

# Operational Readiness

Summer 2026



## Preparing for peak season

As an essential public service, BC Ferries has been planning and preparing to keep people moving safely and reliably this summer. With a busy summer ahead, including the FIFA World Cup 2026™ in Vancouver, readiness work has been underway for months across vessels, terminals, frontline teams, customer communications and incident response, so we can deliver the service coastal communities rely on during periods of high demand and sustained pressure.

## The busiest travel days during summer long weekends:

THURSDAYS & FRIDAYS  
leaving the mainland

MONDAYS  
returning to the mainland

## Busiest long weekends in Summer 2025:

BC Day

Labour Day

Canada Day

## Investing in reliability: Fleet readiness

- **22 major vessel refits** and maintenance projects completed outside of peak season to support performance and reliability.
- **Optimized sailing schedules** to better match peak demand.
- **Coastal Inspiration and Coastal Celebration:** Propulsion upgrades that improve efficiency, reduce underwater noise and lower fuel consumption — delivering operational benefits while also supporting environmental objectives.
- **Queen of Surrey:** Converting the propulsion control system to full electric controls and upgrading the steering gear system to improve long-term reliability.
- **Queen of Cumberland:** Major dry docking including well steel renewal and a switchboard upgrade.



**10.3M**  
passengers



**4.1M**  
vehicles



**37**  
vessels

Last summer we carried 10.3 million passengers and 4.1 million vehicles, with demand expected to increase this peak season.

All 37 vessels in our fleet are set to sail this summer supported by upgrades, enhanced schedules, and recovery plans.



## Scaling capacity to meet demand

- To meet growing demand, we've added **1,800 additional round trips** above our regular schedule across all routes this season to increase capacity and improve travel flexibility for customers.
- **Daily 4:30 PM summer sailing added** from Tsawwassen to Departure Bay to improve flexibility and capacity.
- **425,000 Saver fares available** between June 1 and September 30 to encourage off-peak travel, ease terminal congestion and offer customers more opportunities to save, with fares starting from \$39 for car and driver.
- **Extended two-ship service** for travel between Horseshoe Bay and Langdale and added more than 120 additional sailings on this route between mid-May to late June and September to mid-October
- **Increased bookable space** for travel between Powell River and Comox and Horseshoe Bay and Langdale to provide greater travel certainty

## Building resilience: Redundancy & recovery planning

- Operational recovery protocols updated and rehearsed to guide responses to service disruptions.
- Summer Service Contingency Plan outlining preparations and planned response in the event of any service disruptions. The plan focuses on operational recovery, customer communication and service mitigation strategies.
- 24/7 support from engineering, dispatch, and dock teams.
- Summer emergency preparedness in place for climate-related risks (such as wildfires, extreme heat, and weather).

---

**1,800**  
additional round trips

---

**425,000**  
Saver fares across five routes

---

**630+**  
seasonal staff being hired

---

**ADDED**  
daily summer sailing from Tsawwassen to Departure Bay

---



## Advance bookings required for travel from Horseshoe Bay to Nanaimo

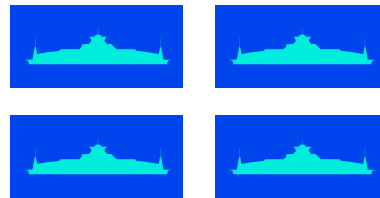
- All customers travelling by vehicle from Horseshoe Bay to Nanaimo (Departure Bay) must book and pay in advance. Drive-up fares are no longer available.
- Infrastructure upgrades are underway at the terminal, reducing available vehicle staging space by 25%. Advance bookings keep traffic moving safely, make the best use of limited space, and give customers certainty before they travel.
- The booking window for sailings departing Horseshoe Bay to Departure Bay has changed from two hours to 30 minutes, to offer more flexibility.
- Customers can also take advantage of booking alerts, and subscribe to email notifications when space becomes available on previously sold out sailings.

## Planning for the future

- Preparing for the arrival of four Island Class vessels in 2026-27. The first vessel, the Island xwsaíluxul, has just arrived in BC waters and will start service this summer between Nanaimo Harbour and Gabriola Island. When all 10 Island Class vessels are in service, it will deliver a 71% increase in vehicle capacity and a 135% increase in passenger capacity on the routes it serves.
- Approved and moving ahead with four New Major Vessels (NMVs), set to arrive between 2029–2031.
- Continued advocacy for additional NMVs to increase redundancy and network resiliency.
- Preparations underway for our upcoming submission for Performance Term 7 (PT7) to the BC Ferries Commissioner, which will the fares needed to deliver service between 2028-2032. It will also include a focus on securing a sustainable funding model to address financial challenges and ensure continued investment in a reliable and adaptable ferry system for our customers.

## 2026-2027

Arrival of 4  
Island Class vessels



## 2029-2031

4 New major vessels





This year, we completed one of the most complex refit periods in recent years, with 22 vessels undergoing refits, including 10 dry dockings. Maintenance work was completed across the fleet to prepare vessels for summer operations. This is highly coordinated work that is planned months in advance and completed to strict regulatory and safety standards.



In Fiscal 2025/26, our Customer Service Centre handled 473,861 calls and on average last summer, each call was answered within 157 seconds. Customers can also schedule a call back on our website, saving a call to us.

## 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Three of our vessels, the Queen of Alberni, the Queen of Coquitlam and the Queen of Cowichan are celebrating their 50th birthdays this year.

## 22.7M passengers

BC Ferries serves more than 20 million customers each year. That's about half the population of Canada in annual passenger trips!



In Fiscal 2026, our top selling White Spot item was Dippin' Chicken, with 349,372 orders. Our top selling burger was the Bacon Cheddar (BC) Burger, with 290,978 sold – makes up a quarter of the 1.16 million White Spot burgers served fleetwide this year!



Roughly 70% of products currently sold in Passages are Canadian-owned and about 65% of those are BC-owned. The top-selling book in Passages is *Coastal Connections*, a BC publication that tells the story of BC Ferries and the people it serves.

## 500km

Longest BC Ferries route: the Inside Passage (Port Hardy to Prince Rupert) covers approximately 500 km and takes 16+ hours, offering one of the most scenic sailings in the world.



## Top travel tips:

- Book in advance where possible to secure a spot on a sailing of your choice. You can change or cancel your reservation from just \$5.
- If you're travelling with a vehicle from Horseshoe Bay to Nanaimo (Departure Bay), you'll need to book and pay in advance. Drive-up fares are not available due to construction underway at the terminal.
- If your travel plans allow for it, consider walking on. Walk-on passengers rarely experience the same waits as vehicles during peak times. Foot passenger reservations are available on our busiest routes at no additional cost, and bookings can be changed up to two hours before departure.
- Take advantage of Saver fares on select off-peak sailings across five routes between Metro Vancouver and Vancouver Island, Vancouver and the Sunshine Coast, and Powell River and Comox.
- Customers travelling to and from Vancouver Island should consider sailings between Metro Vancouver (Tsawwassen) and Nanaimo (Duke Point). This route features more sailings, helping avoid potential waiting times.
- Parking lots fill up quickly – consider ride-sharing, drop-offs or public transit if you can.
- If you plan to drive on board without a booking at peak times, be prepared for sailing waits.
- Stay informed on your travel day by checking [Current Conditions](#) and signing up for service notices for updates on your route.
- Simplify your trip planning with the BC Ferries app. Our app makes it easier than ever to check schedules and Current Conditions, book sailings and manage your trips. Download today on the App Store or Google Play.
- Take advantage of new tools including booking alerts and an online waitlist to help customers access cancelled or newly available bookable space more easily.
- Customers looking for trip inspiration can browse new dedicated sections on our website which provide suggestions for activities, sail and drive itineraries, and local event listings. These allow users to add an activity to their booking or to save on tickets for local events and accommodation courtesy of partner offers available for our customers.