



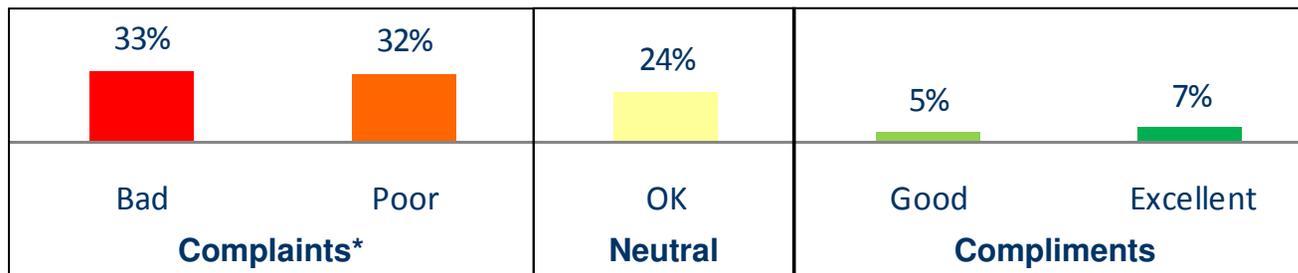
# Complaints Resolution Report Fiscal 2010/11



# Feedback Summary

- During the 2010/11 fiscal year 20.7 million customers travelled with BC Ferries.
  - BC Ferries received 10,790 comments in the 2010/11 fiscal year (equal to **0.052%** of customers travelled)
- Customer initiated feedback tends to be negative. 12% of all customer feedback received in 2010/11, however, was complimentary.
- “On the Web” was the top issue: 1,396 complaints\* were made, representing 20% of the total complaints received in fiscal year 2010/11.
  - Top 5 complaints combined represent 44% of all complaints received in 2010/11

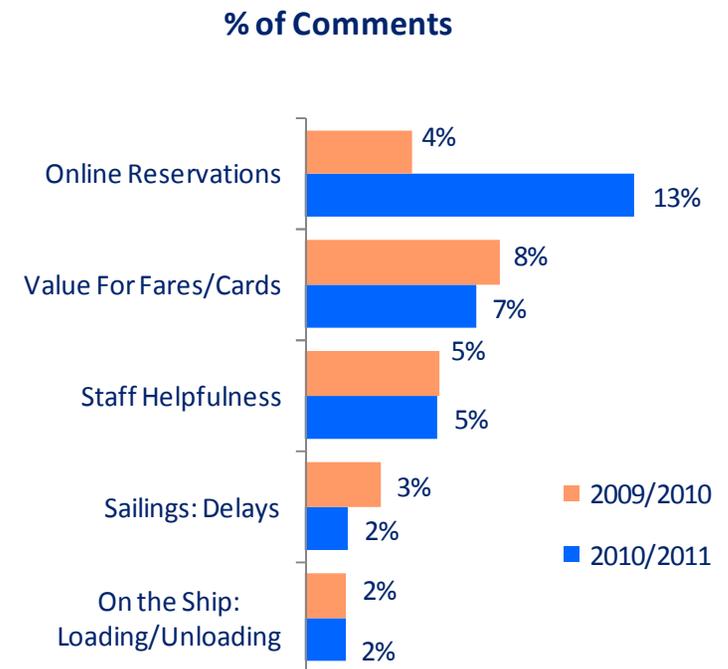
**Distribution of Comments by Rating**



\*Complaints = “bad” or “poor” rating accompanied by a comment

# Top Complaints\*: Corporate

#	Group/Attribute	Complaints*
<b>1</b>	<b>On the Web</b>	<b>1396</b>
	Reservations: Online Reservations	501
	On the Web: Login/Passwords	428
	On the Web: Design And Usability	317
	On the Web: Service Notice	150
<b>2</b>	<b>Value For Fares/Cards</b>	<b>724</b>
	Fares: Value For Fares Paid	305
	Fares: Coast Card	237
	Fares: Experience Card	182
<b>3</b>	<b>Staff Helpfulness</b>	<b>563</b>
	Check-In: Staff Helpfulness	220
	Food and Retail Services: Staff Helpfulness	35
	Inside the Terminal: Staff Helpfulness	137
	On the Phone: Agent Helpfulness	20
	On the Ship: Staff Helpfulness	117
	Outside the Terminal: Staff Helpfulness	34
<b>4</b>	<b>Sailings: Delays</b>	<b>183</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>On the Ship: Loading/Unloading</b>	<b>169</b>



\*Complaints = "bad" or "poor" rating accompanied by a comment



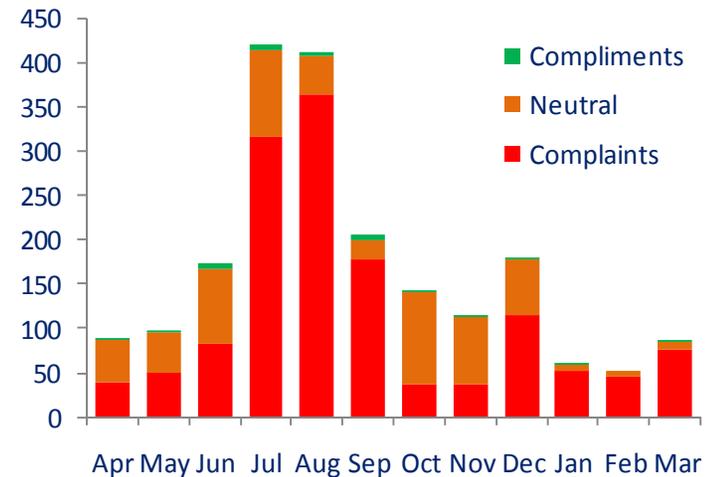
# On The Web

## Sample of Customer Comments:

1. Reservations: Online Reservations
  - “Your system was moving along and then kicked me out somehow when I was trying to reserve, it bumps to some sign in screen, very unclear! Now I have to figure out if the details of the reservation are gone, and what to do next? Not user friendly at all.”
  
2. On the Web: Login/Passwords
  - “I cannot sign on. I sent an email and you gave me a new number for a password. It does not work. The site also does not recognize my customer number or my email address. What is going on?”
  
3. On the Web: Design And Usability
  - “It seems like this site becomes less usable every time I come to it. It is not intuitive, information is difficult to find and the workflow makes no sense, I hate it!”
  
4. On the Web: Service Notice
  - “Service notices should be kept on the web until the actual event announced has taken effect. for example schedule change should stay on until after the sailing.”

## On the Web includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
Reservations: Online Reservations	501	179	17
On the Web: Login/Passwords	428	279	1
On the Web: Design And Usability	317	39	104
On the Web: Service Notice	150	104	3
<b>% of all comments (10,790)</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>1%</b>



# On the Web

## Root Cause:

1. Online Reservation
2. Login/Passwords
3. Design and Usability

## Lessons Learned:

1. Online Reservations
2. Login/Passwords
3. Design and Usability

## Action Taken:

1. Online Reservations
2. Login/Passwords
3. Design and Usability

## Root Cause:

4. Service Notice

## Lessons Learned:

4. Service Notice

## Action Taken:

4. Service Notice

In August 2008, BC Ferries launched a major redesign of its website. The external agency hired to do the work was unable to complete everything associated with the redesign, and one result was the need to maintain two separate online reservation channels. Each channel required its own username and password. As a result customers trying to use a password from one to access the other experienced problems completing reservations.

The launch of the new website should have been delayed until one reservation channel was reliably established.

BC Ferries' Information Technology division has since been working on improving the online customer experience by introducing a single channel for all reservation transactions made through the website. This initiative, slated to launch on May 11, 2011 also features:

- new travel opportunities through BC Ferries Vacations
- engaging, image-based presentation
- consistent navigation menus and intuitive information organization

Service notices are kept live on the website until the event/sailing delay/sailing cancellation has passed, at which point the notice expires and is automatically removed from the website. Customers who click the link in their email after service has been restored get a notice saying "The item requested has expired, or is not currently public."

Not all customers have access to their e-mail throughout the day. Removal of expired service notices leaves customers unclear if service has resumed or if it is back on schedule.

The recommendation was made to leave the service notice live until the end of the day but update it to indicate that service has been restored or back on schedule.

In May 2011, a summary line was added to the e-mail notification outlining the service issue. This enhancement was implemented in response to customer feedback. The new feature provides the customer with enough information to know what this issue is without having to click the link to view the service notice.

BC Ferries also updates Twitter with information impacting its services.



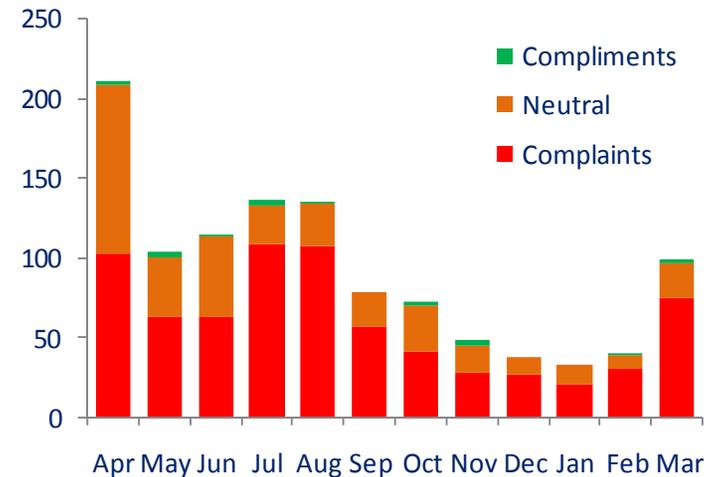
# Value For Fares/Cards

## Sample of Customer Comments:

1. Fares: Value For Fares Paid
  - "It is too expensive to travel by car and it is the only option for Islanders. Every time I pay to get off the island, I feel like I've been scammed."
  
2. Fares: Coast Card
  - "I have just found 2 of my unused Coast Cards I purchased 3 years ago and did not register. At the time I was travelling between the Island and Vancouver a lot and purchased the cards. I contacted BC Ferries by phone and was told they have expired and have a zero balance. As these cards were never used and I was not aware of this stipulation I am requesting that you credit me with the balance at the time of expiry. ..."
  
3. Fares: Experience Card
  - "Our firm has several BC Ferries Experience Cards for travel to and from Saltspring Island. We use them daily and sometimes the auto load feature does not work. I have had complaints from some of the users that there have been insufficient funds when they pay at the booth. Within 10 minutes I get an e-mail stating that the card has been re-loaded. Unfortunately it is after the person has had to pay with some other form of payment. Is there any way to avoid this problem? I have checked the set up and verified that everything is set up correctly to auto load. Is this a glitch in your system or am I doing something wrong...."

## Value For Fares/Cards includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
Fares: Coast Card	237	210	6
Fares: Experience Card	182	110	10
Fares: Value for Fares Paid	305	44	5
<b>% of all comments (10,790)</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>



# Value For Fares Paid

## Root Cause:

1. Value for Fares Paid

The Annual fare increase went into effect April 1, 2010 in accordance with the price provision set by the BC Ferry Commissioner in September 2007 for Performance Term Two. Price caps were set that took into account the significant capital investment in ships, terminals and IT BC Ferries had to make.

The price cap increases also reflected the decision made by the Provincial Government to keep service fees at status quo levels without applying any inflationary factor. It also reflected the terms of the Coastal Ferry Services Contract with the Provincial Government, which have not allowed BC Ferries to make any significant adjustments to service levels to achieve operational efficiencies that could lead to reductions in costs and fares.

Since 2004 there has been a 140% increase in fuel costs, as well as significant operating cost increases, such as insurance premiums, property taxes, utilities, benefits program rates, contractual labor costs, and regulated labor requirements.

## Lessons Learned:

1. Value for Fares Paid

There is anecdotal evidence that the increase in fares has caused customers to limit discretionary travel.

## Action Taken:

1. Value for Fares Paid

BC Ferries has aggressively taken steps to contain discretionary costs – administrative cost have fallen from \$32.0 million to \$31.0 million annually from fiscal 2004 to fiscal 2011.

New lines of business were introduced such as drop trailer and vacation packages whose revenue is being re-invested into the company and helps to keep fares down.

BC Ferries submitted a report “Opportunities for Enhanced Efficiency in Performance Term Three” to the BC Ferry Commissioner in October, 2010, which sets out examples of the innovative ways BC Ferries has pursued and realized cost savings and efficiencies, and identifies additional opportunities that could be considered with the support of the Provincial Government.

On October 18, 2010 BC Ferries was able to reduce fares by two per cent as a result of the Government of Canada granting BC Ferries’ request of duty remission of vessels built offshore.



# Coast Card / Experience Card

## Root Cause:

2. Coast Card
3. Experience Card

## Lessons Learned:

2. Coast Card
3. Experience Card

## Action Taken:

2. Coast Card
3. Experience Card

BC Ferries recognized the \$1.8 million in Assured Loading product (ALT) that was purchased by customers in October 2007 was due to expire on October 31, 2009. To ensure customers weren't caught off guard, BC Ferries took several steps including emailing registered ALT card holders the Terms and Conditions related to the product prior to the expiry date. At the beginning of 2010, customers holding this expired product began contacting BC Ferries to ask what they could do now that the product had expired. Despite BC Ferries' efforts to provide notice, some customers advised they weren't aware the product was subject to expiry and was non-refundable. On March 31, 2010 a second email was sent to registered card holders to advise of a change to the Terms and Conditions so that once the ALT product expired BC Ferries would give customers an additional 6 months to apply the expired product value towards the purchase of a new set of 10 ALTs at the current value.

Additional communication may have been required to ensure customers were aware the ALT product expired after 24 months of purchase, was non-refundable and could only be used towards a new set of 10 ALTs for a 6 month period. It was also acknowledged that mandatory registration and acceptance of the Terms and Conditions may have prevented some of the customer confusion about this niche market product.

BC Ferries sends e-mail notifications to registered customers 3 months prior to their product expiring and again 1 month prior to auto-withdrawal.

Hand outs are distributed by terminal staff to each customer redeeming or purchasing ALT product advising of the Terms and Conditions.

BC Ferries will be implementing system changes to require mandatory registration of a Coast/Experience card before ALT product can be loaded - expected implementation October 2011.

In the meantime, BC Ferries will be offering all holders of ALT product (current, expired or withdrawn) a one time opportunity to be refunded the unused value.



# Staff Helpfulness

## Sample of Customer Comments:

### Staff Helpfulness (negative)

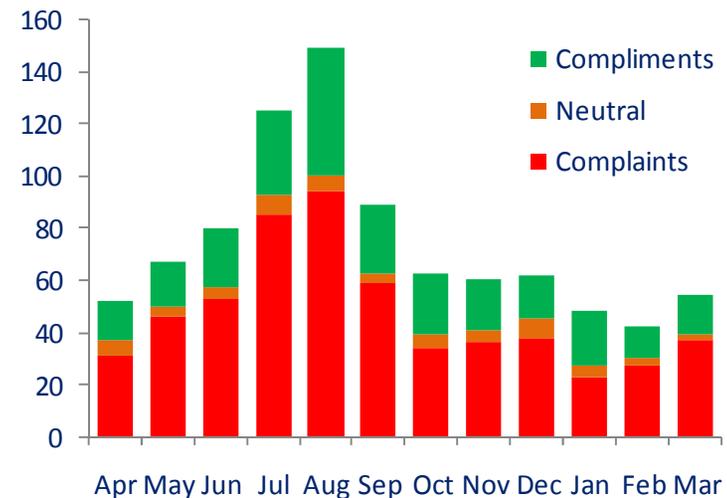
- “Check in staff member was extremely unaccommodating, failing to honour a reservation at 1533 hrs for the 1600 hrs ferry February 20, 2011 while there was a one sailing wait providing no explanation other than reservations are closed.”
- “... I asked a lady in the cafeteria if there was a buffet on this ship. Very rudely she replied ‘NO’, not even ‘sorry not on this ship’. That is not the first encounter I have had with rude staff. Perhaps they need a customer service course.”

### Staff Helpfulness (positive)

- “I just want to comment on the ferry service on the Southern Gulf Islands. It is excellent! The crews are efficient and pleasant, the ships run on time and are clean and safe. The fares are affordable. My family has been in the Gulf Islands since the 1920’s and so we have seen a lot of ferry service and what we are getting now is way beyond the “bad old days” of ferry service. ...”
- “While at the Tsawwassen terminal on November 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm, a very cold, windy and snowy evening, I was looking for a warm cup of coffee. I found that there was no access to the kiosk. I returned to the arrival area, enquired at the info desk about getting a cup of coffee. This lovely woman immediately went and brewed a fresh pot of coffee for myself and two other patrons and would not accept payment! Trust me, under these conditions, she was heaven sent! Please recognize her for going the extra mile!”

## Staff Helpfulness includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
Check-In	220	12	37
Food and Retail Services	35	4	14
Inside the Terminal	137	14	70
On the Phone	20	1	14
On the Ship	117	23	126
Outside the Terminal	34	4	9
<b>% of all comments (10,790)</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>



# Staff Helpfulness

## Root Cause:

Communication issues, ticketing errors, misunderstandings, inappropriate behavior by employee leading to customer dissatisfaction.

## Lessons Learned:

Customer feedback has given us an opportunity to identify areas of improvement in customer service and ongoing customer service training and coaching is required.

## Action Taken:

Complaints regarding employees are investigated on a case by case basis. The customer is sent a response with an apology.

Where communication is the issue, information is provided to the customer to assist in preventing further confusion.

In case of inaccurate information or inappropriate behavior by an employee, corrective action is taken with the employee and the customer is contacted to correct the misunderstanding.

Positive feedback is also shared with the employees.

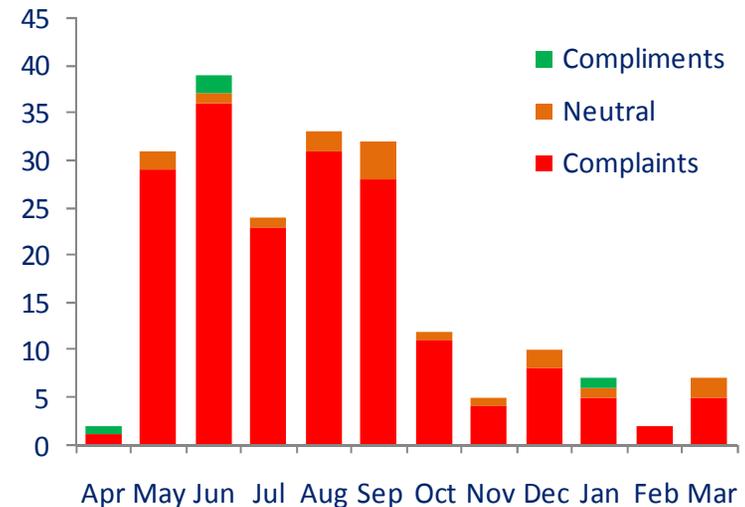


# Sailings: Delays

## Sample of Customer Comments:

- “The 2:25 pm sailing to Bowen Island left 18 minutes late without any apparent reason other than incompetence. Usually when this ferry is late it is because of another ferry loading/unloading at the same time but not today.”
- “The Horseshoe Bay–Langdale route has been atrociously late for most of the month of July. Please consider amending your schedule. It would be far better to change the schedule than to be consistently late ½ hour.”
- “The delays from Powell River to Little River have become a joke, can’t even arrive in Powell River for the first sailing on time.”
- “I am very disappointed that BC Ferries made the choice to inconvenience customers like myself rather than pay overtime to employees to refuel the Queen of Nanaimo as usual on Saturday night (a stat holiday). There are a number of preferential approaches to solving this without inconveniencing customers. If you are not willing to pay the overtime why not change the scheduled sailing time (a bulletin on your website would cover it) so that customers could avoid sitting at the terminal in the pouring rain and snow with tired children for 40 plus extra minutes.”

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
Sailings: Delays	183	17	4
<b>% of all comments (10,790)</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>



# Sailings: Delays

## Root Cause:

Operational delays are often caused by situations that occur during the loading or unloading of the vessels (stalled vehicles, lost key, driver not in vehicle, etc). Other impacts on service include mechanical issues, medical emergencies, marine emergencies and delays caused by weather.

## Lessons Learned:

Sailing delays have an adverse affect on the daily life of our many commuting customers. If sailings have to be cancelled or the vessel has to be taken out of service, every effort must be made to restore service as soon as it is safe to do so.

## Action Taken:

BC Ferries has a Service Interruption Plan that helps guide employees in managing delays and cancellations of service. However, each incident is reviewed and managed on a case by case basis to ensure the needs of the specific communities and customers are taken into consideration. The primary focus is always the restoration of full service as soon as possible.

Ongoing maintenance of vessels and terminal facilities is standard procedure to maintain assets and to provide seamless service.

The overall on-time performance during fiscal year 2010/11 was 89.6% compared to 88.6% in 2009/10.

In a specific example, the *Queen of Surrey* (Horseshoe Bay – Langdale Route) suffered a major engine failure on May 4, 2010 and had to be taken out of service until July 29, 2010. The *Queen of Cowichan* and the *Coastal Renaissance* were brought onto the route to provided replacement service.

A revised schedule was issued as soon as it became available, customers were offered free reservations on some early morning and late evening sailings to encourage travel outside peak travel times.

To ensure customers were informed of the schedule change, paid advertising in both the Sunshine Coast and Metro Vancouver newspapers was done.

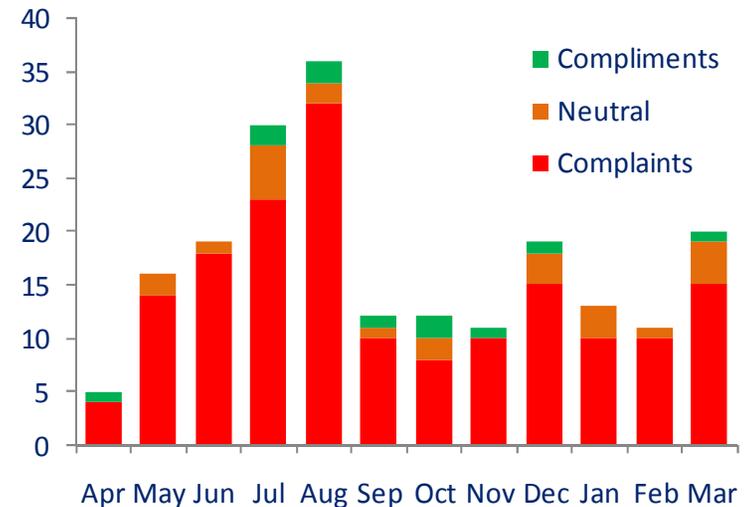


# On the Ship: Loading/Unloading

## Sample of Customer Comments:

- “Please bring up A REMINDER on how deck crews should load disabled Passengers in cars with flashing lights. DO NOT load us until crews know where they want to put us. DO NOT insist we go to bulkhead lane because when adjacent lane is loaded often WE CANNOT EXIT OR ENTER OUR CAR FOR THE ENTIRE JOURNEY because there is not enough space between cars. The law requires that BC Ferries provide us with "reasonable accommodation" to the point of undue hardship. ...”
- “My mother has a disability and although neither crossing was full our vehicle was placed in such a way that it made it difficult to get in and out of the vehicle. For both crossings on one side we had the ship and the other was a vehicle. To add insult to injury both crossings we were among the last few to be boarded and the 4 or 5 cars that loaded after us were allowed to park anywhere they wanted. So one parked by himself by the opening off to the side. There was one full row empty and no one was parked behind us and yet we were told to pull forward. Another car parked in the blue strip in front of the elevators, which would have been the logical place for us which would have allowed us to fully open the doors. None of these vehicles parked with lots of room in the empty spaces had a disability tag. What is the point in handing out the cards if your crew are going to ignore them and park us in like sardines? I did take a couple of pictures showing the deck, etc.”

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
On the Ship: Loading/Unloading	169	24	11
<b>% of all comments (10,790)</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>



# On the Ship: Loading/Unloading

## Root Cause:

Older vessels with narrow tunnels on car deck or articulation ramps can lead to difficulties opening doors of larger vehicles.

## Lessons Learned:

Clear communication is critical during the loading process to ensure customers are loaded in a safe manner and can exit their vehicle.

## Action Taken:

The *Queen of Coquitlam* and *Queen of Cowichan* have an additional staff member at the entrance to the articulating ramp during loading.

Clearer lines of communication have been established between ticket agents, tower operators and the loading officer to ensure customers are loaded appropriately.

The BC Ferries' Accessibility Committee meets bi-annually to discuss possible improvements to services, amenities, and general processes.

An improved special needs process is being developed and will be implemented on June 1, 2011. Accessibility information on the website will be enhanced.





# BC Ferries 2010/11 Business Area Scorecard

Group	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
BC Ferries Vacations	9	11	102
Check-In	548	56	56
Fares	1259	610	74
Food and Retail Services	272	102	170
General	501	424	271
Inside the Terminal	487	75	102
On the Phone	154	39	22
On the Ship	678	158	238
On the Web	1111	555	80
Outside the Terminal	358	47	24
Reservations	849	325	49
Sailings	798	135	41

