

Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC) - Record of Meeting

Date:	May 25, 2018
Committee Name:	Southern Gulf Islands
Routes:	5, 9

Attendees:

<p>For the FAC:</p> <p><i>Chair(s):</i> Brian Hollingshead, Eva Hage</p> <p><i>Members</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Sywulich, Dave Dryer • Jill Justice, David Maude, Conny Nordin • Robert Matson, Anna Dean, Diana King 	<p>For BCF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monique Turgeon • Peter Simpson • Mark Wilson • Lewis McKay • Darin Guenette
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Points of Information/Agreement:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks to BCF. FAC passed along appreciation for work on Tsawwassen Berth 2 improvements. Discussion happened around the type of content that could be placed on the electronic screen there, and BCF noted that the Operations Centre will be able to update information on short notice. 2. Chairs/team leaders. Brian and Eva will remain co-Chairs for this last year; Mary the Galiano rep, Mike the Mayne rep, Roy the Pender rep and Lorelle the Saturna rep. 3. Terminal berth signage. Otter Bay has proper signage (using terminal and island name) installed, and remaining signs are being finalized for installation prior to the peak season. 4. Village Bay road signage. Terminal Operations is training staff to be able to control traffic on the road outside the terminal to help fill in for the lack of signage clarity; this helps drivers maintain order. 5. Saturna only signage. This is a reminder request asking BC Ferries to post the 'Saturna only' traffic above the ticket booths for the 3:10 pm sailing, at the appropriate time. BCF confirmed this procedure is planned to occur. 6. Swartz Bay throughfare. BCF confirmed ongoing dialogue continues to improve efficiency for traffic coming from Tsawwassen to the islands, but is seeking ideas for improving process for vehicles coming from the islands to TSA via SWB. Discussion noted that the most difficult time is when one arrives in SWB fewer than 30 minutes prior to Route 1 sailings, thus not able to redeem a reservation. BCF noted that a pilot is underway at Langdale terminal, whereby terminal staff is trialling a process where Saltery Bay-Earls Cove customers are being processed if arriving fewer than 30 minutes prior to a sailing. BCF will transfer any lessons-learned from that pilot to understand if something similar can be implemented for Swartz Bay. There was a general agreement that discussing this in a sub-working group may be of value. One point: BCF

was asked if customers could purchase a foot passenger TF ticket on the islands, so as to avoid visiting the walk-on ticket booth at SWB.

7. TSA overhead walkway status. BCF confirmed that, to avoid doing a 'one-off' expensive build of a walkway, BCF is analysing what should be a network-wide overhead walkway standard across all major terminal berths. FAC noted that, since there is a decent passenger shelter at Berth 2, a walkway is seen as much less important for customers.
8. Route 9, off-peak, Friday afternoon schedule. FAC asked what BCF has learned from this past off-peak season schedule. BCF noted they will now analyse traffic/overloads/sailing data and let the FAC know if schedule changes for next off-season are required. Eva noted that Saturna customers have shared many complaints about the lateness of arrival to the island...as it effectively discourages any weekenders coming from the mainland. BCF noted that they are aware of this late arrival and other issues (such as the double transfer for Mayne Island customers)...and are still looking at ways to improving aspects of this schedule.

The FAC had requested costs of overtime/extra fuel resulting from the current schedule, but BC Ferries do not share this detailed financial info publicly.

9. CUMB breakdown lessons learned. FAC suggested the following issues be cleared up for next time a similar situation happens. First, the schedules posted on BCF website contained errors, and customers stopped relying on that info – so, please work at putting accurate info online 'the first time'...even if delayed.

Next, do whatever you can to have flexibility to use all available vessels at all terminals (ie. Raven could not be used in SWB). As well, have policies developed to initiate refunds immediately...people were not certain of how/when they would get refunds.

Ensure loading at SWB is kept in order of arrival...this unfairness is noticed and a significant frustration. As well, try to make all connections/transfers clear, even if they involve longer waits than normal.

Mark noted that BCF has indeed learned a great deal, and now has a process in place to 'stand up' a daily FAC communications call after the first day of a crisis situation; this will help both FAC members and BCF understand how to best provide service. As well, BCF will aim to consult on 'temporary schedules/service plans' as early as possible in these situations. BCF will also be able to redeploy vessels much more fluidly as vessels are replaced and crews can be trained to operate out of all terminals more easily.

FAC noted that the 'route map' versions of schedules would be difficult to follow by the average customer. They also suggested that if BCF staff could produce a version of the schedule in a 'what each ship does', it would be very useful.

It was agreed that with early FAC consultation, aspects such as advising when replacement vessels would be of the most value could be learned early on. FAC reps noted there were some great efforts made to add sailings/service using the Skeena Queen and Quinitsa.

They also noted it was very valuable receiving daily info from the Customer Care Director (call centre, reservations explanations, refunds, etc), and that having Mark Collins visit Galiano Island to talk to customers was extremely valuable (ie. if a senior manager can visit the community and hear issues directly from customers, this helps).

10. Vessel design/standardization. FAC wonders what happens if once a vessel class is developed it is 'not sufficient/adequate' for the purposes of all uses it is intended. To this, they suggest the current version of a Salish vessel is not adequate for Route 5. Part of the reasoning is that, because many underheight vehicles are loaded on the lower (closed) deck of Salish, there are difficulties with customers who need to leave that deck (stairs,

mobility, etc). BCF clarified that these vessels are designed to accommodate all road legal commercial vessels, including low beds/trailers. The FAC suggests that BCF revisits the original, scalable design version of the intermediate class concept (ie. 85/125 AEQ version).

Mark noted that BCF realizes there are pros/cons with a vessel standardization concept, and the concerns expressed by the FAC are noted prior to finalizing the Mayne Queen replacement. BCF can look at making changes to future Salish vessels, but this plan should include making those changes to the current Salish vessels at future refit period...so as to keep the entire class as close to identical as possible.

Discussion occurred around having the Salish 'hit passenger licenses', and BCF noted there are options to address larger walk-on numbers. The FAC also noted that Salish vessels are not ideal for accessibility due to narrow/steep stairs and the steepness of the vehicle decks.

11. Salish upper deck loading requests. Terminals strive to assess the 'highest priority' requests for upper deck access, and will make best efforts to find a way to load those vehicles as requested. The ticket agent tries to assess the load/need and would ideally include that customer with the overheight vehicles to go on the upper deck. The use of the 'orange card' was causing way more problems (ie. false customer expectations) than the benefit they were intended to provide, so they were discontinued. BCF noted that if there are customers who are willfully not obeying the regulation to leave a closed deck, they may be sent a letter advising them they may be restricted from sailings.

Vessel crews are now gaining enough experience to efficiently load vehicles well on upper and lower decks for multiple port stops.

12. Route 5 traffic, 'crunch points'. The off-peak Friday 3:50 pm sailing from SWB is often full and departs late, due to serving multiple ports. BC Ferries is not currently looking at making any schedule adjustments, but is working on making the loading process as efficient as possible.

In the peak season, the early Mayne Queen sailing from Village Bay is not providing access for many (if at all) vehicles from Mayne Island. The Mayne Island rep suggested leaving 10 spaces on the Mayne Queen at Village Bay, thus possibly leaving 10 vehicles at Otter Bay to use the Cumberland's sailing later that morning. BC Ferries notes that there are limited options for changes, as the system is at capacity. Another FAC suggestion was to use the Quinitsa to pick up extra Mayne Island traffic; BCF noted that the vessel likely needs to be used elsewhere in the network (relief or supplemental), so it's not an option.

FAC suggested that better overload data would help in analysing 'pinch points' in schedules, but BCF notes that the traffic system can only provide what current data is shared.

13. Salish class issues. Are the elevators going to be more reliable? BCF noted that, beyond original warranty related issues, these elevators are now at least as reliable as others in the fleet. It was noted that elevators outages are more noticeable now that customers are not permitted on the lower deck during sailings.

HVAC issues for customer spaces. The parts are arriving soon and all vessels should be rectified and fully operating within the next month. BC Ferries noted that the vessels are now operating fully on natural gas.

14. Unloading of wheelchair foot passengers. Questions have been asked as to whether vessel crews are sensitive of whether to unload wheelchair passengers prior to, or after, vehicles unload. Lewis noted that crews attempt to find the most efficient manner of

unloading these customers depending on the circumstances.

15. Foot passenger cut-off limit. FAC suggests that the current passenger allocation for reservations be increased, however BC Ferries needs to leave space for flexibility for standby travel. As well, a problem arises because vehicle reservations don't account for every person in the vehicle. FAC agreed that they support BCF finds a way to provide a fully (100%) reservable system for Route 9 (including accounting for all vehicle passengers). In a related note, Lewis related that more people and vehicles were carried this past May long weekend with two Salish vessels than last year with the Queen of Nanaimo.
Another related note was a suggestion to reduce the 30 minute cut-off limit for check-in, to allow more customer flexibility for arriving at the terminal.
16. Printed schedules. FAC members noted that it would indeed be valuable to back in Routes 4 & 6. A suggestion was to alternate between more than two colours as print periods change.
17. Redlin review. BCF has provided info/data to this process and will let FACs know when any public info comes out of this process.
18. Thursday PM Raven sailings. It was noted there are regular overloads when the Raven is in service in shoulder seasons and an extra sailing would be well used. BCF noted that 'adding sailings' are indeed already being considered.
19. Mayne Queen replacement. After board approvals and Section 55 process is complete, the engagement plan will be developed. This will include discussions around using a new vessel or a redeployment of a different vessel to replace the Mayne Queen. FAC noted a general preference for the S100 versus a Salish vessel.
20. FAC term and reappointment – the current FAC term ends December 31, so BC Ferries will be rebuilding all committees beginning later this summer/fall. A reminder that there is a two-term limit. If FAC members have ideas/suggestions for groups to include, please send to BCF.

Action Items¹:

Item	Who	By When
1. Report back on terminal signage installation.	Monique	As required
2. Report analysis on Friday, PM schedule to FAC.	Mark	Aug 1
3. Analyse options to move Route 9 to fully reservable.	Mark	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.