

Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC) - Record of Meeting

Date:	May 29, 2019
Committee Name:	Southern Sunshine Coast
Routes:	3

Attendees:

<p>For the FAC:</p> <p><i>Chair(s):</i> Diana Mumford</p> <p><i>Members</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Croal, Grace Carter, Peter Kosof • Matt McLean, Ali Glencross • Anne Cochran, Nicolas Weswick • Pat Moore, Maureen Hamblin, Robin Merriott 	<p>For BCF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Simpson • Doug Hanning • Lance Lomax • Darin Guenette
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Points of Information/Agreement:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diana noted that a local resident submitted a letter the day prior to the meeting with concerns around lack of sufficient service, lack of parking at Langdale, difficulty with transit access and mobility issues. It was noted that these concerns will generally be covered during the meeting. 2. Assured boarding; medical issues and escorts. The FAC has received further stories around difficulty of people travelling after medical procedures who need to travel as quickly as possible cannot receive a medical assured loading letter in time. BCF noted that it is not realistic to expect terminal agents to assess the medical needs of a patient. Discussion followed to explore ideas for allowing physicians to get assured loading. One idea would see physicians write out an assured loading request on a prescription pad. 3. Transit connections at terminals. TransLink has changed how they provide service to/from Horseshoe Bay, as they now provide service every 20 minutes. If the bus coming to HSB is running late and thinks they may miss a walk-on cut-off, the driver is supposed to phone the terminal to let them know. An example was given in that the 6:20 sailing from Langdale often does not provide enough time to catch the bus that leaves soon after arrival. 4. Accessibility issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visual problems. High sills, poor signage to indicate where accessible washroom are located can be problems for people with accessibility limitations. Idea: invite members from the accessibility committee to tour the vessels and provide ideas for possible fixes. FAC can submit specific suggestions for 'fixes' and/or including committee members for tours, and Darin can then forward this to other BCF reps.
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- Ability to access elevators/open doors widely. Discussion around whether there are areas to provide 'more space' for people who may need ample room to get in/out of vehicles. BCF noted there is a process for terminal and vessel crew to try and stage/load vehicles of people who have self-identified with mobility issues.
 - Elevator size. BCF noted that elevators are very difficult to keep in perfectly reliable order on ships, and sizes cannot be increased realistically.
5. Langdale parking. S.Coast Reg.Dist has been asked to investigate park-and-ride initiatives, and the current challenge is finding suitable property. One idea was to have current Modo availability promoted, including designating a specific spot at Langdale in the lot. BCF noted that the overflow lot is not a viable option for use of regular parking, particularly as it will be used as a lay-down lot during upcoming construction. They will minimize the reduction of available spots during construction, but there will be some spots added at the end.
 6. Options for seeking parking on upper decks. The FAC continually hears community members saying they are looking for reasons to avoid the lower, closed deck. It was noted that customers can ask at the ticket booth for consideration to be on an upper deck, and BCF can make best attempts to accommodate...but there are no guarantees. BCF noted that they are currently planning on options to seek accommodations from Transport Canada on the regulations.
 7. Loading and arrival orders. FAC has received reports of customers have been loaded 'out of order of arrival at the terminal'. Doug noted there are procedures in place for terminal staff to do their best to load vehicles in the order they arrived, but there may be circumstances that customers are not aware of when loading occurs 'out of order'. BC Ferries will be able to investigate any customer's questions if they think they should have been loaded on a sailing, and if an error was made, they will apologize.
 8. Wi-fi improvements. FAC is asking if BCF is planning on making any wi-fi improvements at the terminals. No plans are underway.
 9. Communications. FAC says that current conditions indicate a 'full sailing', but this is not always accurate. BC Ferries noted that sometimes there are lags/glitches with current conditions, and they are working at refinements/improvements.
There was discussion around problems when vessel-specific Service Notices are issued, but the vessels may operate on either Route 2 or 3; BCF is aware of this and working on ensuring the appropriate status is given.
Community notices. There was discussion around options to provide community notices such as fire hazards and water restrictions.
Lack of reservation notices for the 5:30 pm sailing. FAC noted that the message of 'full' for 5:30 sailings is misleading, but BCF replied that the new website should rectify this display. Note that there are no bookings available for that sailing because it is too soon after the prior sailing, and staging/loading vehicles would be unruly.
 10. Children's play areas. Discussion around the lack of interactive initiatives on some ferries was held. One idea was, if structures are not allowed by regulations, could BCF look into 'interactive touch objects' attached to the bulkheads.
 11. Single-use plastic. BCF was urged to continue to look at reducing single-use plastic (cutlery, cups, etc) as much as possible. They noted they do have many initiatives underway to reduce and reuse as much as possible.

12. Ticket purchases. It was noted that customers do have a process to purchase tickets on board for Route 3 or 2 sailings. It was agreed that this function may not be well understood.
13. Easter weekend problems. FAC members sought explanation of why Easter long weekend was overly congested and chaotic for some customers, who may have had waits of more than four hours. Traffic was backed up onto the highway at Horseshoe Bay and BC Ferries had not expected the extreme and condensed demand at the terminal. FAC suggested that any way BCF could provide some sort of information to customers further back in the lineups of what they could expect this would help. BCF generally aims to do everything to avoid having vehicles backed up onto the highway outside the terminal, and they plan to mitigate this with whatever processes they have available. Discussion followed around the challenges inherent with determining how many vehicles could be allocated for reservations and how this affects staging/queueing.
14. Queen of Surrey hard landing. BCF is currently conducting an inquiry and don't have final determinations or recommendations at this time. The inquiry should produce ideas on helping avoid this type of incident in the future.
15. Langdale Terminal development update. BCF noted that early construction at Langdale will begin in the fall. The scope of work is to build a new administration building with an overhead walkway to the ship. The passenger pick-up/drop-off and parking areas will be reconfigured. Ticket booths will be upgraded. The total project should take 2-3 years to completion. Related discussion happened about the Horseshoe Bay development followed, with the next round of public engagement expected in September.
16. Smoke-free enforcement. FAC has been hearing that smoking has not been enforced consistently. BCF wants to rely on informing people of the smoke-free policy, via announcements and signage. They do walk the terminals and engage customers who may be smoking...ensuring they are aware of the limitations.
17. BCF updates.
 - i. Customer Satisfaction Tracking. Darin explained that the Commissioner has asked BCF to review the effectiveness of the CST process in 2017, and to this, BCF is hiring a new research partner soon. A two-phase program will see the development of a new strategy for CST, and to expand both the scope (all routes will be included) and methodology (open online feedback, on board survey and more) of how customer satisfaction is received and measured.
 - ii. Performance Term 5 summary. Commissioner has provided his preliminary price cap ruling of 2.3% for the period April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2024. Next steps are analysis and negotiations and contract changes by BCF and the Province. The final price cap needs to be set by September 30, 2019. BCF wants to ensure that the analysis into their capital plan is built into the projections sufficiently for fare caps, and this is part of the discussions that happen during this time.
 - iii. Fare flexibility. Implementation is delayed until after the website launches in the fall, but the keys notes are: on Major routes, there will still be some standby travel, there will not be surge pricing, some sailings will be discounted to promote travel. These offerings will apply to the majors, and full implementation will happen in the next 1-2 years.
 - iv. Fuel surcharge. BCF is about to implement a fuel surcharge of 1.5% (Northern routes are exempt), as this mechanism serves to mitigate fuel price volatility.

Action Items¹:

Item	Who	By When
1. Discuss with Customer Services whether a prescription pad note for assured loading is feasible.	Doug	Be next meeting
2. Check feasibility of designating a prominent spot at Langdale for the Modo vehicle.	Doug	Summer
3. Check if there are any plans to upgrade terminal wi-fi.	Peter	ongoing

¹ Significant Service Request (SSR) requiring detailed analysis and formal decisions from BCF should be submitted using the SSR process. Submission of a SSR should be noted as an Action Item.