



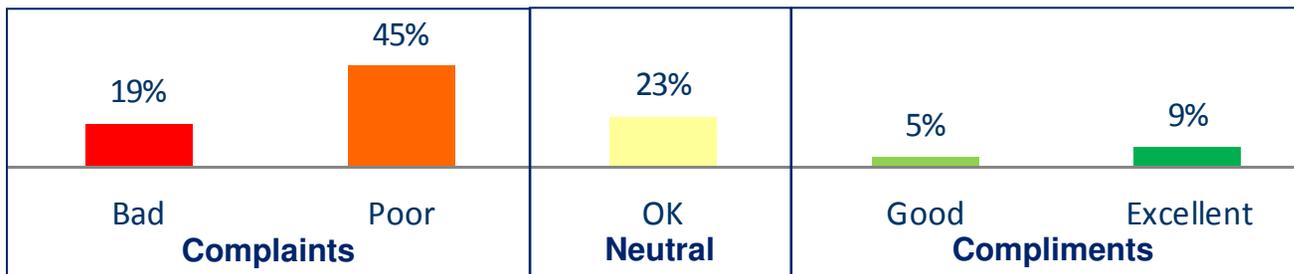
# Complaints Resolution Report Quarter ended June 30, 2012



# Feedback Summary

- During Q1 of the 2012/13 fiscal year 5 million customers travelled with BC Ferries.
  - BC Ferries received 2,015 comments in Q1 2012/13.

**Distribution of Comments by Rating**

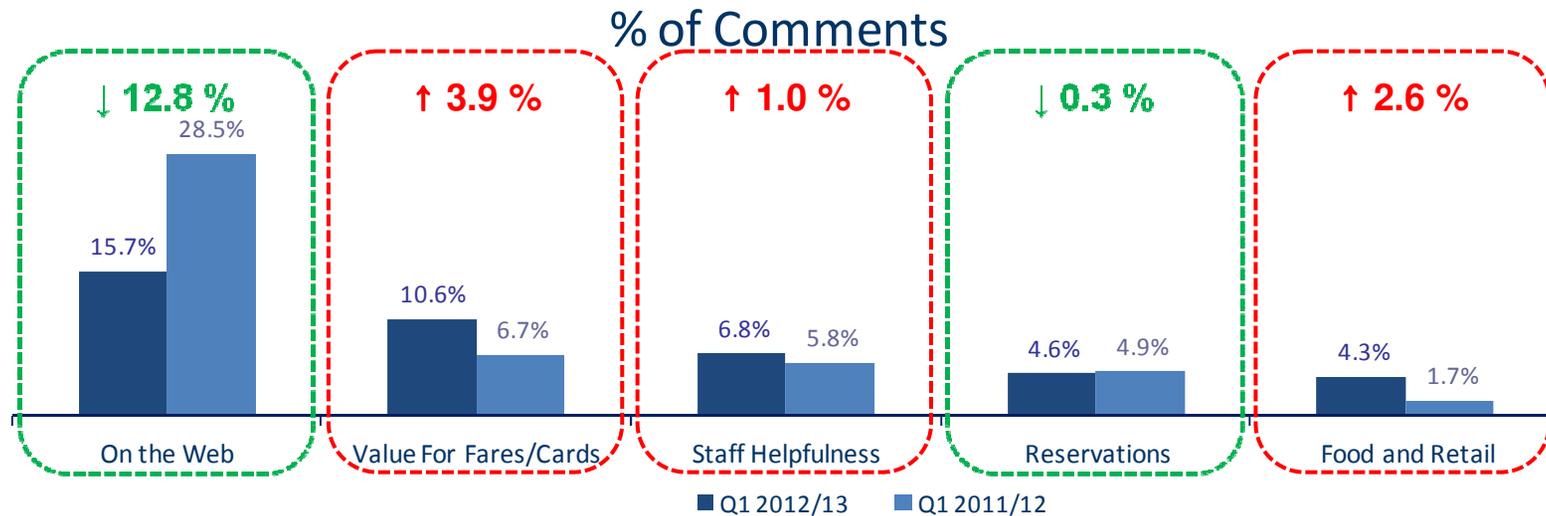


- Customer initiated feedback tends to be negative. Fourteen percent (14%) of all customer feedback received in Q1 2012/13 was complimentary.
- “On the Web” was the top issue: 283 complaints\* were made, representing 15.7% of the total comments received in Q1 2012/13.
  - Top 5 complaints combined represent 42% of all complaints received in Q1 2012/13
- “General” comments are excluded from this analysis:
  - 212 “General” comments were received which were primarily made up of suggestions (70) and company information (57)

\*Complaints = “bad” or “poor” rating accompanied by a comment  
 Note: Q1 2012/2013 = April 1st to June 30th 2012

# Top Complaints\*: Corporate

#	Complaint	Q1 2012/13		Q1 2011/12	
		Complaints*	% of Comments (n=1,803)	Complaints*	% of Comments (n=2,272)
1	On the Web	283	15.7%	647	28.5%
2	Value For Fares/Cards	192	10.6%	152	6.7%
3	Staff Helpfulness	122	6.8%	132	5.8%
4	Reservations	83	4.6%	112	4.9%
5	Food and Retail	77	4.3%	38	1.7%



\*Complaints = "bad" or "poor" rating accompanied by a comment  
 Note: Q1 2012/2013 = April 1st to June 30th 2012  
 Q1 2011/2012 = April 1st to June 30th 2011

# On The Web

## Sample of Customer Comments:

### Complaints

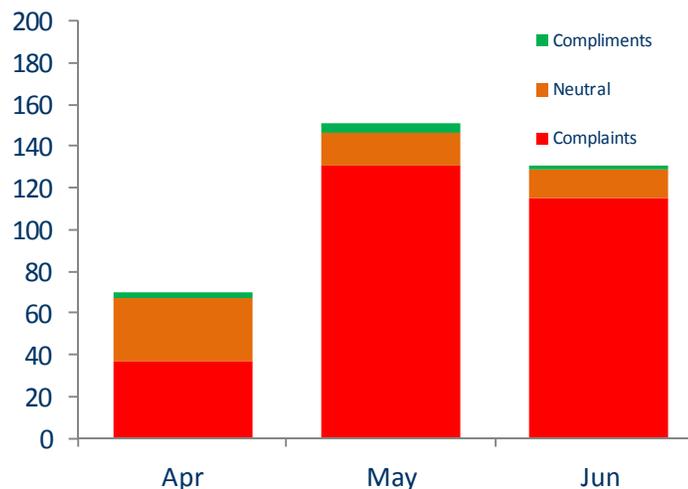
- "It is extremely difficult to find fare information on your website. I wanted to find the fares for a group of people to go to Gabriola from Nanaimo and was directed to the reservation page. I had to enter all sorts of information and then it didn't even give me the fares! I went to the fares PDF page and this meant an exercise in mental math. I had to add up the fares for all the passengers and vehicle, then calculate the experience card discount then apply the fuel surcharge. I'm quite capable of doing this, but in this day and age a much clearer system is expected."
- "Why do we need to login and provide a password which I continually forget because I have to log in from numerous locations and we are inundated with passwords...I understand you want to collect my information but as a regular passenger every other week...this is extremely annoying...just let me book for goodness sake!"

### Compliments

- "Yippeee Yahoo!! Your wonderful reservation system works like a charm! Pie and cake! Thanks for the note letting me know it was fixed."
- "Thank you for putting the information in the body of the email!! It's no fun to have to go to a website from a cell phone to see what the service notice message refers to. Many thanks! A devoted ferry user."

## On the Web includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
On the Web: Login/Passwords	144	29	0
On the Web: Design And Usability	66	6	1
Reservations: Online Reservations	27	2	2
On the Web: Information/General	13	13	4
On the Web: Service Notices	12	5	1
On the Web: Travel Planning	12	2	2
On the Web: Current Conditions	7	2	0
On the Web: Online Giftshop	2	0	0
<b>% of all comments (1,803)</b>	<b>15.7%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>



# On the Web

## Root Cause:

On May 12, 2011, BC Ferries launched a comprehensive redesign of its website. This included the introduction of a single online reservation channel to replace the two unique channels that had been in place since August 2008. The intention of consolidating the two reservation channels was to remove problems encountered by customers when trying to use a password for one channel to access the other.

## Lessons Learned:

Implementing the single access online reservation service proved to be a highly complex undertaking, particularly in terms of aligning customer accounts associated with the ten-year-old Reserved Boarding on the Internet (RBI) service. There were also a number of performance and account validation issues that did not emerge during the testing conducted, nor with external customer focus groups and staff.

## Action Taken:

Since the May 2011 launch, there have been eight subsequent releases plus a number of “spot fixes” aimed at correcting problems with the website.

Another release aimed at improving accessibility and functionality was attempted but proved unsuccessful due to technical issues stemming from aging infrastructure.

Following extensive technical review and heuristic evaluation, BC Ferries has decided to change the look and feel of the online reservation system. This will eliminate a number of issues identified during customer usability tests and result in an efficient, intuitive website experience.

The improvements are planned for release in early 2013.

# Value For Fares/Cards

## Sample of Customer Comments:

### Complaints

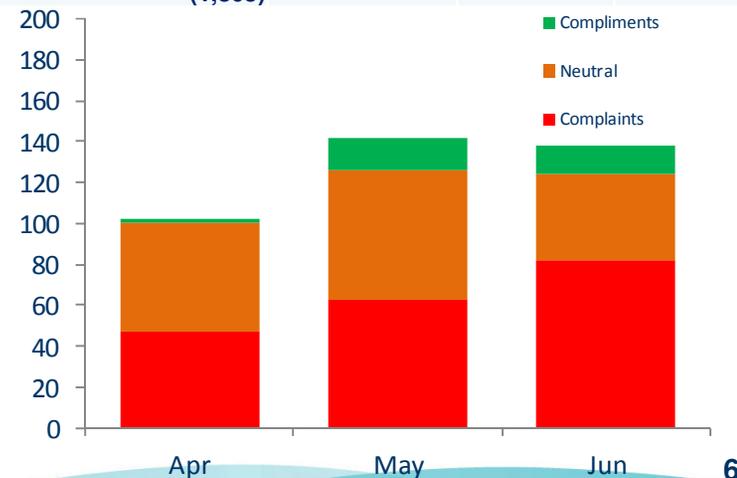
- "I travel quite frequently between Nanaimo and Vancouver for pleasure. I wanted to send a quick email to ask what is going on with the price? I am on the 7 o'clock ferry to Vancouver as I write this. I paid \$15.70 to walk on the ferry. \$31.40 round trip is very much over priced to ride this boat. It is making it increasingly difficult to travel back and forth. It might be worth the price if I was on the new boat as it probably doesn't rattle and squeak as much as this one. I am sorry to come off as rude, but I am just disappointed. Hopefully my concerns are recognized."
- "What discount fares? Your Coast Saver isn't much of a saver it still costs minimum \$100 round trip, and that's only with on person in the car. Why would I ever pay \$100 to leave the island or the mainland when I can spend that money locally?"
- "Reservation fee should go towards the ferry fee rather than an extra charge. Washington State ferry is like this and is also cheaper with less sailings - need to find out how they do it to make travel more affordable for people."

### Compliments

- "Thank you so much for having the Coast Saver this month, it has enabled me to travel back and forth 3 times!! Wish that the Island people could always have this rate, also is there a chance it will be extended or back soon?!"

## Value For Fares/Cards includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
Fares: Value For Fares Paid	65	7	5
Fares: Discount Fares	31	23	1
Fares: Experience Card	26	18	5
Fares: Other Fares	14	24	7
Fares: Errors	12	9	0
Fares: Coast Card	12	33	5
Fares: Promotions	10	17	5
Fares: Refunds	7	23	1
Fares: Frequent Travel	7	1	2
Fares: Credit/Debit Card	5	0	1
Fares: Sailpass/Circlepac	3	3	0
<b>% of all comments (1,803)</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>



\*Complaints = "bad" or "poor" rating accompanied by a comment  
 Note: All data is for Q1 2012/2013 (April 1st to June 30th 2012)

# Value For Fares/Cards

## Root Cause:

On June 2, 2011, the Coastal Ferry Amendment Act (Bill 14) was enacted. Among other things, Bill 14 established a price cap for the first year of the Performance Term Three with an increase for each route group on April 1, 2012 of 4.15% from the weighted average of the tariffs payable as at March 31, 2012. BC Ferries implemented tariff increases April 1, 2012 to the new levels authorized. The April 1, 2012, price cap and tariff increases were moderated by incremental funding provided from the Province.

Overall, the price cap increases reflect the capital investment in ships, terminals, and Information Technology BC Ferries has had to make. It also reflects significant increases in operating costs related to items outside the control of the Company. This includes an approximate 260% increase in fuel costs since 2003, as well as significant increases in insurance premiums, property taxes, utilities, benefits program rates, contractual labor costs, and regulated labor requirements. The current structure of the Coastal Ferry Service Contract (CFSC) with the Province has also contributed to the level of the price caps and tariffs experienced. To date, under the CFSC BC Ferries has not been permitted to make any significant adjustments to service levels to achieve operational efficiencies that could lead to reductions in costs and fares.

## Lessons Learned:

There is anecdotal evidence that the increase in fares has caused customers to limit discretionary travel. A report provided by InterVISTAS Consulting Inc., acknowledges some minor price elasticity, but notes that there are other causal factors affecting ridership.

# Value For Fares/Cards

## Action Taken:

- 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.
- Coast Saver Sail Promotion was offered on the Tsawwassen – Swartz Bay, Tsawwassen – Duke Point and Horseshoe Bay – Departure Bay routes, Friday through Monday from May 25 - June 25, 2012.
- On September 27, 2011 the company announced a major cost containment initiative in an effort to address the significant drop in revenues in the first half of the fiscal year as a result of declining traffic. Cost saving actions include: a hiring freeze of all non-essential positions; two-year wage and salary freeze for exempt employees; eighteen-month delay in select capital expenditures; elimination of many charitable and community donations; and select early retirements. In addition, BC Ferries applied to the Province to reduce up to 400 round trips on the major routes in response to traffic declines and anticipated revenue reductions.
- On January 24, 2012, the British Columbia Ferries Commissioner issued his report to the British Columbia Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure as to how the *Coastal Ferry Act* could be amended to balance the interest of ferry users with the financial sustainability of BC Ferries. The report makes 24 substantive recommendations covering a wide range of ferry related issues.
- In May 2012, the Province responded to the Commissioner's recommendations, enacting the Coastal Ferry Amendment Act 2012 (Bill 47). On May 9, 2012, the Province announced the introduction of amendments to the Act, as well as payment of \$25.0 million relating to fiscal 2012 and a further \$54.5 million over the following four fiscal years to reduce the pressure for higher fares. As well, government announced its intention to make significant adjustments to service levels, and to do so within the context of discussions with communities about trade-offs among service adjustments, fare increases and potential community contributions. To that end, government agreed to the reduction of up to 400 round trips on the Major Routes. In addition, government will seek public input to develop strategies to support a vision for connecting coastal communities. Together, these actions have the potential to make a significant impact in terms of addressing future fare affordability.

# Staff Helpfulness

## Sample of Customer Comments:

### Complaints

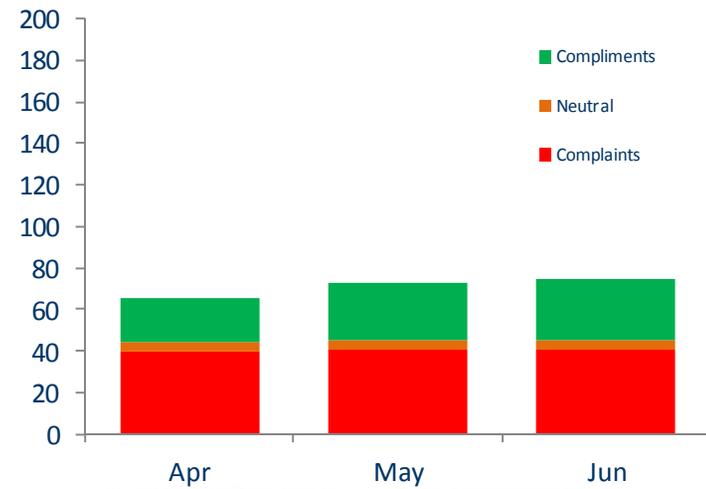
- "Some of the younger staff in the Canoe Cafe need to learn from the customer service provided by the older staff and concentrate on the customer, not laughing and giggling between themselves. Other staff were really good."
- "I travel the B.C Ferries very often living in Powell River. I use most of the ferry routes and always get good service, but for some reason get very bad service at Little River. Today the lady at the booth was so rude, I was there eight minutes before the sailing time. I know that is not the recommended time but she was so rude. She would not put money on my card which I had ready and said if I did I couldn't catch the ferry. I think it would be good for you to go undercover, arrive a little late and see the service that Powell River people deal with everyday. The overall attitude of this route's workers is way below B.C Ferries standards. Thank you for your time."

### Compliments

- "Thank you, to the staff on May 25th, 6 pm sailing from Swartz Bay to Tsawwassen. My mobility chair was having power issues all day. Mentioned it to a staff member who helped me finding a plug to recharge. Another walked me to the cafe, found me a seat and had a nice young lady take my order and bring my dinner. Thank you again for making my trip home go smoothly."

## Staff Helpfulness includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
Check In: Staff Helpfulness	43	3	13
Inside the Terminal: Staff Helpfulness	40	5	28
On the Ship: Staff Helpfulness	21	4	36
Outside the Terminal: Staff Helpfulness	8	1	2
On the Phone: Information Accuracy	7	0	0
On the Phone: Agent Helpfulness	3	0	9
On the Phone: Resolution Of Issues	0	1	1
<b>% of all comments (1,803)</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>4.9%</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 the 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.

# Reservations

## Sample of Customer Comments:

### Complaints

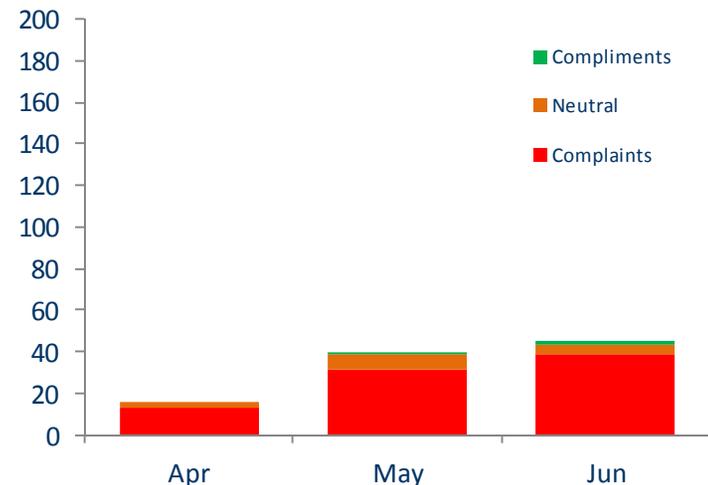
- “Your policy on changing reservations for an additional fee makes it prohibitive to use the ferry system in a planned and efficient manner. Rather than trying to help customers have a smooth and pleasant travel experience, it is tainted by the money grabbing nature of your policies....”
- “I recently was planning a trip to Saturna Island and noticed that foot passengers are still not able to reserve passage on this ferry. Long weekend travel is a busy travel time and there is only one ferry per day from Saturna to Tsawwassen on Sundays and Holiday Mondays. Travelling with a vehicle I can be certain that I will be able to make it back to the mainland in a timely manner. But walk-on passengers, including those with bicycles continue to be treated as second class travellers.”
- “If I pay for a reservation, then I have paid for a spot on the ferry and that is that, I get to show up at the last minute and get on if you're going to charge me a non-refundable reservation fee.”

### Compliments

- “BC Ferries Customer Service went above and beyond to help us get to the #RCMSAR memorial in Sechart this afternoon. Deep gratitude.”
- “I appreciate the option to talk to an agent.”

## Reservations includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
Reservations: Policies	30	7	1
Check In: Reservations	17	2	0
Reservations: Flexibility/Changes	10	1	0
Reservations: General	9	1	0
Reservations: Cost	8	0	0
Reservations: Availability	5	3	0
Reservations: Automated Phone Reservations (IVR)	3	1	0
Reservations: Booking With An Agent	1	0	2
<b>% of all comments (1,803)</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>



# Reservation General

## Root Cause:

To allow sufficient time for safe loading of vessels, BC Ferries implemented a 30 minute cut-off for reservation redemption at the ticket booth. This reservation cut-off is historic and has been in place for many years.

A fee to change reservations was implemented in December 2007 as an enhancement to the previous strict “no refund / no changes” policy.

## Lessons Learned:

It is imperative that customers are made fully aware of reservation policies at the time of booking to avoid disappointment at the time of travel.

## Action Taken:

Clear communication is in place via the following channels: reservation terms and conditions, reservation confirmation e-mail, FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) on the website, through our IVR system, and during the booking process with our Customer Service Agents. Communication through these channels is reviewed annually to ensure the messaging is effective and delivered consistently to customers at the time of booking.

Each complaint made will be investigated to determine if an error on behalf of BC Ferries led to the customer’s dissatisfaction. This includes the possibility of employee not following procedures or customer service agents being unclear about policies at time of booking:

- If an error is identified the reservation fee will be refunded to the customer and corrective training action will be taken with the employee.
- If it is determined that the issue is related to unclear written communication, the collateral material will be reviewed and improved. In this case, the customer will also receive a refund of the reservation/change fee.
- If the policy was clearly communicated at the time of booking and no error has been made, a thorough explanation of the reason for the policy will be provided to create an increased awareness of the complexity of loading a vessel and maintaining on time departures.

With improvements being made to the online reservations system, to be released in early 2013, BC Ferries has usability tested the communication of its reservations policies. Based on customer feedback, improvements have been made on how policy information is displayed online.

# Food and Retail

## Sample of Customer Comments:

### Complaints

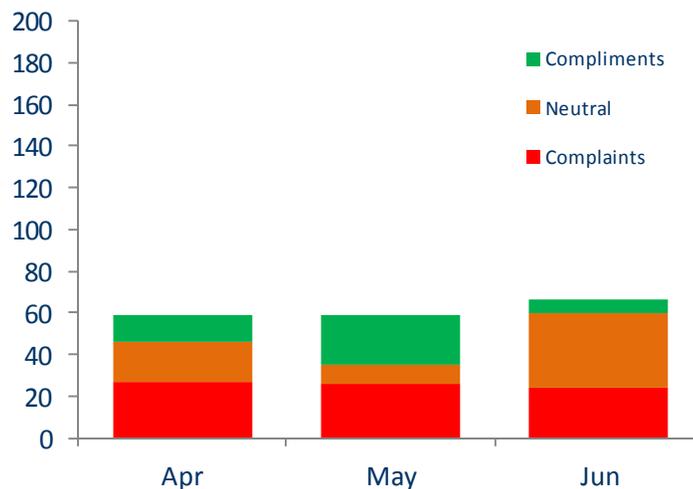
- "Hi, Wondering why the seawest lounge is not open on the Queen of New Westminster when it's going to Nanaimo? Btw, a sign on the door would be useful for customers. Seems redundant to not be open when all the other ships and routes have it open.....I for one would pay more for the lounge to be open and not have to listen to other peoples music and phone conversations while trying to get some work done on route."
- "We were both disappointed with the lunches we ordered! The clam chowder was without clams and the potatoes were the size of tablespoons....our Legendary Burger was the size of a flat penny (burger) and to say the least a TOTAL DISAPPOINTMENT! We hope you shall COMPENSATE us as we usually find the White Spot one of our favourite restaurants to visit."

### Compliments

- "We were on the 7am ferry from Victoria to Vancouver this morning (April 26) and there was a gentleman working in the buffet (I didn't get his name) who was a customer service super star. He was incredibly friendly and warm with everyone he seated and did it in the way where his positive attitude spread to those he talked to. We were travelling with a baby and he immediately got us a high chair and went out of his way to see if there was anything extra he could do to make our trip with him easier. He made our trip."

## Food and Retail includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
On the Ship: Amenities	26	13	9
Food and Retail: Food Selection/Quality	26	15	5
Food and Retail: Staff Helpfulness	12	1	3
Food and Retail: Food Value	6	1	0
Food and Retail: Lounge/Buffer/Coffee Bar	4	3	7
Food and Retail: Retail Value	2	5	2
Food and Retail: Retail Selection	1	25	17
Food and Retail: Online Giftshop	0	1	0
<b>% of all comments (1,803)</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>2.4 %</b>



\*Complaints = "bad" or "poor" rating accompanied by a comment  
 Note: All data is for Q1 2012/2013 (April 1st to June 30th 2012)

# Food and Retail

## seawest Lounge

### Root Cause:

In order to achieve operational efficiencies BC Ferries will deploy vessels on different routes where possible. Not all the available onboard services or amenities are economically viable on all routes. As a result some amenities, such as the seawest Lounge onboard the *Queen of New Westminster* will only be open on the Swartz Bay – Tsawwassen route but remain closed while the vessel is servicing the Duke Point – Tsawwassen route. This route shows a low demand for the seawest Lounge and the closure represents a cost saving measure.

### Lessons Learned:

Frequent travellers on several routes are familiar with the various vessels and their amenities and expect unrestricted access. Clear communication and signage is important to avoid disappointment for frequent customers.

### Action Taken:

Information on the website advertises the location of the seawest Lounge on Deck 6 of the *Spirit of Vancouver Island*, the *Spirit of British Columbia*, the *Coastal Celebration*, and Deck 5 of the *Queen of New Westminster* operating between Vancouver and Victoria, and on Deck 6 of the *Coastal Renaissance* operating between Nanaimo and Vancouver.

In addition, closure signs are placed to the entrance of the seawest Lounge when the *Queen of New Westminster* is deployed on the Tsawwassen – Duke Point route.

# Food and Retail

## White Spot

### **Root Cause:**

In April 2012, BC Ferries expanded the popular White Spot menu offerings on vessels servicing the Horseshoe Bay – Departure Bay route in order to enhance its food and beverage service.

### **Lessons Learned:**

Long time customers of the White Spot chain of restaurants expect the same quality and service onboard BC Ferries when purchasing items from the White Spot menu selection.

### **Action Taken:**

White Spot and BC Ferries Food Services Management work closely together to ensure consistent delivery of quality and service. An internal process has been established for complaints submitted to White Spot regarding White Spot menu items consumed onboard BC Ferries.

Frequent inspections and ongoing quality controls are in place.