

For Immediate Release
06-080

December 11, 2006

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON NEW INTERMEDIATE VESSEL
Special ceremony for new ferry held in North Vancouver

VICTORIA – BC Ferries announced that the keel-laying of a new 125-car intermediate size ferry took place today at Vancouver Shipyards in North Vancouver. The event marked the beginning of construction on the third new vessel that the company has commissioned since 2004 and was recognized at a special ceremony involving representatives from both BC Ferries and Vancouver Shipyards.

“Today is a landmark event as we lay the foundation of this new intermediate size vessel, which will serve our customers on our minor routes for the next forty years,” said David L. Hahn, BC Ferries’ President and CEO. “This ship is a major part of BC Ferries’ program to revitalize our aging fleet and to ensure continued operational safety and reliability.”

The keel is generally the first part of a ship to be constructed. The new intermediate vessel’s keel unit weighs approximately 30-tonnes, and is the first of over 100 units that will be fabricated and pre-assembled at Vancouver Shipyard’s main facility in North Vancouver over the next year. In total, 1700-tonnes of steel will be required to construct the ship. All of these units will then be trucked to Vancouver Shipyard’s Pier 94 location in North Vancouver where vessel construction and outfitting will take place.

Once complete, the vessel will measure 100-metres long and will feature a variety of amenities including a comfortable lounge and snack bar for passengers to enjoy, as well as a new state-of-the-art lifesaving system. The ship will accommodate 600 passengers and will travel at a service speed of 14.5 knots. It will enter service initially on the Earls Cove – Saltery Bay route by the summer of 2008.

In keeping with maritime tradition, today’s ceremony was marked by the placing of a coin into the keel blocks just prior to the lowering the unit into place. This special edition \$20 coin will be retrieved at the time of launch and presented to BC Ferries.

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Photo Attached



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