

CLAIMS

1. A travel facility including travel members configured to travel along a travel path, the travel facility comprising:

a first travel member provided as one of the travel members;

a first travel actuator provided to the first travel member for actuating the first travel member to cause the first travel member to travel;

a first controller provided to the first travel member for generating a travel control signal to be sent to the first travel actuator to control actuating operation of the first travel actuator;

characterized by

a second travel member configured to travel along a travel path, separately from the first travel member;

a second travel actuator provided to the second travel member for actuating the second travel member to cause the second travel member to travel;

a second controller provided to the second travel member for generating a travel control signal to be sent to the second travel actuator to control actuating operation of the second travel actuator;

an external signal generating portion provided to the second travel member for generating an external travel control signal to be sent to the first travel actuator;

a first connecting portion provided to the first travel member for receiving the external travel control signal and transmitting the external travel control signal to the first travel actuator;

a steering operation portion provided to the first travel member for changing a travel direction, of the first travel member, along the travel path;

wherein the first controller is configured to control operation of the steering operation portion;

wherein the external signal generating portion is configured to generate an external steering control signal for controlling operation of the steering operation portion;
a second connecting portion provided to the second travel member and capable of transmitting the external travel control signal generated by the external signal generating portion;

a connecting member removably connected to, and between, the first connecting portion and the second connecting portion, for receiving and transmitting the external travel control signal; and

wherein the connecting member is configured to receive and transmit the external steering control signal.

2. The travel facility as defined in claim 1, characterized in that

a guide rail for guiding travel of the first travel member along the travel path,

wherein the first travel member has a guide member configured to be guided by the guide rail,

the travel path includes a branching portion in which a path, along which the first travel member travels, branches into a plurality of paths,

wherein the guide rail is formed to branch, at the branching portion, into branching guide rails with at least one branching guide rail provided for each of the plurality of paths, and

wherein the steering operation portion is configured to change a position of the guide member to select a branching travel rail by which the first travel member is guided, among a plurality of the branching guide rails.

3. The travel as defined in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that

the first travel actuator is provided with a negative brake mechanism which applies braking force, arising from urging force of an urging member provided in the first travel actuator, to the first travel actuator when the travel control signal to be sent to the first travel actuator is not generated; and

wherein the external signal generating portion generates, as the external travel control signal, a suspending signal for suspending a braking action of the negative brake mechanism of the first travel member.

4. The travel facility as defined in claim 3, further comprising:

a linking member removably provided for connecting the first travel member and the second travel to each other, maintaining a fixed distance therebetween.

5. The travel facility as defined in one of claims 1 - 4, characterized in that

the first travel member is a transport travel member which can travel while holding an article that is being transported,

wherein the transport travel member includes a vertically movable member which can hold an article and can be vertically moved, a vertical movement actuator for vertically moving the vertically movable member, and a vertical movement controller for controlling operation of the vertical movement actuator,

wherein the external signal generating portion is configured to be able to generate an external vertical movement control signal for activating the vertical movement actuator of the first travel member, and

wherein the connecting member is configured to receive and transmit the external vertical movement control signal.

6. The travel facility as defined in one of claims 1 - 5, characterized in that

a plurality of the travel members are provided,

wherein each of the plurality of the travel members includes the first connecting portion so as to be able to be the first travel member, and the second connecting portion and the external signal generating portion so as to be able to be the second travel member.