

DESCRIPTION

Title of Invention

TRANSPORT CART SYSTEM

Technical Field

5 [0001] An aspect of the present invention relates to a transport vehicle system.

Background Art

[0002] As a transport vehicle system, a system including a transport vehicle configured to travel along a track and a control device
10 configured to control the transport vehicle is known (refer to, for example, Patent Document 1).

Citation List

Patent Literature

[0003] [Patent Literature 1] Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication
15 No. 2013-35670

Summary of Invention

Technical Problem

[0004] With the technology described above, for example, if a failure occurs in a power supply device in a system, system failure may be
20 caused in which the entire system goes down (becomes not in normal operating condition).

[0005] In view of this, an aspect of the present invention has an object to provide a transport vehicle system capable of preventing system failure.

25 **Solution to Problem**

[0006] The transport vehicle system according to an aspect of the

present invention includes: a transport vehicle configured to travel along a track; a control device configured to control the transport vehicle; and a power supply device provided at each of a plurality of sections made by dividing the track, in which each of the power supply devices has a monitor device configured to monitor a state of the power supply device and a communication device configured to transmit a monitoring result by the monitor device to the control device, and the control device controls the transport vehicle in accordance with the monitoring results.

[0007] In this transport vehicle system, the power supply devices are provided in the respective sections, the state of each power supply device is monitored by the monitor device in the power supply device, and the transport vehicle is controlled by the control device in accordance with the monitoring results. As a result, if a failure occurs in the power supply device, the control device can perform a process by which the system goes only partially down, but the entire system does not go down. Thus, it is possible to prevent the system failure of the transport vehicle system.

[0008] In the transport vehicle system according to an aspect of the present invention, the control device may determine, based on the monitoring results, whether the respective states of the power supply devices are in an abnormal state, and the control device may prohibit entry of the transport vehicle into the section corresponding to the power supply device determined to be in the abnormal state, and cause the transport vehicle present in the section to be evacuated from the section. As a result, it is possible to efficiently suppress the propagation of influence due to the failure of the power supply device

over the entire system.

[0009] In the transport vehicle system according to an aspect of the present invention, the control device may be a device configured to further control the power supply devices, and may stop the power supply device determined to be in the abnormal state. As a result, it is possible to efficiently suppress the propagation of influence due to the failure of the power supply device over the entire system.

[0010] In the transport vehicle system according to an aspect of the present invention, the control device may determine, based on the monitoring results, whether the respective states of the power supply devices are in a warning state, the degree of abnormality of which is lower than that of the abnormal state, and may limit acceleration of the transport vehicle present in the section corresponding to the power supply device determined to be in the warning state. As a result, it is possible to efficiently suppress the propagation of influence due to the failure of the power supply device over the entire system.

[0011] In the transport vehicle system according to an aspect of the present invention, when the power supply device is determined to be in the abnormal state by the control device and the abnormal state is of a temperature anomaly, information on temperature distribution in the power supply device determined to be in the abnormal state may be transmitted from the communication device to the control device. As a result, a user can easily grasp at the control device a temperature distribution that results in a temperature anomaly in the power supply device.

[0012] In the transport vehicle system according to an aspect of the

present invention, the monitoring results may include first information including at least one of temperature data and power data of the power supply device and second information regarding whether the power supply device is in the abnormal state, the first information may be transmitted from the communication device to the control device in a first cycle, and the second information may be transmitted from the communication device to the control device in a second cycle shorter than the first cycle, when the power supply device is normal. As a result, when the first information and the second information are periodically transmitted from the power supply device to the control device, a communication cycle of the first information the data volume of which is larger than that of the second information is longer than a communication cycle of the second information. Thus, communication traffic volume of the communication device can be reduced.

Advantageous Effects of Invention

[0013] According to an aspect of the present invention, it is possible to provide the transport vehicle system capable of preventing system failure,

Brief Description of Drawings

[0014] [FIG. 1] FIG. 1 is a schematic view illustrating an example of a transport vehicle system according to an embodiment.

[FIG. 2] FIG. 2 is a front schematic diagram illustrating the transport vehicle in FIG. 1 when viewed from a traveling direction.

[FIG. 3] FIG. 3 is a block diagram illustrating a configuration of a power supply device in FIG. 1.

[FIG. 4] FIG. 4 is a diagram illustrating a display example displayed on a display unit of the control device in FIG. 1.

[FIG. 5] FIG. 5(a) is a flowchart illustrating a periodic monitoring process of the transport vehicle system in FIG. 1. FIG.

5 5(b) is a flowchart illustrating a manual image acquisition process of the transport vehicle system in FIG. 1.

[FIG. 6] FIG. 6 is a flowchart illustrating an abnormality monitoring process of the transport vehicle system in FIG. 1.

Description of Embodiments

10 [0015] An embodiment will now be described in detail with reference to the drawings. In the description of the drawings, identical or equivalent elements are marked with the same symbol, and redundant explanations are omitted. The words "up" and "down" correspond to a vertical direction, the words "front" and "rear" correspond to an
15 advancing direction of a traveling vehicle, and the words "left" and "right" correspond to a direction orthogonal to an up-down direction and a front-back direction.

[0016] As illustrated in FIG. 1 and FIG. 2, the transport vehicle system 1 is a system configured to transport an article 10 between a plurality of
20 loading portions 9 using a transport vehicle 6 in, for example, a factory or the like. The transport vehicle system 1 includes the transport vehicle 6 configured to travel along a track 4, the plurality of loading portions 9 each on which the article 10 is placed, a control device 5 configured to control the transport vehicle 6, and a power supply device
25 8 configured to supply power to the transport vehicle 6. Examples of the article 10 include containers such as a front opening unified pod

(FOUP) storing a plurality of semiconductor wafers, a reticle pod storing a glass substrate, general components, and the like.

[0017] The track 4 is, for example, a track laid near a ceiling, which is an overhead space of a worker. The track 4 is suspended from the ceiling. The track 4 is a predetermined traveling path on which the transport vehicle 6 travels. The track 4 is divided into a plurality of sections. In an example illustrated in the drawing, the track 4 is divided into a first section 4X and a second section 4Y.

[0018] The track 4 is supported by posts 40A. The track 4 has: a rail body 40 having a C shape including a pair of lower surfaces 40B, a pair of side surfaces 40C, and a ceiling surface 40D; power supply units 40E; and a magnetic plate 40F. The lower surfaces 40B each extend in the traveling direction of the transport vehicle 6 and constitute a lower surface of the rail body 40. The lower surfaces 40B each are a plate-like member on which a traveling roller 51 of the transport vehicle 6 rolls to travel. The side surfaces 40C each extend in the traveling direction of the transport vehicle 6 and constitute side surfaces of the rail body 40. The ceiling surface 40D extends in the traveling direction of the transport vehicle 6 and constitutes a top surface of the rail body 40.

[0019] The power supply unit 40E supplies power to a power receiving core 57 of the transport vehicle 6 and transmits and receives signals to and from the transport vehicle 6. The power supply unit 40E is a feeder line fixed to each of the pair of side surfaces 40C and extending along an extending direction of the track 4. The power supply unit 40E provides power to the power receiving core 57 in a non-contact

state. The power supply unit 40E is provided for each of the sections of the track 4. The power supply unit 40E includes a first power supply unit 40EX extending along the track 4 in the first section 4X and a second power supply unit 40EY extending along the track 4 in the second section 4Y.

[0020] The magnetic plate 40F generates a magnetic force for a linear DC motor (LDM) 59 of the transport vehicle 6 to travel or stop. The magnetic plate 40F is fixed to the ceiling surface 40D and extends along the traveling direction. The length, the shape, and the layout of the track 4 are not limited to the example illustrated in the drawings, but may be of various lengths, shapes, and layouts.

[0021] The transport vehicle 6 travels along the track 4 and transports the article 10. The transport vehicle 6 is configured to be able to transfer the article 10. The transport vehicle 6 is an overhead traveling unmanned vehicle. The number of transport vehicles 6 provided by the transport vehicle system 1 is not limited, and is one or more. The transport vehicle 6 is also referred to as, for example, a transport vehicle, overhead traveling vehicle, overhead transport vehicle, or a traveling cart. The transport vehicle 6 has a main unit 7, a traveling unit 50, and a traveling vehicle controller 35. The main unit 7 has a main frame 22, a lateral feed unit 24, a θ drive 26, a lifting drive unit 28, a lifting platform 30, and a front-rear frame 33.

[0022] The lateral feed unit 24 collectively feeds the θ drive 26, the lifting drive unit 28, and the lifting platform 30 horizontally in a direction perpendicular to the traveling direction on the track 4. The θ drive 26 rotates at least one of the lifting drive unit 28 and the lifting

platform 30 within a predetermined angular range in a horizontal plane.

The lifting drive unit 28 raises and lowers the lifting platform 30 by winding and unwinding lifting materials such as a belt, a wire, and a rope. The lifting platform 30 is provided with a chuck, thereby

5 allowing the article 10 to be grasped or released. A pair of the front-rear frames 33 are provided at, for example, the front and the rear of the transport vehicle 6 in the traveling direction of the transport vehicle 6.

The front-rear frames 33 each allow claws and other parts, which are not illustrated, to advance or retreat, thereby preventing the article 10
10 from falling during transport.

[0023] The traveling unit 50 causes the transport vehicle 6 to travel along the track 4. The traveling unit 50 has traveling rollers 51, side rollers 52, a power receiving core 57, and the LDM 59. The traveling rollers 51 are disposed at both of the right and the left ends on the front
15 and the rear of the traveling unit 50. The traveling rollers 51 roll over the pair of lower surfaces 40B of the track 4. The side rollers 52 are disposed so as to sandwich the traveling rollers 51 in the front-back direction. The side rollers 52 are provided in a manner of being

capable of contacting the side surfaces 40C of the track 4. The power
20 receiving cores 57 are disposed on the front and the rear of the traveling unit 50 so as to sandwich the LDM 59 in the right-left direction. The power receiving core 57 receives power from the power supply unit 40E disposed in the track 4 in a non-contact manner and performs

transmission and reception of various signals between the power supply
25 unit 40E and the traveling vehicle controller 35 in a non-contact manner. The LDMs 59 are provided at the front and the rear of the traveling unit

50. The LDM 59 generates a magnetic force for traveling or stopping.

[0024] The traveling vehicle controller 35 is an electronic control unit including a central processing unit (CPU), a read only memory (ROM), a random access memory (RAM), and the like. The traveling vehicle controller 35 controls various types of operations of the transport vehicle 6. Specifically, the traveling vehicle controller 35 controls the traveling unit 50, the lateral feed unit 24, the θ drive 26, the lifting drive unit 28, and the lifting platform 30. The traveling vehicle controller 35 can be configured, for example, as software such that a program stored in the ROM is loaded into the RAM to be executed by the CPU. The traveling vehicle controller 35 may be configured as hardware including an electronic circuit or the like. The traveling vehicle controller 35 communicates with the control device 5 using the power supply unit 40E and the like.

[0025] The loading portion 9 is disposed along the track 4. The loading portion 9 is provided at a position where the article 10 can be passed by the transport vehicle 6. The loading portion 9 includes a buffer on which the article 10 is temporarily placed, and a load port for passing the article 10 with respect to a processing apparatus (not illustrated).

[0026] The control device 5 is an electronic control unit including a CPU, a ROM, a RAM, and the like. The control device 5 can be configured, for example, as software such that a program stored in the ROM is loaded into the RAM to be executed by the CPU. The control device 5 may be configured as hardware including an electronic circuit or the like. The control device 5 controls various operations in the

transport vehicle system 1. The control device 5 controls the transport vehicle 6 and the power supply device 8. The control device 5 includes a display unit 5A such as a monitor configured to display various types of information, an input unit 5B such as a keyboard and a mouse receiving various types of operational input from the user, and a storage unit 5C configured to store various types of information.

[0027] The control device 5 is connected to a communication device 3. The communication device 3 is a device configured to communicate with the power supply device 8. The communication device 3 outputs various types of information received from the power supply device 8 to the control device 5. The communication device 3 transmits various types of information input from the control device 5 to the power supply device 8. The communication device 3 is not limited and can be, for example, a publicly known communication converter.

[0028] The control device 5 requests a plurality of the power supply devices 8 to transmit temperature-power information (first information) regarding the temperature data and the power data of the power supply devices 8, via the communication device 3. The control device 5 acquires the temperature-power information transmitted from the power supply device 8 in response to the request via the communication device 3. The control device 5 requests the power supply devices 8 via the communication device 3 to transmit device state information (second information) regarding whether the power supply device 8 is in the abnormal state, the warning state, or a normal state. The control device 5 acquires the device state information transmitted from the power supply device 8 in response to the request via the communication

device 3. The control device 5 stores the acquired temperature-power information and the device state information in the storage unit 5C.

[0029] The power supply device 8 is provided at each of the sections of the track 4. Here, the power supply device 8 includes a power supply device 8X installed corresponding to the first section 4X of the track 4 and a power supply device 8Y installed corresponding to the second section 4Y of the track 4. The power supply device 8X is connected to the first power supply unit 40EX in the first section 4X. The power supply device 8Y is connected to a second power supply unit 49EY in the second section 4Y.

[0030] As illustrated in FIG. 3, the power supply device 8 has a plurality of non-contact temperature sensors 81, a current sensor 82, a power supply device control unit 83, and a communication device 84. The non-contact temperature sensor 81 is a sensor configured to monitor the temperature of the power supply device 8. A thermopile array sensor, for example, is used as the non-contact temperature sensor 81. Each of the non-contact temperature sensors 81 measures, in a non-contact manner, the temperature of each of a plurality of areas different from each other in the power supply device 8. Each of the non-contact temperature sensors 81 detects the temperature distribution in the corresponding area and outputs information on the temperature distribution as temperature data to the power supply device control unit 83. For example, in temperature data, the temperature distribution is associated with the identification number of each non-contact temperature sensor 81. The current sensor 82 is a sensor configured to monitor the current at a predetermined measurement point in the power

supply device 8. The current sensor 82 detects the current at the predetermined measurement point and outputs information on the current as current data to the power supply device control unit 83.

[0031] The power supply device control unit 83 is an electronic control unit including a CPU, a ROM, and a RAM. The power supply device control unit 83 controls various operations in the power supply device 8. The power supply device control unit 83 can be configured, for example, as software such that a program stored in the ROM is loaded into the RAM to be executed by the CPU. The power supply device control unit 83 may be configured as hardware such as an electronic circuit or the like.

[0032] The power supply device control unit 83 determines which state, out of the abnormal state, the warning state, and the normal state, the power supply device 8 is in, based on the temperature data and the power data. The warning state is a state in which the degree of abnormality is lower than that of the abnormal state. For example, the power supply device control unit 83 determines that the power supply device 8 is in the warning state when the power data is equal to or more than a first power threshold. For example, the power supply device control unit 83 determines that the power supply device 8 is in the abnormal state when the power data is equal to or more than the second power threshold value greater than the first power threshold value. For example, the power supply device control unit 83 determines that the power supply device 8 is in the warning state when any of the highest temperatures in the respective temperature distributions in the temperature data is equal to or more than the first temperature threshold.

For example, in the power supply device control unit 83, the power supply device 8 is in the abnormal state (temperature anomaly) when any of the highest temperatures in the respective temperature distributions in the temperature data is equal to or more than the second temperature threshold value greater than the first temperature threshold. In other cases than the above, the power supply device control unit 83 determines that the power supply device 8 is in the normal state.

[0033] The power supply device control unit 83 outputs the result of determining which state, out of the abnormal state, the warning state, and the normal state, the power supply device 8 is in to the communication device 84, in response to the request from the control device 5, as device state information. The data size of the device state information is, for example, 20 to 80 bytes. The device state information may include an error log. The power supply device control unit 83 outputs the temperature data and the power data to the communication device 84 as the temperature-power information in response to the request from the control device 5. The data size of the temperature-power information is, for example, 80 to 204 bytes.

[0034] The non-contact temperature sensor 81 and the current sensor 82 constitute a monitor device configured to monitor the state of the power supply device 8. The temperature-power information and the device state information constitute the monitoring result of the state of the power supply device 8 monitored by the monitor device (hereinafter referred to simply as "monitoring result of the power supply device 8").

[0035] The communication device 84 is a device configured to communicate with the control device 5 via the communication device 3.

The communication device 84 outputs the various types of information received to the power supply device control unit 83. The communication device 84 transmits various types of information input from the power supply device control unit 83 to the control device 5.

5 The communication device 84 transmits the monitoring result of the power supply device 8 to the control device 5 (details will be described later). The communication device 84 is not limited and can be, for example, a publicly known communication converter.

[0036] In the present embodiment, the control device 5 controls the
10 transport vehicle 6 in accordance with the monitoring results of the power supply devices 8. Based on the monitoring results of the power supply devices 8, the control device 5 determines whether the power supply devices 8 are in the abnormal state. The control device 5, when determining that at least one of the power supply devices 8 is in the
15 abnormal state, prohibits the transport vehicle 6 from entering a section corresponding to the power supply device 8 determined to be in the abnormal state on the track 4, and causes the transport vehicle 6 present in the section to be evacuated from the section. The control device 5 stops the power supply device 8 determined to be in the abnormal state.

20 The stopping the power supply device 8 includes at least stopping power supply to the power supply unit 40E connected to the power supply device 8.

[0037] Based on the monitoring results of the power supply devices 8, the control device 5 determines whether the power supply devices 8 are
25 in the warning state. The control device 5, when determining that at least one of the power supply devices 8 is in the warning state, limits the

acceleration of the transport vehicle 6 present in a section corresponding to the power supply device 8 determined to be in the warning state on the track 4.

[0038] The control device 5, when determining that at least one of the power supply devices 8 is in the abnormal state, further determines whether the abnormal state is of the temperature anomaly. The control device 5, when determining that the abnormal state is of the temperature anomaly, causes the temperature data of the power supply device 8 determined to be in the abnormal state to be transmitted from the communication device 84 of the power supply device 8 to the control device 5. As a result, the control device 5 generates an image of the temperature distribution that results in the temperature anomaly based on the transmitted temperature data, and displays the temperature distribution image on the display unit 5A. Details of the various processes involving the processing of the control device 5 will be described later.

[0039] FIG. 4 is a diagram illustrating a display example to be displayed on the display unit 5A of the control device 5. The display example illustrated in FIG. 4 is an example where a temperature anomaly occurs in the power supply device 8 labeled with PSP2, among the power supply device 8 labeled with PSP1 and the power supply device 8 labeled with PSP2. The display unit 5A displays a temperature distribution image G1 according to the temperature distribution of the temperature anomaly in the power supply device 8 labeled with PSP2 and an acquisition time of the temperature distribution image G1. Besides, the display unit 5A displays various

types of information on the power supply device 8 labeled with PSP2 in which the temperature anomaly has occurred. Examples of the various types of information displayed on the display unit 5A include, for example, a label of the power supply device 8, a state of the power supply device 8, whether the power supply device 8 is in operation, power data of the power supply device 8, and the highest temperatures in the respective temperature distributions detected by the corresponding non-contact temperature sensors 81.

[0040] In such a display of the display unit 5A, for example, when the user clicks the "PSP1" button by operating the input unit 5B, the display can be switched to various types of information on the power supply device 8 labeled with PSP1. In addition, in such a display of the display unit 5A, for example, when the user clicks the "Image" button by operating the input unit 5B, the display can be switched to the image data of the temperature distribution of the corresponding non-contact temperature sensor 81. Moreover, in such a display of the display unit 5A, for example, the user can set the "temperature bar" of the temperature distribution image G1 by operating the input unit 5B.

[0041] Next, various processes executed by the transport vehicle system 1 in the present embodiment will be described.

[0042] [Periodic monitoring process]

The transport vehicle system 1 periodically repeats the following periodic monitoring process in a first cycle (10 seconds, for example). In the periodic monitoring process, as illustrated in FIG. 5(a), the temperature and the power of all the power supply devices 8 are first checked by the control device 5 (step S1). In step S1,

specifically, a request for the temperature-power information is made from the control device 5 to all the power supply devices 8 via the communication device 3. Each of the power supply devices 8 receives the request via the communication device 84 and transmits the temperature-power information to the communication device 3 in response to the request. The control device 5 acquires the temperature-power information via the communication device 3 and stores the acquired temperature-power information in the storage unit 5C.

[0043] Then, the display of the display unit 5A is updated by the control device 5 so that the acquired temperature-power information is displayed (step S2). The display aspect and display format of the display unit 5A are not particularly limited and may be in various types of aspects and formats (the same applies hereinafter). The step then advances to the processing in above-described step S1 in the next cycle to check the temperature and the power of all the power supply devices 8 again. In other words, the temperature-power information is transmitted from the communication device 84 to the control device 5 in the first cycle.

[0044] [Manual image acquisition process]

In the transport vehicle system 1, the following manual image acquisition process is executed when the user operates the input unit 5B to display on the display unit 5A a temperature distribution image of the temperature distribution detected by the non-contact temperature sensor 81 of a certain power supply device 8. In the manual image acquisition process, as illustrated in FIG. 5(b), a temperature distribution image of a target to be displayed is first acquired by the

control device 5 (step S11).

[0045] In step S11, specifically, a request for the temperature-power information is made from the control device 5 to the power supply device 8 as the target via the communication device 3 in response to the operation received at the input unit 5B. The power supply device 8 as the target receives the request via the communication device 84 and transmits the temperature-power information to the communication device 3 in response to the request. The control device 5 acquires the temperature-power information via the communication device 3, acquires the temperature distribution of the target from the temperature data in the temperature-power information, and generates a temperature distribution image based on the acquired temperature distribution using, for example, a publicly known method.

[0046] The display of the display unit 5A is then updated by the control device 5 so that the acquired temperature distribution image is displayed. Along with this, the acquired temperature distribution image is stored in the storage unit 5C (step S12). As in the foregoing, the manual image acquisition process ends. Priority of the manual image acquisition process is set lower than that of the above-described periodic monitoring process. Therefore, when each piece of processing of the periodic monitoring process is being executed, each piece of processing of the manual image acquisition process is not executed.

[0047] [Abnormality monitoring process]

In the transport vehicle system 1, the abnormality monitoring process described below is periodically executed. In the abnormality

monitoring process, as illustrated in FIG. 6, first the device states of all the power supply devices 8 are checked by the control device 5 (step S21). In step S21, specifically, a request for the device state information is made from the control device 5 to all the power supply devices 8 via the communication device 3. Each of the power supply devices 8 receives the request via the communication device 84 and transmits the device state information to the communication device 3 in response to the request. The control device 5 acquires the device state information via the communication device 3 and stores the acquired device state information in the storage unit 5C.

[0048] Control judgment is then performed by the control device 5 to determine the device state of each of the power supply devices 8 based on the acquired device state information (step S22). In step S22, the control device 5 refers to the device state information to determine which state, out of the abnormal state, the warning state, and the normal state, each of the power supply devices 8 is in.

[0049] If none of the power supply devices 8 are in the abnormal state or in the warning state (NO in step S23 and NO in step S24), a series of processing in the current cycle is terminated, and the step advances to the processing in above-described step S21 in the second cycle (1 second, for example) shorter than the first cycle. In other words, the device state information is transmitted from the communication device 84 to the control device 5 in the second cycle shorter than the first cycle, when the power supply device 8 is normal.

[0050] On the other hand, if at least one of the power supply devices 8 is in the abnormal state (YES in step S23), the temperature and the

power of the power supply device 8 in that abnormal state are checked (step S25). In step S25, specifically, a request for temperature-power information is made from the control device 5 to the power supply device 8 in the abnormal state via the communication device 3. The power supply device 8 in the abnormal state receives the request via the communication device 84 and transmits the temperature-power information to the communication device 3 in response to the request. The control device 5 acquires the temperature-power information via the communication device 3 and stores the acquired temperature-power information in the storage unit 5C.

[0051] Then, by the control device 5, the display of the display unit 5A is updated so that the acquired temperature-power information is displayed, and the abnormal section, which is a section corresponding to the power supply device 8 determined to be in the abnormal state in the track 4, is closed by route closure (step S26). In the route closure in step S26, the entry of the transport vehicle 6 into the abnormal section of the track 4 is prohibited, and the transport vehicle 6 present in the abnormal section is evacuated from that abnormal section. For example, in the route closure in step S26, when some command (a travel command or a transport command, for example) is allocated to the transport vehicle 6, a command to evade the abnormal section is allocated. For example, in the route closure in step S26, a command to cause the transport vehicle 6 present in the abnormal section to travel outside the abnormal section is allocated. In step S26, the control device 5 stops the power supply device 8 determined to be in the abnormal state.

[0052] Then, based on the device state information of the power supply device 8 in the abnormal state, whether the abnormal state of the power supply device 8 is of the temperature anomaly is determined by the control device 5 (step S27). If the abnormal state of the power supply device 8 is of the temperature anomaly (YES in step S27), a temperature distribution image according to the temperature distribution that results in the temperature anomaly is acquired by the control device 5 (step S28).

[0053] In step S28, specifically, a request for the temperature-power information is made from the control device 5 to the power supply device 8 in the abnormal state via the communication device 3. The power supply device 8 in the abnormal state receives the request via the communication device 84 and transmits the temperature-power information to the communication device 3 in response to the request.

The control device 5 acquires the temperature-power information via the communication device 3 and acquires the temperature distribution that results in the temperature anomaly from the temperature data in the temperature-power information. Based on the acquired temperature distribution, the control device 5 generates a temperature distribution image using, for example, a publicly known method. In other words, in step S28, when the power supply device 8 is determined to be in the abnormal state by the control device 5 and the abnormal state is of the temperature anomaly, information on the temperature distribution in the power supply device 8 determined to be in the abnormal state (the temperature-power information) is transmitted from the communication device 84. Then, by the control device 5, the display of the display

unit 5A is updated and the acquired temperature distribution image is stored in the storage unit 5C so that the acquired temperature distribution image is displayed (step S29).

[0054] On the other hand, if none of the power supply devices 8 are in the abnormal state and at least one of the power supply devices 8 is in the warning state (NO in step S23 and YES in step S24), the temperature and the power of that power supply device 8 in the warning state is checked (step S30). In step S30, specifically, a request for the temperature-power information is made from the control device 5 to the power supply device 8 in the warning state via the communication device 3. The power supply device 8 in the warning state receives the request via the communication device 84 and transmits the temperature-power information to the communication device 3 in response to the request. The control device 5 acquires the temperature-power information via the communication device 3 and stores the acquired temperature-power information in the storage unit 5C.

[0055] Then, by the control device 5, the display of the display unit 5A is updated so that the acquired temperature-power information is displayed, and the acceleration of the transport vehicle 6 in a warning section, which is a section corresponding to the power supply device 8 determined to be in the warning state in the track 4, is limited (step S31). As an example, in the limiting of the acceleration in step S31, the maximum acceleration specified by a command to be allocated to the transport vehicle 6 present in the warning section is set to a value equal to or less than the preset acceleration.

[0056] If NO in step S27, after step S29, or after step S31, a series of

processing in the current cycle is terminated, and the step advances to the processing in the above-described step S21 in the next cycle.

Priority of the abnormality monitoring process is set lower than that of the above-described periodic monitoring process and manual image acquisition process. Therefore, when any of the periodic monitoring process or the manual image acquisition process is being executed, each piece of processing of the abnormality monitoring process is not executed.

[0057] As in the foregoing, in the transport vehicle system 1, the power supply device 8 is provided in each of the sections made by dividing the track 4, the state of each of the power supply devices 8 is monitored by the non-contact temperature sensors 81 and the current sensor 82, and in accordance with the monitoring results of the power supply devices 8, the transport vehicle 6 is controlled by the control device 5. As a result, if a failure occurs in the power supply device 8, the control device 5 can perform a process by which the system goes only partially down, but the entire system does not go down. Thus, it is possible to prevent the system failure of the transport vehicle system 1.

[0058] In the transport vehicle system 1, the control device 5 determines whether the power supply devices 8 are in the abnormal state based on the monitoring results of the power supply devices 8. The control device 5 prohibits the entry of the transport vehicle 6 into the abnormal section corresponding to the power supply device 8 determined to be in the abnormal state, and causes the transport vehicle 6 present in the abnormal section to be evacuated from that abnormal section. As a result, it is possible to efficiently suppress the

propagation of influence due to the failure of the power supply device 8 over the entire system. The transport vehicle system 1 can continue to operate with reduced transport capacity.

[0059] In the transport vehicle system 1, the control device 5 stops the power supply device 8 determined to be in the abnormal state. As a result, it is possible to efficiently suppress the propagation of influence due to the failure of the power supply device 8 over the entire system. It is possible to prevent the failure of the power supply device 8 from developing. Early recovery of the power supply device 8 from the failure is made easier.

[0060] In the transport vehicle system 1, the control device 5 determines, based on the monitoring results of the power supply devices 8, whether the power supply devices 8 are in the warning state, and limits the acceleration of the transport vehicle 6 present in the warning section corresponding to the power supply device 8 that is determined to be in the warning state. As a result, it is possible to efficiently suppress the propagation of influence due to the failure of the power supply device 8 over the entire system. The transport vehicle system 1 can continue to operate with reduced transport capacity.

[0061] In the transport vehicle system 1, when the control device 5 determines that the power supply device 8 is in the abnormal state and the abnormal state is of the temperature anomaly, the temperature-power information on the temperature distribution in the power supply device 8 determined to be in the abnormal state is transmitted from the communication device 84 to the control device 5. As a result, in the control device 5, the temperature distribution that results in the

temperature anomaly in the power supply device 8 can be displayed as a temperature distribution image on the display unit 5A. The user can easily grasp at the control device 5 the temperature distribution that results in the temperature anomaly in the power supply device 8.

5 [0062] In the transport vehicle system 1, the temperature-power information is transmitted from the communication device 84 to the control device 5 in the first cycle. The device state information is transmitted from the communication device 84 to the control device 5 in the second cycle shorter than the first cycle, when the power supply
10 device 8 is normal. As a result, when the temperature-power information and the device state information are periodically transmitted from the power supply device 8 to the control device 5, the communication cycle of temperature-power information the data volume of which is larger than that of the device state information is
15 longer than the communication cycle of device state information. Thus, the communication traffic volume of the communication device 84 can be reduced. In addition, the communication load can be reduced.

[0063] In the transport vehicle system 1, desired temperature-power
20 information and device state information can be displayed in a simplified manner by the display unit 5A. In addition, the display of the display unit 5A can be easily set and operated. Moreover, it is possible to display the temperature distribution image of the temperature distribution according to the temperature anomaly, on the
25 display unit 5A when the user operates or when the power supply device 8 is in the abnormal state.

[0064] Although the embodiment has been described above, an aspect of the present invention is not limited to the above-described embodiment, and various modifications may be made within the scope not departing from the gist of the invention.

5 [0065] In the above-described embodiment, the monitor device is not limited to the non-contact temperature sensor 81 and the current sensor 82, but may be any other sensor or the like capable of monitoring the state of the power supply device 8. In the above-described embodiment, the power supply device 8 may exclusively include only
10 the non-contact temperature sensors 81 or the current sensor 82. In the above-described embodiment, an area in which each non-contact temperature sensor 81 measures temperature in the power supply device 8 is not limited and may be various areas. In the above-described embodiment, a measurement point at which the current sensor 82
15 measures the current in the power supply device 8 is not limited and may be various measurement points.

[0066] In the above-described embodiment, the first cycle when the communication device 84 transmits the temperature-power information and the second cycle when the communication device 84 transmits the
20 device state information are not particularly limited, and it is sufficient that the second cycle is shorter than the first cycle. The first cycle and the second cycle may be fixed values, or may be variable values that vary according to the situation. In the above-described embodiment, the control device 5, when determining that the power supply device 8
25 is in the abnormal state or the warning state, may make some notification (a caution on the display unit 5A, for example) to alert the

user to the power supply device 8 in problem.

[0067] In the above-described embodiment, an example with the two power supply devices 8 is illustrated and explained, but the number of the power supply devices 8 is not limited and it is sufficient that the number is more than one. The above-described embodiment may have a plurality of units, each including the plurality of power supply devices 8 and the control device 5. In this case, a higher-level control device configured to control the control devices 5 may be included. The above-described embodiment may include a data server configured to manage data for the entire system. The above-described embodiment may include an overall control device configured to control the entire system. In the above-described embodiment, wireless communication or wired communication may be used for part or all of the communication. In the above-described embodiment, a LAN connection of a facility in which the transport vehicle system 1 is installed, for example, may be used for part or all of the communication.

[0068] In the above-described embodiment, stopping the power supply device 8 in the abnormal state, prohibiting the entry of the transport vehicle 6 into an abnormal section, evacuating the transport vehicle 6 present in the abnormal section from that abnormal section, and limiting the acceleration of the transport vehicle 6 present in a warning section are executed, but it is sufficient at least one of these steps is executed

[0069] The materials and shapes of the respective configurations in the embodiment and the modifications above are not limited to those described above, and various materials and shapes can be used. Each configuration in the embodiment or the modifications above may be

optionally applied to each configuration in other embodiments or
modifications. Some of the respective configurations in the
embodiment or the modifications above may be omitted as appropriate
within the scope not departing from the gist of an aspect of the present
invention.

Reference Signs List

[0070] 1 ... transport vehicle system

4 ... track

4X ... first section (section)

10 4Y ... second section (section)

5... control device

6 ... transport vehicle

8, 8X, 8Y... power supply device

81 ... non-contact temperature sensor (monitor device)

15 82 ... current sensor (monitor device)

84 ... communication device

CLAIMS

[Claim 1] A transport vehicle system comprising:

a transport vehicle configured to travel along a track;

a control device configured to control the transport vehicle; and

5 a power supply device provided at each of a plurality of sections made by dividing the track, wherein

each of the power supply devices has a monitor device configured to monitor a state of the power supply device and a communication device configured to transmit a monitoring result by the monitor device to the control device, and

10 the control device controls the transport vehicle in accordance with the monitoring results.

[Claim 2] The transport vehicle system according to claim 1, wherein

15 the control device determines, based on the monitoring results, whether the respective states of the power supply devices are in an abnormal state, and

20 prohibits entry of the transport vehicle into the section corresponding to the power supply device determined to be in the abnormal state, and causes the transport vehicle present in the section to be evacuated from the section.

[Claim 3] The transport vehicle system according to claim 2, wherein the control device is a device configured to further control the power supply devices and stops the power supply device determined to be in the abnormal state.

[Claim 4] The transport vehicle system according to claim 2 or 3,
wherein the control device

determines, based on the monitoring results, whether the
respective states of the power supply devices are in a warning state, the
5 degree of abnormality of which is lower than that of the abnormal state,
and

reduces acceleration of the transport vehicle present in the
section corresponding to the power supply device determined to be in
the warning state.

10 [Claim 5] The transport vehicle system according to any one of
claims 2 to 4, wherein when the power supply device is determined to
be in the abnormal state by the control device and the abnormal state is
of a temperature anomaly, information on temperature distribution in the
power supply device determined to be in the abnormal state is
15 transmitted from the communication device to the control device.

[Claim 6] The transport vehicle system according to any one of
claims 1 to 5, wherein

the monitoring results include first information including at least
one of temperature data and power data of the power supply device and
20 second information regarding whether the power supply device is in the
abnormal state,

the first information is transmitted from the communication
device to the control device in a first cycle, and

the second information is transmitted from the communication
25 device to the control device in a second cycle shorter than the first
cycle, when the power supply device is normal.