

# Complaints Resolution Report

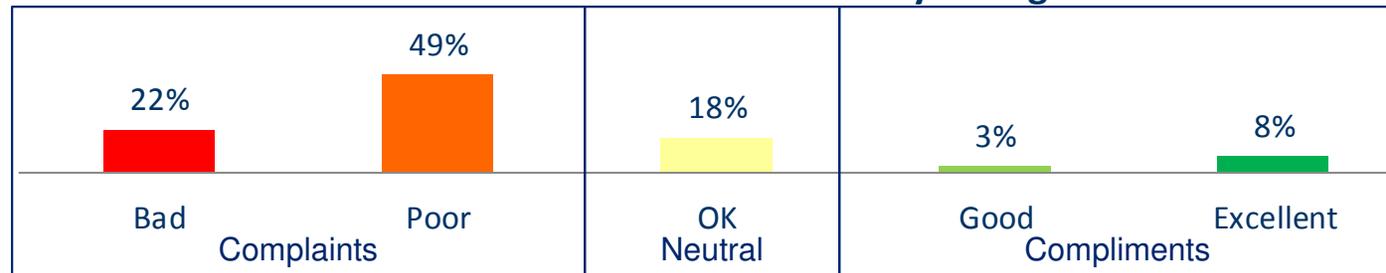
## Quarter ended September 30, 2015



# Feedback Summary

- During Q2 Fiscal 2016, 7.1 million customers travelled with BC Ferries
  - BC Ferries received 2,588 comments in Q2 Fiscal 2016
  - The average time to respond to customers was 5.2 days in Q2 Fiscal 2016

**Distribution of Comments by Rating**



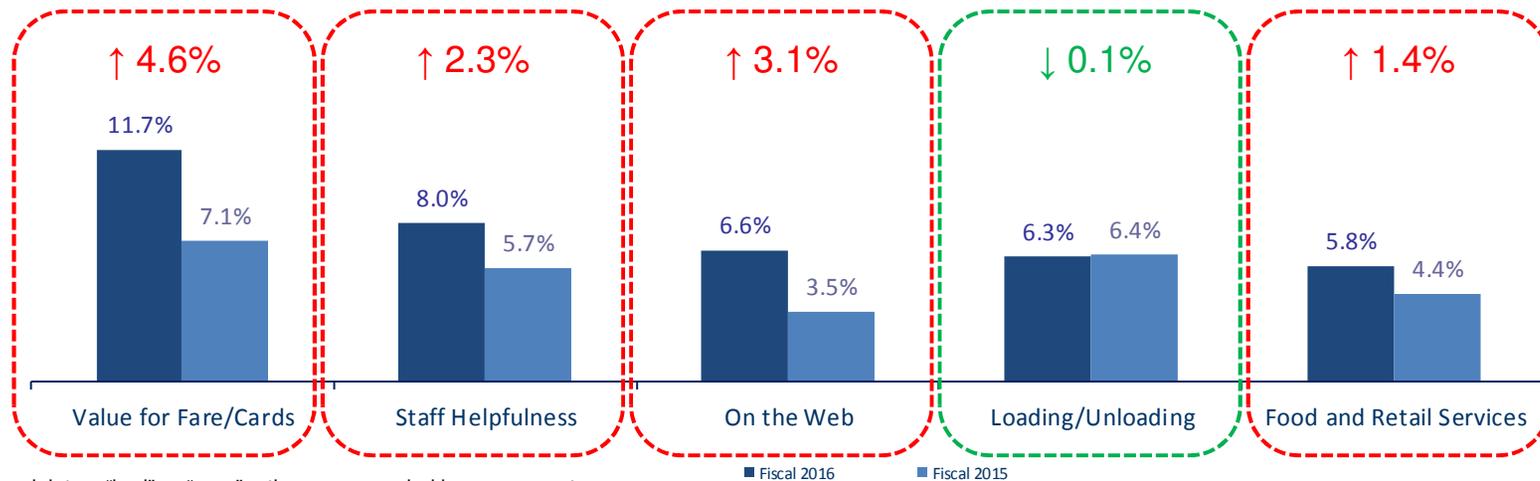
- Customer initiated feedback tends to be negative. Eleven percent (11%) of all customer feedback received in Q2 Fiscal 2016 was complimentary
- “Value for Fare/Cards” was the top issue: 277 complaints\* were made, representing 12% of the total comments received in Q2 Fiscal 2016
  - Top 5 complaints combined represent 54% of all complaints received in Q2 Fiscal 2016
- “General” comments are excluded from this analysis, along with comments with no rating:
  - 169 “General” comments were received which were primarily made up of Company Information (125), Community Issues (33), Environment (11) and 59 comments were provided with no rating

\*Complaints = “bad” or “poor” rating accompanied by a comment  
 Note: Q2 Fiscal 2016 = Jul 1, 2015 to Sept 30, 2015

# Top Complaints\*: Corporate

#	Complaint	Q2 Fiscal 2016		Q2 Fiscal 2015**	
		Complaints*	% of Comments (n=2,360)	Complaints*	% of Comments (n=2,493)
1	Value for Fare/Cards	277	11.7%	178	7.1%
2	Staff Helpfulness	188	8.0%	143	5.7%
3	On the Web	156	6.6%	88	3.5%
4	Loading/Unloading	148	6.3%	159	6.4%
5	Food & Retail Services	137	5.8%	110	4.4%

## % of Comments



\*Complaints = "bad" or "poor" rating accompanied by a comment  
 Note: Q2 Fiscal 2016 = Jul 1, 2015 to Sept 30, 2015  
 Q2 Fiscal 2015 = Jul 1, 2014 to Sept 30, 2014

\*\*Restated. Based on customer feedback, improvements were made to the online feedback form in October 2014. This resulted in some reorganization and changes to the feedback categories and areas to rate, impacting feedback volumes in the Categories Groups and Attributes.

# Value for Fares/Cards



## Sample of Customer Comments:

### Complaints

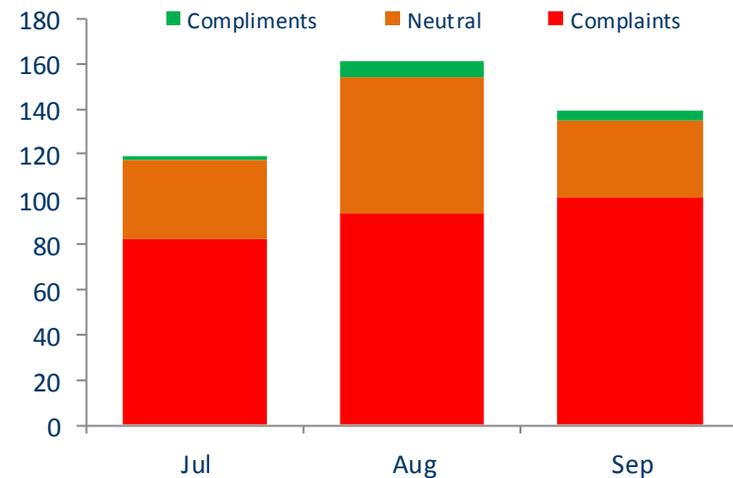
- “In the future would you consider a monthly or yearly ferry membership where travellers could pay a flat rate on a monthly or yearly basis to use the ferry to travel across from Vancouver to Victoria, just like the bus system?”
- “The lower passenger only fare are fine. But whatever happened to the off season Coast Saver Fares? If you want to increase the usage of the system in the off season (mid September to mid April) except for Christmas and Easter, bring back the Coast Saver fares and we will fill your ferries.”
- “I just found out that travellers to the Sunshine Coast can get discounts when using [repurchasing trips in] their BC Ferries card. Why is this not available to Vancouver Island travellers? Why do you favour Sunshine Coast travellers?”

### Compliments

- “We really appreciated the discount RV fare this summer. As seniors on a fixed income it was great to be able to tow our trailer off Vancouver Island and enjoy a holiday in northern BC for a lot less by going on a Wednesday evening.”
- “Good that you are experimenting with discount fares on some less busy weekly routes.”

## Value for Fare/Cards includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
Fares: Discount Fares/Promotions	95	59	9
Fares: Value for Fares Paid	73	7	3
Fares: Errors	46	5	0
Fares: Experience Card	38	27	0
Fares: Assured Loading Card	19	30	1
Fares: Credit/Debit Card	6	1	0
<b>% of all comments (2,360)</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>



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# Value For Fares/Cards

## Root Cause:

Fare discounts have been in place since 1961 for all Gulf Islands and since 1972 for the Sunshine Coast. The major routes connecting Vancouver Island to the mainland are not deemed commuter routes and no permanent fare discounts have been offered.

## Lessons Learned:

Fare affordability is a major concern for our customers and the assurance of 1.9% annual average fare increases for the next 4 years, in accordance with the British Columbia Ferries Commissioner's price cap decision for performance term four, does not completely alleviate this concern.

The need to consider options to recognize and award frequent travellers on the major routes connecting Vancouver Island to the mainland has been identified. System upgrades are required in order to be able to offer more dynamic pricing models in the future.

## Action Taken:

On December 2, 2014, BC Ferries submitted an application for the *Fare Flexibility and Digital Experience Initiative*, which proposes e-commerce and information technology upgrades. The BC Ferry Commission conditionally approved this application on February 2, 2015. The Initiative is currently in the planning stages and will introduce a new system to manage fares, improve operational efficiency through better capacity management, provide customers with a modernized e-commerce platform with greater online functionality and booking options, and provide better access for mobile, tablet and desktop channels.

During Q2 of Fiscal 2016 BC Ferries offered two promotions to test variable pricing concepts in order to understand their impact on traffic trends, customer response and operations:

- On select sailings from June 17 through September 13, 2015 customers with vehicles longer than 20 feet paid only \$2.00 per foot additional length charge on the Tsawwassen – Swartz Bay and the Tsawwassen – Duke Point routes. The promotion applied to Wednesday and Saturday sailings starting at 4:00 pm and Sunday sailings before 9:00 am for both routes, departing from either terminal.
- From September 8 to October 15, the regular passenger fare was discounted by 50% on off-peak days of the week and certain off-peak times of the day on the major and minor routes. Customers travelling on the Northern Routes received this discount on all sailings from October 1 – 31, 2015.

# Staff Helpfulness

## Sample of Customer Comments:

### Complaints

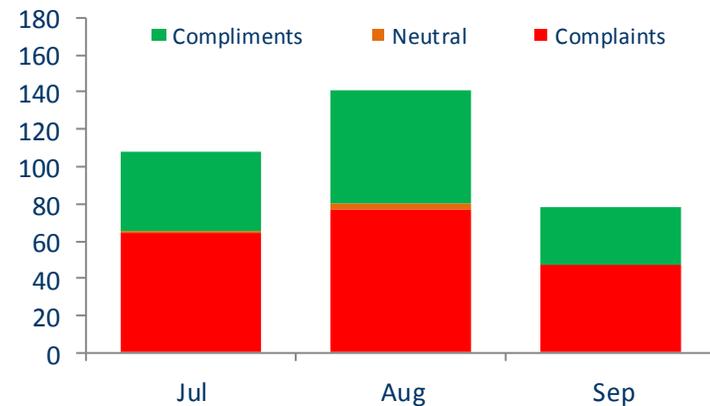
- "I can't believe the poor customer service from BC Ferries! Three guys watched as a mother with baby in stroller, carrying a car seat, diaper bag, and huge suitcase barely made it up the ramp! Could they not take two seconds and help her with her stuff? I was appalled! Maybe a little biased as it was my daughter, but really it could have been anyone!! Shame on you guys!"
- "Sure glad the BC Ferries cashiers stopped gossiping to acknowledge me ... oh wait they didn't even look my way. Poor Service."
- "I called earlier to find out about a through-fare. I arrived for the leg from Swartz Bay to Tsawwassen. Now there is a two sailing wait. I was not told to make a reservation."

### Compliments

- "A huge thank you to the employee at the Departure Bay terminal who helped me check my bags for the 5:20 sailing this evening. My baby was crying, the bags were heavy, and this man calmly assisted with the situation. He made a stressful situation manageable. Thank you!"
- "Just wanted to say thank you to the Ferries employee that gave my car a boost yesterday. When it wouldn't start I was sure I was going to miss the 4:40 sailing but he was fast and efficient so I made it on and was able to get home on time. Thank you!"

## Staff Helpfulness includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
Inside the Terminal: Staff Helpfulness	90	1	39
On the Ship: Staff Helpfulness	41	3	64
Outside the Terminal: Staff Helpfulness	38	0	16
On the Phone: Information Accuracy	10	0	0
On the Phone: Agent Helpfulness	9	0	16
<b>% of all comments (2,360)</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>



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# Staff Helpfulness

**Root Cause:**

Communication issues, ticketing errors, misunderstandings, inappropriate behavior by employees can lead to customer dissatisfaction.

**Lessons Learned:**

Customer feedback represents opportunities to identify areas of improvement in customer service in general and with individual employees.

**Action Taken:**

Complaints regarding employees are investigated on a case by case basis. The customer is sent a response with an apology and if appropriate with an explanation of policies to prevent future disappointment.

Compliments for employees will be shared with the individual via the management team.

Representatives from all areas of the Operations Division form an Ambassador team for the "Customer Service Enhancement Program". The Ambassadors meet bi-annually to review corporate initiatives to improve the customer service delivery for BC Ferries' customers.

Improvements to customer service are reflected in high number of staff compliments received during Q2 Fiscal 2016, most notably for the categories of 'On the Ship: Staff Helpfulness' and 'On the Phone: Agent Helpfulness' compliments far exceeded complaints.

## Sample of Customer Comments:

### Complaints

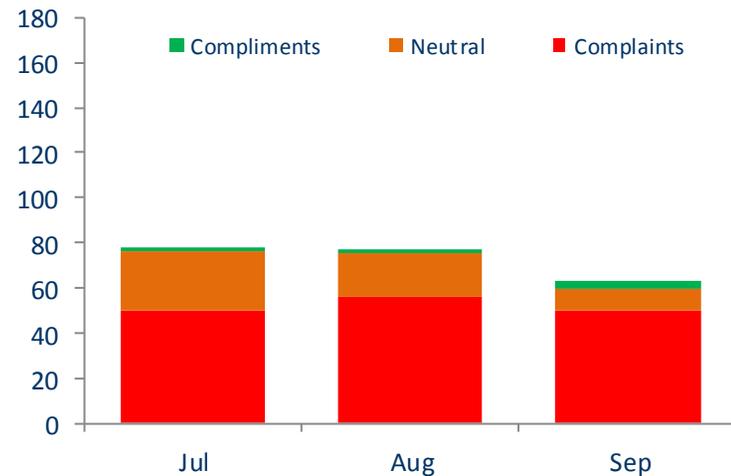
- “Just thought that I should let you know that your online reservation system is really slow. Each user interaction is followed by a long delay (between 8 -25 seconds) when the wheel icon spins. I am using Safari 7.1.8, and Firefox on Mac OS 10.9.5, and iPad with iOS 8.4.1. The performance is equally bad on each. And to think I pay BC Ferries \$15 for each booking for such a poor bit of software. Thanks.”
- “Your site is becoming a dog’s breakfast. Particularly the Northern Routes. Pretend you don’t know the site inside out, upside down and try and find cabin costs for Northern Adventure and Expedition. They are in there, I found them accidentally, once, and would not waste any more of my time trying to find them again.”
- “A suggestion would be to have exportable iCal links on your schedules so that users can import calendar appointments into their pc, smartphone or tablet. Check out calsky to see how this is done.”

### Compliments

- “This was the first time using your reservation system and am VERY impressed with the website and procedures. Very clear and precise with lots of info provided! Well done and Thank-you!”

## On the Web includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
Reservations: Online Reservations	37	5	1
On the Web: Information/General	35	24	5
On the Web: Design and Usability	32	7	1
On the Web: Current Conditions	20	6	0
On the Web: Travel Planning	17	10	0
On the Web: Service Notices	10	1	0
On the Web: Login/Passwords	5	2	0
<b>% of all comments (2,360)</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>



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**Root Cause:**

Themes emerging from incoming customer feedback have touched on user interface design; the need for better trip planning and fare calculating tools; site accessibility with certain browsers, operating systems and devices; and timing of e-mail notifications about service interruptions.

Many of these issues stem from technology limitations. The current website is built on an aged platform that predates the diversity of browsers, devices and social media channels that define user experience expectations today.

**Lessons Learned:**

Ongoing customer input has helped us prioritize issues to be addressed going forward. Account accessibility, browser and mobile device compatibility, travel planning tools, usability refinements and timeliness of e-mail notifications are at the top of the list.

**Action Taken:**

Issues identified through customer feedback channels have been earmarked for resolution as part of the Fare Flexibility and Digital Experience Initiative. Improvements, including mobile apps, are expected within the next 12 to 24 months.

# Loading/Unloading

## Sample of Customer Comments: Complaints

- “I was among the 1<sup>st</sup> in line for the 6:30 pm ferry, once the 5:20 left then the BC Ferry personnel directed my car lineup to level 2. I watched the cars that arrived after me drive to level 3 and 4 and I wasn’t loaded onto level 2 yet. By the time I was parked on level 2, then went upstairs, the cafeteria line up was long. I was frustrated by the way your personnel loaded the ferry.”
- “I was one of the first 50 vehicles at the terminal, waiting for the sailing. I have no problem with waiting and understand that reservations will load first. However, my lane was loaded last on to the ferry. Meaning that I was one vehicle from the back of the ferry. I know I have to wait at my arrival terminal for everyone who got to the ferry after me to disembark. I have never had this happen before and am annoyed.”
- “OK seriously, every time I travel with you guys I get mad. It’s so frustrating. Why do you put regular vehicle with the oversize before all the oversize are on the boat? It costs so much more money for oversize and then to not make the boat because you shove a bunch of cars in the oversize and can’t fit the last two oversize is so infuriating! That’s rude and does not make sense!”

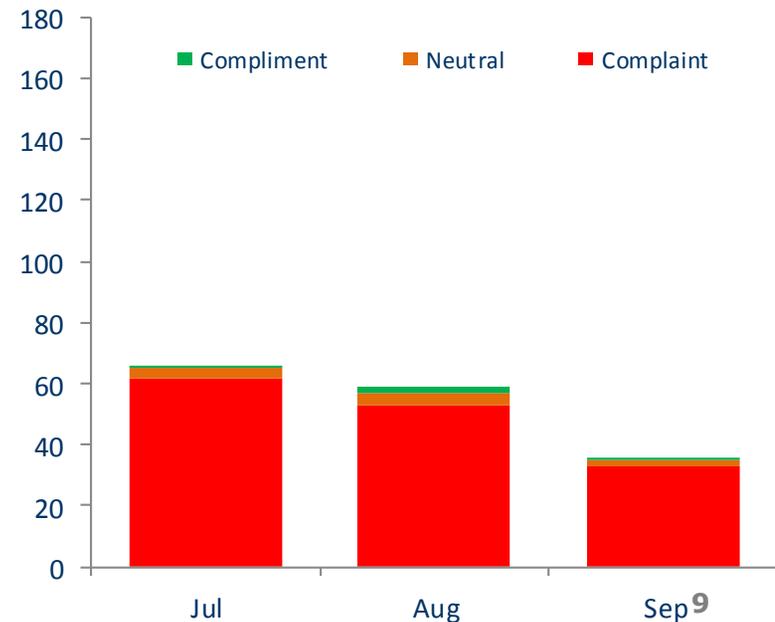
## Compliments

- “Busy morning at Tsawwassen to Duke Point 10:15. Crew loaded vehicles to 30 cm apart, looked like a jigsaw puzzle near the aft. Nice work getting a few extra cars on!”

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## Loading/Unloading includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
Inside the Terminal: Loading/Directions	75	4	2
On the Ship: Loading/Unloading	58	3	2
Sailings: Loading Error	15	2	0
<b>% of all comments (2,360)</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>



# Loading/Unloading

## Root Cause:

Customers expect to be loaded and discharged in the order their vehicle arrived at the terminal.

Customers travelling with oversized vehicles expect the space accessible for their vehicle type to be prioritized for oversized vehicles.

## Lessons Learned:

Expectations for loading such as, first on – first off, oversized space prioritized for oversized vehicles, etc. are frequently expressed by customers and perceived as a lack of customer service if not provided. While operationally we are unable to fulfill such expectations, we could improve our communication to help customers understand.

## Action Taken:

When the issue of first on – first off and the vehicle placement is raised, staff offer a thorough explanation of the factors impacting placement:

- Stability of the vessel in the water and positioning of the ramp during loading
- Even distribution of traffic to maintain vessel stability during crossing
- Optimal use of car deck space in order to accommodate as many vehicles as possible
- The time a vehicle arrives at the terminal and if it has reserved status will determine if it will be loaded on a sailing but not necessarily where on the car deck it will be parked. This applies to all types of vehicles regardless of size.

The consequences of moving to a declared first on – first off guarantee would be:

- Late sailings due to single lane loading
- Fewer vehicles on the car deck
- Increased sailing waits for customers left behind

# Food and Retail Services

## Sample of Customer Comments:

### Complaints

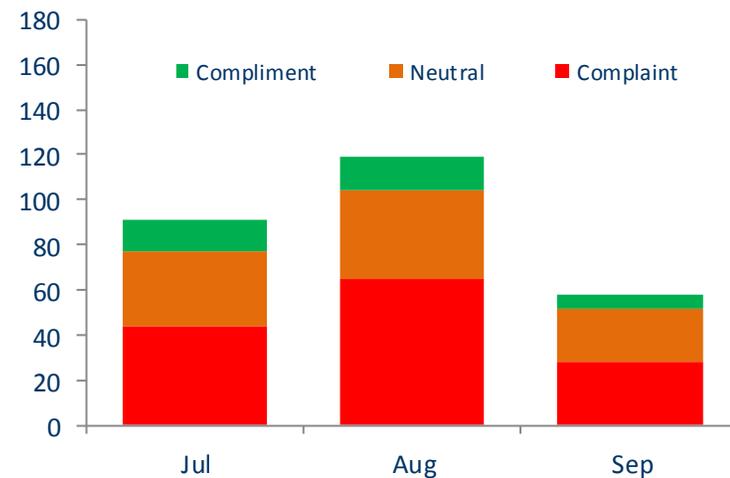
- “Just wondering why I can't access Netflix? We should be able to access it! There is nothing bad on there. It's just movies! You should change it! And YouTube come on it's YouTube!! Let us access that too!”
- “So what's the point of providing wi-fi if half the websites are blocked? Completely pointless...”
- “There are NOT enough vegetarian options still, I rarely eat on the ferry but due to service delays this weekend I had no choice.”

### Compliments

- “We were on the 5 pm sailing and we ate in the Pacific Buffet for dinner. I didn't catch the cashier's name - TAKE NOTE - WHOEVER SHE IS, SHE IS AWESOME! If you can clone her and put her in all customer interactions, you should! She had a smile on her face the entire time we were in the Buffet. She asked if our food tasted good and was very pleasant. That type of interaction is what makes a sailing great.”
- “We travelled from Vancouver to Victoria on the 9 am ferry on July 2 and we enjoyed the breakfast buffet, in particular, the oat bar. Are you able to share the recipe?”

## Food and Retail Services includes:

Group/Attribute	Complaints	Neutral	Compliments
On the Ship: Amenities	96	24	2
Food and Retail Services: Food Selection/Quality	17	3	2
Food and Retail Services: Staff Helpfulness	8	0	6
Food and Retail Services: Lounge/Buffer/Coffee Bar	6	2	2
Food and Retail Services: Retail Value	5	0	0
Food and Retail Services: Food Value	3	0	0
Food and Retail Services: Retail Selection	2	67	23
<b>% of all comments (2,360)</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>



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# Food and Retail Services

## Root Cause:

### Amenities / Wi-Fi:

For the past 5 years BC Ferries has been offering a complimentary Wi-Fi service to allow customers to browse the web or check e-mail while travelling onboard BC Ferries. The service is currently available at the Swartz Bay, Tsawwassen, Departure Bay, Duke Point, Horseshoe Bay and Langdale terminals as well as onboard select vessels that travel to and from these terminals.

A standard global filtering service is restricting access to websites tagged as displaying inappropriate content. Furthermore, streaming websites are restricted in order to allow all customers shared access to the limited wireless bandwidth available on our networks for basic web browsing and e-mail usage. To allow streaming media would impact other customers' ability to use the free resource efficiently.

The high demand for Wi-Fi during busy sailings can lead to access issues.

## Lessons Learned:

Customers need to be kept informed of the restrictions that do apply to the free Wi-Fi service to avoid disappointment.

## Action Taken:

The BC Ferries website provides information about the complimentary Wi-Fi service in general as well as the challenges associated with offering this service at sea.

A printed brochure was produced and is available onboard to communicate Wi-Fi locations and restrictions.

BC Ferries is in the process of installing the latest in ship-to-shore radio technologies onboard all major route vessels and at shore-based locations. These new radios will have much higher connectivity and throughput capabilities than the previous generation radios.

# Food and Retail Services

## Root Cause:

Food selection for customers with food sensitivities and/or preferences:

The rising number of people with various food sensitivities and preferences have led to a higher demand in specific food options.

## Lessons Learned:

Customer feedback shows an increased demand for more variety in food options for special dietary needs and preferences when travelling onboard BC Ferries.

## Action Taken:

BC Ferries is actively monitoring the various dietary needs and when possible is responding by adding items to the food selection. New menu options are tested for quality, value and feasibility while monitoring demand and the potential for increased waste. BC Ferries further has a ban on food items containing MSG and procedures are in place to avoid cross contamination such as can be the case when handling seafood.

Detailed lists of ingredients are available at all onboard food outlets for customers to make educated decisions on what menu item to choose in case of food allergies or preferences.