

## PRESS RELEASE



くしろバス株式会社



YAMATO  
TRANSPORT

June 2, 2025

Nemuro Kotsu Co., Ltd.

KUSHIRO BUS CO.,LTD.

Yamato Transport Co., Ltd.

# Start of Full Mixed Passenger/Cargo Services via the Nemuro-Go Intercity Bus in Hokkaido

Linking local foot traffic and local logistics to create a sustainable collaborative model for transportation and logistics infrastructure in underpopulated areas

Nemuro Kotsu (Head Office: Nemuro-shi, Hokkaido; Representative Director: Masamitsu Okano), KUSHIRO BUS CO.,LTD. (Head Office: Kushiro-shi, Hokkaido; Representative Director and President: Shinya Fukaya), and Yamato Transport Co., Ltd. (Head Office: Chuo-ku, Tokyo; Representative Director and President: Seiichi Awa) have launched a full-scale mixed passenger/cargo service on Monday, June 2, 2025. This service uses the Nemuro-Go intercity bus, which KUSHIRO BUS jointly operates between Nemuro and Kushiro (Kushiro Line), to transport TA-Q-BIN packages for Yamato Transport.

As the maintenance of transportation and logistics infrastructure in depopulated areas becomes an issue, the companies aim to contribute to sustainable local communities by leveraging the management resources of each company across industries.



## ■ Overview of Mixed Passenger/Cargo Service

### 1. Transportation flow:

- Yamato Transport sales drivers transport packages bound for Akkeshi-cho, Akkeshi-gun that arrive at Yamato Transport's Kushiro West Sales Office to the KUSHIRO BUS head office, both in the city of Kushiro in eastern Hokkaido.
- Nemuro Kotsu's drivers load cargo into the trunk space of the Nemuro-Go bus, transporting this cargo to Akkeshi-cho, Akkeshi-gun.
- Cargo is delivered to a Yamato Transport sales driver at the Yamato Transport Akkeshi Sales Office, in the nearby town of Akkeshi, and at the Chanai stop of the Nemuro-Go bus, in the town of Hamanaka.

### 2. Advantages

For municipalities: Maintains transportation infrastructure critical to the lives of local residents

For Nemuro Kotsu and KUSHIRO BUS: Secures stable and new sources of income to maintain and sustain intercity bus services

For Yamato Transport: Secures stable transportation capacity, shortens delivery lead time for some packages, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions

### 3. Features

- The bus stops at Yamato Transport sales offices close to the bus route, eliminating the need for time coordination with sales drivers and reducing impact on bus schedules.
- Containers of multiple types (room temperature, refrigerated, frozen, and shopping delivery) can be loaded efficiently since the large-capacity trunk space of the bus is fully reserved for use by the service.

4. Start date: Monday, June 2, 2025

\*Pilot program active since Tuesday, April 1, 2025

5. Applicable routes: Nemuro-Go (Nemuro-Kushiro route), weekday service

KUSHIRO BUS Head Office 12:40 departure for Nemuro Kotsu Ariiso Office 16:00 arrival

### ■ Initiative Context

Eastern Hokkaido is the most expansive area in the region. Here, rail and bus services are being reduced or closed due to population decline. The Kushiro Line, which connects the cities of Nemuro and Kushiro, has been difficult to sustain due to a decline in the number of passengers. However, thanks to support from organizations like the government of Hokkaido and the city of Nemuro, the line continues to operate with reduced services because of its importance as infrastructure for the elderly, young people, and other vulnerable citizens who cannot drive cars to make hospital visits.

Yamato Transport provides logistics services to all areas of Hokkaido, with a total of 138 locations there. However, with depopulation and decline in transportation capacity, maintaining a sustainable logistics network has become a challenge in the region.

On April 1, 2025, the participating companies launched pilot mixed passenger/cargo services utilizing the Nemuro-Go to confirm the feasibility and safety of the service.

### ■ Comments from Nemuro City

- Mr. Junshi Maeda, Senior Manager of Traffic Policy, Nemuro City General Policy Office

The Kushiro Line is an important part of transportation infrastructure in that it helps Nemuro residents get to important places, like the hospital. The full-scale operation of mixed passenger/cargo services to help sustain the Kushiro Line is the result of public and private sectors working together to help the line provide added value, and we look forward to continuing various initiatives to maintain a sustainable public transportation system.

### ■ Comments from Participating Company Representatives

- Misa Matsunaga, General Manager, Operations Department, Nemuro Kotsu Co., Ltd.

The Kushiro Line has been operating with reduced services since October 2024 due to a decrease in the number of passengers. This line is mainly used for commuting to and from hospitals and schools, and is an important route for those who cannot drive. We hope that this mixed passenger/cargo service will connect local foot traffic and logistics to support transportation and distribution between other industries.

- Akira Hara, Section Manager, Planning Section, Passenger Transport Division, KUSHIRO BUS CO.,LTD.

With a decline in passengers and problems securing drivers, it has become a major challenge to sustain bus services. We hope that this new initiative will continue over the long term to improve efficiency and create a positive trend in the transportation industry as a whole.

- Kohei Saito, Branch Manager, East Hokkaido Branch, Yamato Transport Co., Ltd.

In response to a request from Nemuro City to help address challenges in sustaining bus operation, an element of infrastructure for Nemuro's residents, we began operating a mixed passenger/cargo service in cooperation with local governments, Nemuro Kotsu, and KUSHIRO BUS in order to ensure sustainable operation. We hope to continue our contribution to bring about a prosperous society for all residents.

### Contact

Matsunaga, Nemuro Kotsu Co., Ltd. TEL: +81-153-24-2201

Hara, KUSHIRO BUS CO.,LTD. TEL: +81-154-36-8181

Corporate Communications, Yamato Transport Co., Ltd.

TEL: +81-3-3541-3411

### Reference

Nemuro City: Decision made to continue operation of the Kushiro Line, where continuous operation has become difficult (August 13, 2024)

<https://www.city.nemuro.hokkaido.jp/lifeinfo/kakuka/sougouseisakubu/sougouseisakusitu/chikikoutsuu/13589.html>