

Southern Gulf Islands Ferry Advisory Committee

October 5, 2023 Meeting Agenda

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM, Virtual

Meeting Purpose

1. Share information by providing the Ferry Advisory Committee with:

- Updates on corporate and route-specific activities, plans and projects
- Answers and updates on route-specific questions and concerns

2. Hear feedback and initiate action by:

- Hearing from the Ferry Advisory Committee about potential solutions to areas of concern
- Generating trackable action items and next steps to address areas of concern raised by the Ferry Advisory Committee

3. Increase transparency and accountability by providing a public venue where:

- Community members can observe and hear the information and feedback exchanged between BC Ferries and the Ferry Advisory Committee
- Actions and solutions to concerns can be identified, recorded, tracked and reported

	Торіс	Time	
Welco	Territorial Acknowledgement Welcome & Introduction		
Nomir	ation and Election of Co-Chairs	5 mins	
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.	Terminal development timelines TSW terminal Berth 2 trailer Current Capacity info on website Vessel refit schedule Scheduling communications TOR update	15 mins	
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	Old Business 1. Inter-island through fare via Swartz Bay 2. Service Notices 3. Medical reservations on Route 9 3. Medical reservations on Route 9 30 mins 4. Land's End Café 30 mins 5. Passenger accessibility 6. Order of loading lanes		
1. 2.	Eusiness Extension of summer service Operations contingency plans Sailing by sailing data Route reports	30 mins	
Final	Final Questions & Close 30 minutes		



Southern Gulf Islands Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting Topic Log October 5, 2023

NOTE: notes summarizing the general discussion of meeting participants is included in the appropriate section of each agenda item in the table below.

Text in black was information sent to all meeting invitees prior to the meeting as part of the agenda. Text in blue are notes taken during the meeting as each item was discussed. Text in red captures a follow up action and parties responsible.

Meeting attendees:

BC Ferries:

- Brian Anderson, Vice President Strategy & Planning
- Capt. James Bradley, Marine Superintendent
- Capt. Hardeep Grewal, Director of Fleet Operations
- Carrie McIntosh, Director of Community Relations
- Camrin Hillis, Regional Terminal Manager
- Brittney Sylvester, Regional Terminal Manager

Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure:

FAC:

- Mary Greenwood FAC Co-Chair
- Dave Maude, FAC Co-Chair
- (Chair of Salt Spring Island FAC)
- Robert Fenton
- Diana King

Public: Members of the public were present, attendance not taken.

- Tamara Olson, Community Relations Manager
- Natalie McCall, Customer Experience and Marketing Manager
- Steve Anderson, Manager of Fleet Deployment and Scheduling
- Jameson Mtanga, Project Manager
- James Wilson, Project Manager

- Fiona Poole
- Meg Ferris
- Wendy Sage Hayward
- Robert Alloway
- Harold Swierenga



Territory acknowledgement and Welcome		
Territory acknowledgement	BC Ferries acknowledges the Coast Salish peoples on whose territory spans the Southern Gulf Islands, lower mainland and Victoria. We are grateful to live, work and gather in their traditional homelands.	

Nomination & Election of Co-Chairs	
Nomination & Election of Co- Chairs – 4 mins	Election (re-election) of FAC Chair: Seeking nominations from the Ferry Advisory Committee for election of co-chairs.R. Alloway nominated Mary Greenwood and Dave Maude a co-chairs. Seconded by Robert Matson. Carried. Mary Greenwood and Dave Maude continue as Southern Gulf Island Co-Chairs.

Information Section	
Vendor Applications – 2 mins	The FAC inquired into how BCF is advertising for vendors. All information and application process for vendors is available on the BC Ferries website: <u>https://www.bcferries.com/our-company/procurement</u>
	ACTION: T. Olson to provide FAC with materials on how local vendors can apply at the Village Bay terminal. Completed.
	Update: All information and application process for vendors is available on the BC Ferries website: <u>https://www.bcferries.com/our-company/procurement</u>
	Update October 19: Email provided to FAC for vendor applications
Swartz Bay & highway lanes – 2 mins	The FAC noted that while there is a dedicated ticket booth for Southern Gulf Islands travellers at the Swartz Bay terminal, this booth can be found multitasking with other routes causing long line-ups during peak hours.
	ACTION: C. Hillis will investigate the multitasking of the SGI ticket booth. Completed. Update : C. Hillis continues to work with the terminal teams to ensure SGI booth remains available. Update October 6: Follow up was completed with the Terminal team following the FAC meeting to ensure it was top of mind. In addition, clarification on the policy was sent to the FAC: When traffic is busy for the SGI travellers, the SGI ticketing booths are to be dedicated. During times when SGI traffic is light the ticket booths may be used for selling to multi destinations.



	 ACTION: Joint stakeholder meeting to be set up including municipality, RCMP and possibly MoTI. Completed. Update: An email was sent to stakeholders in July to schedule a meeting. Many of the individuals were away for the summer and asked to wait for the fall when all were available to meet. FACC were updated in July. All stakeholders have been contacted and a meeting is tentatively planned for the week of October 24. Update 10/23: Meeting has been set and invitation sent for November 2, 2023. New FAC request: Request for copies of the existing protocols for lane assignments outside of the booths/down the highway and dedicated booth availability as requested at March meeting.
Terminal development timelines – 2 mins	 ACTION: T. Olson to provide updates on terminal upgrades for Sturdies and Village Bay. Completed. Update: Sturdies Bay: Life extend trestle, wing walls and floating leads — estimated completion 2024 Terminal reconfiguration, pick-up/drop off area, ticket booth and service buildings—estimated completion 2025 Replace trestle and waiting room — estimated completion 2027 Village Bay: Berth 1 rebuild—estimated completion 2027 Berth 2 rebuild—estimated completion 2034 Otter Bay: Replace ramp, towers, wing walls, shoreline stabilization—estimated completion 2027
	Village Bay terminal construction is on schedule for completion and BC Ferries teams will be in the community next year to share more updates and engagement opportunities. The FAC requested that all Southern Gulf Island communities be included in updates and engagements given Village Bay is a hub for all islands.Project manager for Lyall Harbour, J. Wilson, reported that design work is currently underway for the terminal and as a result, construction has been delayed. Once internal approvals have been received, we will provide an updated construction schedule.



	Long Harbour is in preliminary design phase. Once internal approvals are received, we will provide further updates.
TSW terminal Berth 2 trailer – 1 min	Trailer at Berth 2 is too small for Route 9 passengers and it is a long way coming down from Berth 2 upstairs lounge. Customer Experience is working to improve the space to the best of our ability given budget constraints. ACTION: N. McCall to work with Customer Experience team to investigate what improvements can be made to the trailer at Berth 2 for Route 9 passengers and report back to community relations team.
	Update: We have updated the trailer at Berth 2 by replacing and adding new chairs with USB charging capability, a community board, a power charging station, side tables and art. More improvements have been requested including digital information screens, new doormats and heating.
	M. Greenwood requested that passengers be permitted to wait in the upstairs lounge at Berth 2 and that BCF staff complete a sweep of waiting travellers before sailing. This way, people can comfortably wait inside. B. Sylvester responded that this is available as an option for any travellers. A sweep is routinely performed in the upstairs Berth 2 lounge in advance of departure. On occasion, the space may be closed for the use of another route or for maintenance, however it is an often available for travellers bound for the Southern Gulf Islands.
	M. Taylor and D. Maude expressed complaints regarding the trailer at Berth 2, emphasizing that it is a poor representation of the Southern Gulf Islands and BCF customer experience. They noted that the trailer has poor ventilation and no heating or cooling controls. The FAC asked if BCF would consider adding a passenger waiting area similar to the three-sided glass lounge area at Berth 1. BCF responded that we are exploring adding a similar structure to what is located at Berth 1. The lease on the trailer at Berth 2 is temporary and we understand it's not ideal; however it is what is available at this time. We are working with terminal construction to explore long term solutions.
	ACTION: B. Sylvester to explore alternative heating options for the Berth 2 trailing including a temperature control.
	ACTION: T. Olson to coordinate a meeting between the FAC to collect feedback on improvements to the Berth 2 trailer.
Current Capacity info on website – 1 min	A request has been made to have an explanation of vessel current capacity be provided to FAC to post to social media ACTION: T. Olson will work on creating an update to the community pages that can easily be shared and



	referenced back to.
	Update: BCF is currently waiting as there has been a change on the current conditions project. Once we have an update, we will provide more information to the community.
	M. Greenwood noted that the Southern Gulf Island (SGI) routes load at multiple terminals. How will the website reflect the complexities of Routes 5 and 9? N. McCall will take special consideration for the SGI routes. The current conditions project will reflect what can be seen on the majors. Before we launch the new program, there will be opportunity for the FAC Chairs to provide feedback.
Vessel refit schedule – 1 min	Expected dates are:
	F2024: Queen of Cumberland – Jan 9, 2024 to Feb 8, 2024 - relief vessel is Salish Heron Salish Eagle – Feb 10, 2024 to Mar 16, 2024 – relief vessel is Salish Heron
	F2025: Queen of Capilano - Oct 15, 2024 to Dec 7, 2024 – relief vessel is Queen of Cumberland (Salish heron will replace the queen of Cumberland) Salish Heron – Jan 6, 2025 to Feb 16, 2025 – No relief required
	Salish Raven – Mar 3, 2025 to Mar 31, 2025 - relief vessel is Salish Heron
Scheduling communications – 5 mins	Printing Colour FAC noted that the spring/summer schedule is the same colour as the fall/winter and therefore it is difficult to discern which is current.
	ACTION: BCF will take this feedback back to the marketing team. Completed. Update : It is policy to change the colour of each new schedule and moving forward, it will be actioned for each new schedule print.
	Schedule distribution Schedule distribution is long (weeks) after schedule change is in effect
	BCF Info: A meeting is scheduled with all of teams to discuss schedule printing and timelines.Marketing, terminal ops, web team, and scheduling to see how we can improve this.M. Greenwood requested that schedule printing colour and timelines are assigned to a BCF staff position.BCF responded that while these tasks are assigned to a staff member, the reason for delay is due to the



	process for tracking and adjusting discrepancies between schedules. The upcoming meeting will address the current challenges.
	New FAC Request: Thru-Fare option on winter schedule: Thru-Fare (via Swartz Bay) options on the winter schedule (Route 9) seem to have been dropped out of the Saturna Schedule. All other island schedules appear to be in order, but good for each island to do their own check. Can BCF please correct these? Printable schedules (PDF format) also lack complete information.
	BCF Info: This information has been shared with our marketing team for follow-up.
	R. Alloway requested a timeline for when Saturna schedule will be updated. It was noted that the thru- fares options were missed on the Tsawwassen and Swartz Bay stops and wording is missing on winter schedule for the 3:10 pm Saturna loading priority.
	A request has been made to our web team to adjust the online schedule to include the Saturna loading priority on the 3:10 pm sailing. Any print changes are planned for the next print schedule. Update: Saturna loading priority was added to the web-schedule on October 16.
	New FAC Request: Could BCF please duplicate the notices (showing in red directly underneath each sailing) they have placed on the shoulder season schedule, onto the winter schedule; Currently the winter schedule shows only a small footnote at the bottom of the page - easily missed by booth staff & passengers alike. Year-round priority boarding for Saturna is confirmed in BCF Service Notice dated Aug. 13th 2019. This is not the first time we've asked for consistency of wording between schedules.
	BCF Info: this information has been shared with our marketing team for follow-up.
TOR update – 3 mins	TOR Update Thank you to everyone who made the effort to review the first draft of the Terms of Reference! C. McIntosh is now working on the second draft based on the feedback received from members and Chairs. A second draft has been created. We are making final edits and will provide the revisions to the FACs once completed. There will be another opportunity for feedback on the forthcoming draft.
Saturna priority loading - min	The FAC noted that occasionally business vehicles bound for Saturna are left behind due how vehicles are staged into overflow lanes. Currently there is a Saturna only ticket booth however, this booth has been found to multitask with other routes during peak traffic times. ACTION: C. Hillis to investigate the multitasking of the Saturna only ticket booth. Completed.



Update : C. Hillis has followed up with the terminal operations team and we believe there has been improvements. If there are any specific incidents, please lets us know of the time and date of the incident so we can investigate.
ACTION: C. Hillis to remind terminal staff to be diligent of any Saturna bound vehicles that may be staged in the overflow lanes (30s) to be loaded with priority on the 3:10 pm sailing. Completed.
Update: We haven't experienced any issue on this sailing since our last meeting.
The FAC requested permanent wording on all schedules of the Saturna 3:10 pm sailing priority. ACTION: T. Olson to pass on request for permanent wording of Saturna priority loading on 3:10 pm sailing. Completed.

Old Business	
Inter-island through fare via Swartz Bay – 3 mins	 There is no process in place at this time to accommodate inter-island rates through SWB. Exceptions and 'work around' are made as required when there is service disruptions ACTION: N. McCall and C. Hillis will follow up with our revenue teams on the ability for our systems to facilitate this request. An update will be provided to the FAC and community in early May. Update: We do not currently have the ability to charge inter-island fares at Swartz Bay Terminal as it not set up on our Point of Sale (POS). Our teams have contacted the revenue and tariff department to investigate solutions to this issue. We will follow up regarding any updates.
Service Notices – 4 mins	 The FAC noted that <i>holding in dock service</i> notices are no longer being posted. Service notices sent out after the sailing has left with a delayed departure time is not helpful for those travelling to the terminal. ACTION: BCF agreed that this could be reinstated and will bring it to the attention of the BCF teams. Completed. Update: We have enhanced our service notices and are working to update the digital information signage to alert when the sailing is delayed. The FAC requested information on when is the earliest a service notice can go out, and when the latest
	is a service notice can be received. This information would be useful for those taking early morning sailings.



	 ACTION: T. Olson to investigate when is the earliest a service notice is sent and the latest a service notice can be received. T. Olson will share this information with the FAC chairs. Completed. Update: Sent to FACC April 6: We have confirmed with the departments that OSC is on 24/7 and post service notices. Our customer care team are also on duty between 5:45am -11:00pm for additional support.
	BCF recommended downloading the new BCF application and ensuring push notifications are enabled on your mobile device to ensure Service Notices are received in a timely manner. ACTION: T. Olson and N. McCall to provide an easy "how to" for the mobile app. Completed.
	Update June 15: A draft was sent to FACC for review
	The FAC expressed gratitude for the enhanced service notices including the <i>holding in dock</i> communications requested at the previous meeting.
	Given the cancellation of the <i>Salish Raven</i> yesterday, D. Maude expressed gratitude to BCF for their responsiveness to the issue. However, by 3:00 pm FAC noted they believed BCF had knowledge that the <i>Salish Raven</i> would be cancelled and a service notice was not provided confirming the cancellation until 3:40 pm. This notice was received after the alternate vessel had sailed from Galiano Island. As a result, passengers departing Galiano Island were reluctant to board the <i>Queen of Cumberland</i> because they were still under the impression that the <i>Salish Raven</i> might sail. Furthermore, when received, the service notice was listed as Tsawwassen to SGI, not Swartz Bay to Southern Gulf Islands. The FAC noted they did not receive a route 5 service notice.
	ACTION: Community relations team to investigate and provide feedback on the delayed service notice and incorrect heading.
	M. Greenwood expressed concern for equity toward those who must purchase overnight accommodations due to cancellations but do not adequate funds. The passenger must own a credit card and have sufficient funds to purchase the overnight accommodations however not all people have the means to do so. The FAC requested a separate discussion to address this equity concern at a later date.
Medical reservations on Route 9-	ACTION: T. Olson to confirm customer care hours of operation. Completed.
8 mins	Update: Information provided to FAC: customer care 1-888-BC FERRY (1-888-223-3779) Canada & USA - Monday to Friday 6:00 am – 10:00 pm & Saturday to Sunday 7:00 am – 7:00 pm



	 M. Greenwood requested that more marketing and promotion be provided by BCF to ensure that passengers are aware of the customer care phone number. They noted that the communities are not well aware of this process and there is a sense of anxiety when travelling to make important medical appointments. She suggested this information be prominent on the community page and boards at terminals. ACTION: The community relations team will work with the marketing team to promote the customer care
	phone number for last minute medical reservations.
Land's End Café – 2 mins	Substantial renovations have resulted in perceived degradation of services including less hot menu items, no soft drink dispensers/ice, long lineups and loss of display terminals.
	BCF Info : We have passed this feedback onto our teams. We appreciate your input on these recent changes.
	D. Maude received feedback that there are now fewer screens in the café. C. Hillis confirmed that no screens were removed and the number of screens has not changed. There is currently one digital board in the building and a large TV. The TV modem box was being updated and was offline for a short period. It is now working.
Passenger accessibility – 5 mins	Ongoing issues with mobility challenged customers. DEI, new BC Act.
	M. Greenwood requested more information on how BC Ferries plans to implement the new BC Accessibilities Act including how we plan to support the visually and hearing impaired.
	N. McCall shared that the next accessibility committee meeting is taking place on November 22 which includes internal teams from terminal, fleet, and customer experience staff members, as well as representation from public interest groups. We are currently working to install Braille on the vessels and terminals among other upgrades. We are aware of the new act and working on updates, and expect it will be discussed at the upcoming meeting. More information can be found on the BC Ferries Accessibility page here: <u>https://www.bcferries.com/accessibility</u>
Order of loading lanes – 2 mins	FAC shared that the order of loading lanes is an ongoing issue at Swartz Bay in particular, but also occurring at other terminals on occasion. BCF replied that while we endeavor to load in order of arrival, on occasion we are required to load by vehicle type, UCD requests, PRAs, destination etc. ACTION: C. Hillis and Capt. Grewal will follow up with terminal and vessel teams on procedures. Completed.

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Traffic on the 4:20 pm sailing is segregated into different lanes to expedite the discharge of Galiano traffic. BCF agrees this may not be generating the efficiencies expected and would revisit the decision.
BCF Info: BCF has implemented this feedback and has gone back to mixed traffic on the Swartz Bay to Mayne Island sailing that transfers on Galiano Island.
BC Ferries specified that the not all cars are loaded and unloaded in the exact order they arrive because this does not facilitate the most efficient loading of deck space. Staff prioritize that all passengers are loaded onto the vessel over queuing order. M. Greenwood shared that the frustration from communities stems from a problem with the public narrative. People do not understand that everyone will make the sailing and for this reason, they worry about the queuing order. She requested that BCF promote the rationale behind the current process and provide overload statistics as supportive data. M. Ferris suggested advertising in the Pender Post and the Mayne Liner newspapers and the Galiano Active Page.
ACTION: Community relations team to provide loading order information on the community page.
ACTION: Community relations team to follow up with FACC on additional options for communication of loading order.
ACTION: Community relations team to amplify D. King's Ferry Facts on the community pages.
D. Maude noted that the mixing of traffic bound for different terminals, specifically on the 1020 am sailing, appear to be reduced. However, there is a problem of not separating undersized and oversized vehicles. This results in the terminal attendant re-arranging vehicles to optimize deck space at the cost of loading efficiency.
ACTION: C. Hillis will investigate the issue of intermingling over size and under sized vehicles causing loading inefficiencies in collaboration with vessel operations.

New Business	
Extension of summer service – 3 mins	FAC request more information on why BCF has not provided extended summer service despite multiple request by the FAC. They note that the <i>Salish Heron</i> and addition crew are still on duty for the shoulder seasons. They believe it would ease traffic congestion from September to Thanksgiving



	while tourists still frequent the islands.
	M. Greenwood clarified that the "shoulder season" is still the "peak season" in the Southern Gulf Islands and as such the FAC request that the additional summer service be extended to include the months leading up to and following July and August. If this cannot be done, please provide more information on why, especially as the Salish Heron is still on route and crewed.
	S. Anderson responded that BC Ferries and the provincial government have agreed to develop metrics that will inform service level decisions making. This is a fleet wide process that will include capital expenditure costs, crewing costs, and vessel capacity among other criteria. Prior to this new agreement, BCF offered a Significant Service Request (SSR) application as a means of requesting additional service. The SSR was based on cost recovery, however, because cost recovery is supported by ticket fares, it is difficult to justify any additional service due to price caps set by the BC Ferry Commission. The new process with the province will review needs and include contractual considerations.
Operations contingency plans – 3 mins	In the past these were circulated annually, however they have not been seen in recent years.
	BCF Info: In the case that BCF assets are required for a large scale provincial response to an emergency, we would be responsive to EMCR (formerly EMBC) and their needs for ferry transportation. Any agreements made for one community could jeopardize EMCR's response capabilities.
	For unique cases where an evacuation is acute to a single island community (because of fire etc.), EMCR may not be in charge but they will still be consulted, along with MOTI. In those scenarios, BCF will respond as required to the situation to ensure the evacuation demands of the community are met as assessed by MOTI and EMCR.
	This process falls under the Request for Assistance protocol, where local/municipal governments raise their needs to the province if they cannot manage the situation themselves. The Province can then elevate to Federal if need be.
	The BCF Operations and Security Centre (OSC) does not be codify and provide evacuation or disaster plans for each community, as it is not our role as a privately run company.
	M. Greenwood clarified that they are asking for a contingency plans for alternate service should there be a mechanical issue with a vessel serving the Southern Gulf Islands (SGI). She noted that up to several years ago, all Chairs received contingency plans for their routes. This was a document that



	laid out what would occur in a given scenario.
	ACTION: SGI FACCs to send the contingency planning document to T. Olson for further investigation.
Sailing by sailing data – 3 mins	FAC would like information on traffic by sailing on all route 5 and 9 sailings.
	BC Ferries clarified that there are several reports that reflect traffic sailing data. One is posted on the website and is available quarterly. It includes a month-by-month break down. The other is an un-audited spreadsheet that contains sailing-by-sailing data. The FAC requested that these report have distinct naming logic to avoid confusion and that it be emailed directly to the FAC Chairs when available.
	ACTION: Community relations team to send traffic reporting data to FACC when available.
Route reports – 2 mins	Clarity on what reporting data is currently being provided and where to find this on the website.
	BC Ferries clarified that there were two reports that included route specific data including one that came from the marine superintendent. T. Olson is investigating with Capt. Raduta what became of the marine superintendent report and if it is needed or possible to reinstate. The FAC emphasized that they would like marine reports to be reinstated.
	The other route report was provided by the community relations team and reiterated data from the publicly available reports to the BC Ferry Commission. We are investigating how to streamline the information from the Commissioner reports to ensure accuracy and provide timely updates.
	ACTION: T. Olson to arrange a follow-up meeting with the FACCs to see what data would be most useful in reports and then investigate how to streamline reporting to meet these requests.
	M. Greenwood emphasized the importance of data to understand and communicate BC Ferries practices and make suggestions.

Final Questions & Close	
Final questions & close	Action tracking
	R. Alloway requested tracking of action items and more regular follow-up information. BC Ferries responded that we have implemented a tracking process which records items from meetings and emails. The tracking sheet includes the time taken to complete an item and the outcome that are provided to FAC Chairs. The



expectation is to share these on a quarterly basis. Furthermore, the community relations team now provides three month follow up meetings to ensure ongoing stewardship of priority issues. These are held between FAC members and the community relations team, are 1 hour meeting and held virtually. The community relations director reminded members that our team is comprised of two full time staff and that there are 13 FACs with various requests and follow up items.
Digital communications R. Alloway requested that BC Ferries invest more time and resources into educating users on how to access digital information including navigating the website and web applications. The member noted that the website is difficult to use and locate information. BC Ferries responded that we are aware of this issue and we are working to improve our website to improve access to information. If there are suggestions, we invite that feedback.
ACTION: Community relations team to pull statistics of community page site visitors and provide to the FAC.
On Time Performance BC Ferries has been analyzing at on time performance in the Southern Gulf Islands. After the initial review, the main challenge is in village bay on the 5:30 sailing. The next step is to investigate options for adjustments. This includes adjusting schedules to ensure sailings arrive and departed as stated. Implementations of changes are expected to occur in 2024.