

For Immediate Release
08-063

September 25, 2008

BC FERRIES' NEW NORTHERN VESSEL LAUNCHED IN GERMANY TODAY

VICTORIA – BC Ferries is pleased to announce that its new northern vessel, the Northern Expedition, was launched today at a special ceremony at FSG Shipyards in Flensburg, Germany.

“Today with the launch of the Northern Expedition, we are one giant step closer to completely revitalizing BC Ferries’ northern service,” said David L. Hahn, BC Ferries’ President and CEO. “It’s also an important day for our overall fleet renewal program, as the Northern Expedition will be the seventh new ship to join BC Ferries fleet since the spring of 2007.”

The new 150 metre ship will accommodate 130 vehicles and 600 passengers. Among its many features, the Northern Expedition will offer 55 modern staterooms for customers and an expanded range of food services and other amenities to delight local residents and tourists alike.

Passengers will enjoy the spacious cafeteria, called Canoe Café, as well as the Vista Restaurant. The Raven’s Lounge offers TV viewing while the reserved seating Aurora Lounge boasts wonderful views and reclining chairs, perfect for taking in the sweeping vistas of northern B.C. The Passages Giftshop will be stocked with a wide selection of apparel, native art and souvenirs, and the children’s play area will provide entertainment for younger travellers.

The Northern Expedition is set to depart Germany at the end of January 2009 bound for B.C., which will allow for the retirement of the 42-year old Queen of Prince Rupert from the BC Ferries’ fleet next year.

The new northern cruise-ferry will begin service between Port Hardy and Prince Rupert on the Inside Passage route in time for the 2009 summer season. Together, the Northern Expedition and the Northern Adventure, a vessel added to BC Ferries’ northern fleet in 2007, will deliver a cruise-like travel experience on the northern routes.

Modifications to marine structures to accommodate the Northern Expedition are currently underway at Port Hardy, Prince Rupert, Bella Bella and Skidegate, and will be completed early next year.

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Photos Enclosed

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BC Ferries' Board member Maureen Macarenko christens vessel with FSG Shipyard President and CEO Peter Sierk.



The Northern Expedition about to be launched.



The Northern Expedition launched.



The Northern Expedition alongside at FSG Shipyard.