

Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC) - Record of Meeting

Date:	May 17, 2019
Committee Name:	Southern Gulf Islands
Routes:	5, 9

Attendees:

<p>For the FAC:</p> <p><i>Chair(s):</i> Eva Hage</p> <p><i>Members</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dale Henning, Joanne Enns, Brad Holman • David Maude, Roy Moore, Mary Greenwood • Robert Matson, Anna Dean, Diana King • Greg Lucas, Harold Swierenga (S.Spring) 	<p>For BCF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesley Hancyk • Peter Simpson • Derek Sweet • Mark Wilson • Darin Guenette
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Points of Information/Agreement:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chair/island rep selection. Galiano-Robert; Mayne-Diana; Pender-Roy; Saturna-Anna. Chair-Mary and David (Co-Chairs). Eva is reducing her involvement for personal reasons. 2. Outstanding issues. Overheight thrufare- it was reported that recently, the procedure to stage overheight vehicles at TSA has been working well. Discussion followed around the current process for TF customers and when some may not be loaded/unloaded to favour a connection at Swartz Bay. Commercial reservations. FAC reported that there are still instances of commercial vehicles not being allowed to book. Dalton Road signage. FAC has noticed that there are flaggers on the roadway during busy times, but they suggest signage improvement could still help. BC Ferries is not installing Naloxone units at terminals. Swartz Bay loading practices. FAC noted there are still experiences where vehicles arriving at SWB are being loaded out of order compared to arrival; which is a problem when overloads occur. This is also relevant when loading order by island may be inconsistent, and certain island customers may be overloaded, when they arrived before others. 3. On-time performance at 4:20 pm sailing ex SWB. FAC noted that, because this sailing is multi-port loaded, the Cumberland deploys the ramps and often then runs late. They suggest there may be opportunity to look at changing the sailing time in order to avoid this delayed departure. BCF agrees there may be opportunity to delay that departure, but nothing could be implemented until the fall/winter schedule. 4. Mayne Queen replacement. BC Ferries confirmed that the Mayne Queen is due to be replaced in fiscal year 2022 (ends March 31, 2022), whereby a new Salish vessel will replace the Cumberland, which will replace the MQ. FAC asked if the elevator reliability and 'internal doors' problems are being addressed in the build of the next Salish. BCF

noted that there were learning issues with the first three Salish, and these problems should be mitigated with the next build. BCF noted that although there are times when elevator outages, these ships are much better designed to accommodate staging vehicles near elevators for mobility challenged customers. Derek noted that customers can ask crew for accommodation if they are concerned, and the crew will try...but there may be constraints (multi-port loads). In general, the lower decks are loaded with the first port, and it doesn't make sense to 'mix load' vehicles on each vehicle deck. Discussion followed around helping customers understand how/when vehicles are loaded on the lower decks, especially when they have medical/mobility challenges. FAC suggests that BCF try to load anyone with a disabled placard on the upper deck, when possible, or otherwise ensure they are aware that they either must be loaded on the lower deck or wait for the next sailing. More discussion followed on the elevators and if there are ways to improve reliability. BC Ferries confirmed that, if customers ask for elevator access at the booth, they will be handed an 'elevator tag' and the crew can stage them near an elevator. It was suggested that BCF post a clear communication on the process customers need to follow if they are looking for upper deck loading or access near an elevator.

Related issue. BCF confirmed that the Salish vessels are operating well on LNG almost all the time, but there are still learnings on the best time on bunkering the ships.

5. Schedule revisions. The 'new' schedules have some opportunities to improve, and FAC wonders when the next chance is to look at making changes. Peter noted that once the schedule for the new Salish build is known, we will look at engaging with the FAC approximately one year prior to its introduction into service to visit schedule changes.
6. Reservation thrufare refunds. Some thrufares provide a Route 1 reservation, but others don't. The FAC suggests that all TF sailings 'in the schedule' should provide a refund.
7. SGI to TSA thrufares process. FAC asks how BCF analysis is doing to helping load customers coming from the islands on thrufare so they have a better chance of making the Route 1 vessel at SWB. BCF noted that, when customers arrive at their booths early, they will generally be loaded on board to help this transfer. Related: the FAC still is hoping to see a thrufare process 'from the islands', to allow favourable loading at SWB.
8. Route 1 reservation lanes. During busy periods, the Route 1 reservation ticket booth is blocking the SGI booth. FAC has asked to move which booth is used for reservations, and is reiterating this...and this is still a problem.
9. Route 5 interisland transfers. A resident travelling between Saturna and S.Spring has been experiencing problems when travelling on the Queen of Cumberland off the islands, as they are not getting favourable loading that can help them get to Route 4 via SWB. Derek noted that it is difficult to try and provide a consistent preference of loading certain customers, as the crews generally need to stick with a first-come-first-serve practice. He suggested customers do their best to communicate with crews, and they will try to accommodate.
10. Peak season issues. FAC has reiterated that the 'Island only' booth signage is working well, and they hope this continues. BCF confirmed SWB agents do intend to continue this process to help ensure customers don't miss key sailings where possible.
Pets and cool air flow. Derek noted that, if people have concerns around insufficient air flow in hot temperatures, they should ask crews if more fans can be turned on, and they should be able to accommodate. He also noted that people can ask the Steward during the sailing to go check on their pet.

11. Website reservations process. FAC noted there are some glitches with default settings on the current reservation pages, particularly when customers need to go back. Another suggestion was that there are inconsistencies with 12/24 hour clock displays. The new website will provide different functionality and is due to be launched in the early fall; Darin will be sending out a document showing how it will look soon. BCF confirmed they are staying with the current passenger reservation levels, and the FAC suggested that BCF still consider moving towards 100% foot passenger reservation levels. They are suggesting that customers may think that there is no longer foot passenger capacity when the reservations are full. Part of the problem is that the Call Centre is not telling customers there may be standby room once the allocation is reached.
12. Swartz Bay development update. Currently, a revised draft concept (terminal design) has been developed after months of engagement and analysis. BCF is finalizing the concept plan and will be sharing this design in 2019. Construction is slated to begin in two years, but this plan may change as the process continues.
13. Printed schedules. David noted that there are still problems with schedule distribution problems, and vary the colours each issue. Of note, they are greatly needed at the foot passenger terminal at SWB. BCF noted that they will be ceasing printing all schedules before peak season of 2020, and they are looking for assistance/suggestions from FAC members on how to help prepare their communities.
14. Cumberland snack bar. The Cumberland snack bar has been closing mid-sailing for crew breaks, and this is cutting out opportunities to customers (and revenue to BCF). FAC suggests trying to keep the snack bar open as much as possible during the sailing. Related: the FAC suggests that the new Salish should offer as wide as possible food service when it enters service.
15. Terminal digital signage. Pender FAC reps suggests that their digital sign is in the wrong place, and the suggestion was to relocate it next to the waiting room. They will send a suggestion to BCF for sharing with the project team.
16. Route 1 alcohol pilot. BCF confirmed that the plan is to pilot wine/beer sales in the buffet of three Route 1 ships, beginning in June sometime, if possible. BCF will assess the pilot for success prior to making decisions on whether to continue or extend this initiative.
17. BC Ferries town hall. Pender noted there have been questions for BCF to have an open house style session once/year for residents to air questions. BCF replied that they prefer to keep information/questions/comments flowing through FACs as much as possible. The type of open house being requested are not done in any community, but they do hold sessions for specific reasons (new ships, new schedules, etc). It was suggested that BCF should consider having a senior rep come to the islands and outline key issues/plans/initiatives, etc.
18. BC Ferries 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. Messages to communities. Discussion occurred around how/if BCF can improve messaging to the various communities.

- 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. 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.
- v. BCF environmental initiatives. In pursuing further corporate responsibility, BCF is working with government on being a leader in minimizing our environmental footprint, including LNG usage, electric propulsion options, etc. BCF is focussed and has a plan to continue to reduce their impacts.
- vi. Consultation. BCF continues to engage with communities in a more wholesome manner, including working with other stakeholders on combined efforts.
- vii. Fuel surcharge. BCF is about to implement a fuel surcharge, as this mechanism serves to mitigate fuel price volatility.

Action Items¹:

Item	Who	By When
1. Confirm TF process at TSA for FAC; including if something can clarify on the website.	Darin	End-June
2. Confirm status of Dalton Rd signage discussions with MOTI.	Darin	As required
3. Confirm loading practices are clear and consistent for the multi-port loads at SWB.	Darin (ask Monique)	Completed
4. Consider a communications piece (for FAC, on website) that outline accessibility request.	Darin and Derek	as soon as reasonable
5. Ask Monique if Rte 1 reservation booth can be moved away from the SGI booth, so as to not block them.	Darin	end-June
6. Confirm if 3:10 sailing still will have 'Saturna only' on the signage at the right time prior to sailing. YES.	Darin ask Monique	Completed
7. Review if the foot pax reservation allocations be adjusted upward from 75.	Darin ask Monique	end-June
8. Confirm if Call Centre can let customers know there may be standby space for foot passengers once reservations are maxed.	Darin via Karen T.	end-June

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.