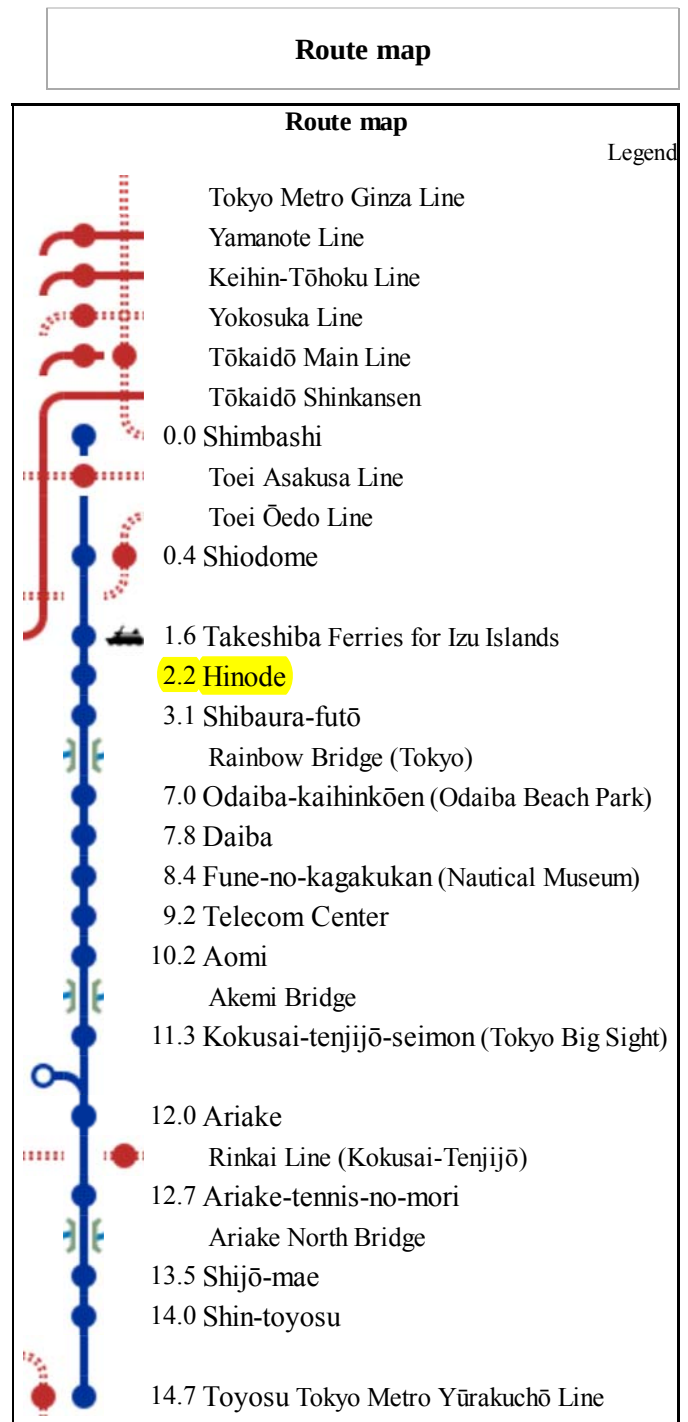
Overview	
Type	Automated guideway rapid transit
Locale	Tokyo, Japan
Termini	Shimbashi Toyosu
Stations	16
Daily ridership	106,000/day (FY 2009)
Operation	
Opened	November 1, 1995
Owner	Toei
Operator(s)	Tokyo Waterfront New Transit Corporation
Depot(s)	Ariake
Rolling stock	Tokyo Waterfront New Transit 7000 series
Technical	
Line length	14.7 km (9.1 mi)
Electrification	600 V three-phase
Operating speed	60 km/h (37 mph)

	Station	Voice actor
U-01	Shimbashi	Masumi Asano
U-02	Shiodome	Hiro Shimono
U-03	Takeshiba	Chiaki Takahashi
U-04	Hinode	Yurika Ochiai
U-05	Shibaura-futō	Maria Yamamoto
U-06	Odaiba-kaihinkōen	Kenichi Suzumura
U-07	Daiba	Toshiyuki Morikawa
U-08	Fune-no-kagakukan	Motoki Takagi
U-09	Telecom Center	Kaori Mizuhashi
U-10	Aomi	Kōsuke Toriumi
U-11	Kokusai-tenjijō-seimon	Mikako Takahashi
U-12	Ariake	Mai Nakahara
U-13	Ariake-tennis-no-mori	Chihiro Suzuki
U-14	Shijō-mae	Tatsuhisa Suzuki
U-15	Shin-toyosu	Natsuko Kuwatani
U-16	Toyosu	Sōichirō Hoshi

Yurikamome trains are taken in and out of service at Ariake, and are stored in a yard near Tokyo Big Sight when out of service.

Ridership

Ridership on the line peaked at over 200,000 daily boardings in 2000,^[2] but declined substantially by 2004 as the Rinkai subway line, which opened a year after the Yurikamome Line, expanded into more of the waterfront area and offered lower fares. Between 2004 and 2006, four new stations were added, which raised ridership slightly.^[3]



View from the Yurikamome

	Station	2000	2004	2006
U-01	Shimbashi	94,217	63,791	58,824
U-02	Shiodome	--	7,500	7,805
U-03	Takeshiba	4,681	9,301	4,701
U-04	Hinode	1,675	2,043	2,271
U-05	Shibaura-futō	6,970	5,875	5,166
U-06	Odaiba-kaihinkōen	19,406	15,859	14,497
U-07	Daiba	28,838	22,866	21,682
U-08	Fune-no-kagakukan	2,734	3,506	3,579
U-09	Telecom Center	13,561	11,233	10,649
U-10	Aomi	11,529	7,152	7,153
U-11	Kokusai-tenjijō-seimon	21,420	13,885	16,312
U-12	Ariake	3,531	2,509	3,743
U-13	Ariake-tennis-no-mori	--	--	1,185
U-14	Shijō-mae	--	--	76
U-15	Shin-toyosu	--	--	893
U-16	Toyosu	--	--	9,494
	Totals	208,562	165,520	168,030

Rolling stock

The line uses a fleet of 7000 series trains.^[4] Between 2014 and 2016, a fleet of 18 new 6-car 7300 series trains will introduced on the line. The first train will be test run during the summer of 2013, entering revenue service early in 2014.^[4] The new trains will have longitudinal seating throughout, to increase overall capacity and speed-up boarding and alighting.^[4]

History

Before its 1995 opening, it was widely feared that the Yurikamome would end up as a multibillion-yen white elephant. The artificial island of Odaiba, which it serves, had been designed and constructed at prodigious expense before Japan's economic crash and, much like London's equally beleaguered Canary Wharf, there simply didn't seem to be enough demand to support it. In the first few months of operation, ridership hovered around 27,000 passengers per day, only a little less than the predicted 29,000, but still far less than the 80,000 passengers needed to be profitable.

However, in 1996, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government re-zoned Odaiba from pure business and residential to also permit entertainment zones. Tokyo may be next to the sea on the map, but before Odaiba, effectively the entire coastline had been taken over by an endless concrete strip of ports and warehouses. Promoted as the "Rainbow Town", the island provided Tokyo with a strip of livable seaside, and within one year, ridership doubled to 60,000. As more and more restaurants, shopping malls, exhibition centers and museums opened, traffic continued to grow.

It is not just the island that became popular, as the Yurikamome had become an attraction in itself. To raise itself from ground level to the Rainbow Bridge, the Yurikamome makes a 270-degree loop, providing panoramic views of both mainland Tokyo and Odaiba. Easily accessible and comfortable, most island goers opt for the Yurikamome despite its high price, with the fares of 180 to 370 yen being nearly twice that of a normal subway.

- November 1, 1995: Shimbashi-Ariake opens, using temporary Shimbashi station
- March 22, 2001: Current Shimbashi station opens, temporary station closes
- November 2, 2002: Shiodome Station opens
- March 27, 2006: Ariake-Toyosu opens; all stations adopt letter/number identification based on Tokyo Metro.

An accident on the Yurikamome occurred on the afternoon of April 14, 2006. According to a government commission, one of the axles on the six-car train was cracked due to metal fatigue, causing a rubber tire on the train to fall off.^[5] The train came to a halt near Fune-no-Kagakukan station, and services were suspended on the entire line. This came at the start of a busy weekend when events were taking place at Tokyo Big Sight on Odaiba, but, according to news reports, alternate means of transportation were offered and there was no major confusion. The Yurikamome resumed limited train service on April 17 while further inspections and tests continued, with full service restored on April 19.

Services on the Yurikamome were suspended on March 11, 2011, following the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake. Service was restored the following day.^[*citation needed*]

Future

At over 160,000 passengers per day, the Yurikamome is making a net profit and will pay off its loans in full faster than the 20 years originally anticipated. Operating frequency, hours of operation and number of trainsets have been continually revised upwards to accommodate the ever-increasing number of passengers.

Further extension to Kachidoki is currently under consideration.^[6]

See also

- List of tram and light-rail transit systems

References

- ↑ [1] (<http://www.yurikamome.co.jp/outline/voice.php>)
- ↑ "サイト移転のお知らせ" (http://www.fmn-inc.co.jp/project/pdf/FPLL_yurikamome.pdf). Fmn-inc.co.jp. Retrieved 2011-08-08.
- ↑ "輸送データ 【ゆりかもめ】" (<http://www.nk-works.sakura.ne.jp/ayano/data/metro/yurikamome-h14.htm>). Nk-works.sakura.ne.jp. Retrieved 2011-08-08.
- ↑ ^{*a b c*} "ゆりかもめ 新型車輛7300系を導入" [Yurikamome: New 7300 series trains to be introduced] (<http://rail.hobidas.com/news/info/article/135838.html>). *Tetsudo Hobidas* (in Japanese). Japan: Neko Publishing. 15 March 2013. Retrieved 15 March 2013.
- ↑ [2] (<http://asia.news.yahoo.com/060417/kyodo/d8h1qs7g9.html>)
- ↑ "東京都港湾局 臨海副都心まちづくり推進計画 都市基盤の整備" (<http://www.kouwan.metro.tokyo.jp/data/rinkai-plan/5-1.html>). Kouwan.metro.tokyo.jp. Retrieved 2011-08-08.

External links

- Official website (<http://www.yurikamome.co.jp/en>)
- Japan Rail and Transport Review article (http://www.jrtr.net/jrtr16/f15_iwata.html)

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