

For Immediate Release

**Commenced Construction of the Kansai Guide Dogs
for the Blind Association Training Center**
Birth of a Wooden Training Center

Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd. (President and Representative Director: Akira Ichikawa; Head Office: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; hereafter “Sumitomo Forestry”) announced the commencement of construction on October 13 for an order received from the Kansai Guide Dogs for the Blind Association (Location: Kameoka, Kyoto). The order is for the design and construction of a training facility for guide dogs for the blind, which will be operated by the association. Sumitomo Forestry aims to proliferate the construction of wooden buildings bringing out the charm of wood. The project is part of Sumitomo Forestry Group’s move to promote its MOCCA business to develop wooden construction and use timber in building non-residential facilities, starting with commercial and welfare facilities.

Presently, training facilities for guide dogs for the blind in Japan are mostly built using reinforced concrete or steel-frame construction. Between two months to a year old, guide dogs are taken care of by volunteers known as “puppy walkers” to build trust with people. After turning one, they are brought to the facility to undergo training. For training to progress smoothly under the sudden change of environment, staff and trainers have strongly requested for a facility with an easily adaptable environment, leading to the construction of the wooden training facility for these guide dogs. Wood has also been reported to have good biological and psychological effects on animals. It is hoped that trainers and guide dogs are able to relax while training in this facility built using wood.



The facility is designed as a one-storied (partly two-storied) building, with a space for visitors to observe how training is conducted. Although it is a one-storied building, the first floor has a high ceiling allowing a lot of natural sunlight into the building, giving the place a spacious feeling. Usually, guide dogs are kept in individual cages when not undergoing training. However, in this facility, they will be kept in this spacious environment and allowed to roam freely when not undergoing training. Furthermore, the exposed design of wooden posts

and beams within the facility brings across the gentleness and warmth of wood to the space within.

Sumitomo Forestry will continue to make use of wood’s benefits and characteristics to provide charming building designs and construction with comfortable interior spaces.

[Overview of the property]

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| Operator | Kansai Guide Dogs for the Blind Association |
| Location | 18-2 Hitsujigatani, Inukai, Sogabe-cho, Kameoka, Kyoto |
| Use | Kennel |
| Total floor area | 486.08 square meters |
| Design/ Construction | Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd |
| Structure | One-storied (partly two-storied) wooden building |
| Construction start date | October 13, 2015 |
| Scheduled date of completion | April 20, 2016 |