

# Southern Gulf Islands Ferry Advisory Committee

## Fall 2022 Meeting Agenda

Monday, September 12, 2022  
9:00 am – 12:30 pm

### 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

Topic	Time
<b>Territorial acknowledgement</b>	
<b>Welcome and approval of agenda</b>	10 mins
<b>Updates &amp; Discussion</b>  Heavy traffic loads and staffing challenges created pressure on operational staff across the system, and BCF would like to recognize the efforts of its crew in keeping people moving this summer.  1. Marine superintendent update 2. Terminal manager update 3. FAC review and enhancements 4. Route 5/5a and Salish deployment 5. Terminal Development updates 6. Wi-fi at terminals 7. Printed schedule distribution 8. Signage at Otter Bay 9. Service notices 10. Route 9 communications 11. Website and digital signage 12. Terminal loading procedures 13. Discontinuing Shoulder season 14. Priority Loading 15. Reservations on Route 5	3 hours, 20 mins.

*Attached: Meeting topic log*

## Southern Gulf Islands Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting Topic Log September 2022

**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, Capt. Hardeep Grewal, Jessalyn Kovacs, Natalie McCall, Carrie McIntosh, Karen Johnston, Tamara Olson, Steve Anderson

Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure: Kirk Handrahan

FAC: Rob Alloway, Charlene Dishaw, Mary Greenwood, Dale Henning, Diana King, Robert Matson, David Maude, Roy Moore, Wendy Sage-Hayward, Tobi Wadsworth

1.	Marine Superintendent update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cumberland ramps:</b> We recognize the delays and schedule changes that happened as crew worked to balance capacity with on-time-performance using the Cumberland created challenges, e.g. missed stops, significant delays etc.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ BCF has provided the FAC with explanations about the impacts of Cumberland ramp usage this summer, and operational teams have worked to respond to this feedback to the best of their ability.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• October 12 is date for arrival of Salish vessel on Route 5/5a</li> <li>• February 9<sup>th</sup> 2 Salish vessels will be in service – this is temporary while the Queen of Cumberland is being used for a refit of another vessel.</li> </ul>
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2.	Terminal Manager update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Traffic back log on August 26 at Swartz Bay:</b> This was a very unusual situation precipitated by a police incident the night before at Duke Point that pushed a significant amount of traffic to SWB terminal.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ BCF has contingency plans that should maintain access for Gulf Islands and emergency traffic in these situations. That plan was not immediately enacted in this case and by the time traffic control was contacted and arrived on the scene, the system was overwhelmed.</li> <li>○ Terminal staff took action to move as much traffic through the terminal as quickly as possible, but access was limited for many for a stretch of time</li> <li>○ Terminal staff have reviewed the situation and remedial training/communication has occurred to prevent this breakdown from occurring in the future</li> <li>○ In this situation the priority was to move as much traffic through the booths as possible, which led to not having a dedicated SGI lane.</li> <li>○ It is important to remember that terminal operations staff always have discretion to adjust operational processes as unusual situations unfold. BCF supports its operational staff in these decisions</li> <li>○ We also acknowledge the communication gaps and breakdown in traffic marshalling that exacerbated the situation, especially for SGI customers</li> <li>○ We have reviewed the situation with our operations, customer care, and OSC teams to identify where these gaps occurred and how we will fix them</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Sorting Sturdies and VB traffic for the 4:20pm at Swartz Bay:</b> Sorting traffic for this sailings helps to expedite the discharge of Sturdies Bay traffic in Village so that it does not delay those who are connecting to the Rt.5a vessel</li> <li>• <b>Handicap passenger protocol, maintaining access for washrooms at the terminal and on vessel:</b> Customers entering the terminal may choose to advise the ticket agent that they require</li> </ul>
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		<p>a washroom and are able to access the public washrooms near the ticket booth prior to going to the vehicle staging lane.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>TAP forms and chaperones:</b> The Ticket Agent involved has been coached. Is this a recurring incident that the FAC is aware of?</li> </ul> <p>TAP forms say 'escort' and it is a Dr's call. BCF could align wording with form (rather than chaperone)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Loading order based on arrival times:</b> Often vehicles are loaded in order of destination on multi-port sailings which results in vehicles being loaded out of order based on terminal arrival. This is necessary to keep traffic separated by destination during off-loading.</li> </ul> <p>Difference for commercial customers being behind ramp or in front of it are significant. Air flow is important for commercial trucks to keep them from overheating.</p> <p>Current process of separating Galiano and Mayne is not working. Intermingling of commercial and under heights in terminal creates delays for loading. Suggest BCF divide over height and under height traffic at terminal rather than try to divide by destination. These destinations intermingle onboard, particularly on Cumberland. Might make it easier to divide by height, since everyone gets off anyway and has to wait for vessel to fully offload before transferring (10:20 and 4:20 sailings).</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Terminal Manager will review loading procedures with terminal staff to see what can be arranged to respond to the recommendation to split o/h and u/h traffic, particularly for the 10:20 and 4:20 sailings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dalton Drive, Mayne Island signage:</b> A sandwich board sign was made after previous consultation with the Mayne Island FAC and BCF Marketing. The sign is only deployed when required.</li> </ul> <p>Not used in morning, which is one time it is needed. It doesn't seem to be used as frequently as it could/should be. Recommendation to make the sign permanent. Early morning line ups may not be a challenge once Salish is in.</p>
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		<p><b>ACTION:</b> Terminal Manager will follow up with terminal staff on Mayne to see if the sign can be placed out more frequently and earlier in the day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Saturna priority:</b> Traffic has been prioritized for Saturna customers on the 15:10 sailing. The team has become well versed in the requirement and the frequency of loading errors has drastically decreased</li></ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Cam and Hardeep to consider a process to ensure that Saturna traffic is consistently prioritized on 3:10 sailing. COMPLETE.</p> <p>Saturna priority is working well. Thanks to BC Ferries.</p> <p>Printed schedules needs to be updated to reflect that priority is in place all year round, not just seasonally. Policy says 'may' be priority loaded, would be good if it didn't say 'may'.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> BCF to take the recommendation away to eliminate 'may' on website and printed schedules.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> from previous meeting: Cam to work with his team to consider separating lane usage between reserved vehicles and SGI vehicles outside the booths.</p> <p>Task analysis underway for transfers at Sturdies Bay to see if improvements to the process is possible to make it clearer for people.</p> <p>Village Bay Berth 1 upgrade is potentially delayed as we work to do the proper consultation and engagement process.</p> <p>What staffing is still needed in SGIs? Village Bay requires one more staff, under ten at SWB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our head count this year is similar to what it was pre-pandemic in our system. Impacts to crewing are usually related to absenteeism due to illness – it is double to what it has normally been and COVID isolation protocols are making it more difficult.</li></ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruiting and retention efforts are underway across the organization.</li> </ul>
3.	FAC review and enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Recent events and updates include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication of the BC Ferries Commissioner’s Review of Community Engagement and FAC Process, and BC Ferries’ formal response</li> <li>FAC Chairs Meeting and Annual General Meeting</li> <li>Completion of the FAC annual survey</li> <li>Finalizing of a FAC application package</li> <li>Refreshing of membership terms (rolling two years, with no maximum)</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Developing in-person community check-ins for SGI:</b> Suggesting terminal drop-ins (meet terminal staff, ask questions, see what has been happening on the SGI routes)</li> </ul> <p>Traffic could be a problem at SGI terminals. We will look at locations close to the terminals and/or community centres instead.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Sailing by sailing data request from FAC</b></li> </ul> <p>Quarterly audited data is not at same level as being requested by FAC, i.e. sail-by-sail. Data does not include overloads, is it possible to receive this information?</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Brian will take a look at providing leg data once again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Process for handling inquiries from FACs, what to expect</b></li> </ul> <p>Brian has provided an outline of how communications will work with FAC when things are happening across the system</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> BCF will connect with FACs on contingency plans before storm season.</p>

		<p>Desire to increase FAC meeting frequency, maybe 3-4 times per year. BCF is holding all-FAC member meetings virtually twice per year to supplement the individual FAC meetings, and provide members with an opportunity to ask questions and receive updates from BCF. We will not increase frequency of individual FAC meetings, but FACs are welcome to meet as often as they like on their own.</p>
4.	Salish Vessel deployment on Route 5/5a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vessels are set to be deployed onto the route in October 2022</li> <li>Queen of Cumberland is anticipated to replace the Mayne Queen on the route in November</li> </ul> <p>Salish entry planned for October 12, 2022. Contingency plans will be based on the use of the Salish Vessel. BCF will use the SOP in place for using a Salish on the route.</p>
5.	Terminal Development update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Sturdies Bay Terminal Development Plan:</b> The full Terminal Development Plan has been developed and is currently undergoing final approvals. Information on the plans and the engagement process can be found here: <a href="https://www.bcferreriesprojects.ca/sturdies">https://www.bcferreriesprojects.ca/sturdies</a></li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Carrie to provide an update on timing for TDP implementation, and whether there will be any operational impacts (e.g. water taxi/barge). If so, desire is to have in-person community engagement to support these plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Village and Otter Bay Terminal Development Plans:</b> Engagement is planned to begin for the development of these terminals this year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In this phase we plan to gather feedback about ideas to improve the terminal from key stakeholders and partners including the Ferry Advisory Committee, First Nations, the community and government stakeholders</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Carrie to provide an update on timing for TDP implementation.</p>
6.	Update on wi-fi at terminals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project to install Wi-Fi service to 14 additional ferry terminals was completed on July 28th, 2022, bringing the total number of terminals with free Wi-Fi access to 21 including:</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Galiano Island (Sturdies Bay)</li> <li>- Mayne Island (Village Bay)</li> <li>- Pender Island (Otter Bay)</li> <li>- Salt Spring Island (Long Harbour)</li> <li>- Salt Spring Island (Vesuvius Bay)</li> <li>- Saturna Island (Lyall Harbour)</li> </ul> <p>Otter Bay seems to be problematic with connecting to wi-fi.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Natalie has sent the information to BCF IT team to look into connection and availability.</p>
7.	Printed schedule distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution for new schedules has begun and will be available at terminals and on vessels</li> </ul> <p>Schedules for shoulder season are being distributed.</p>
8.	Signage at Otter Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage at Otter Bay is part of the request being made for IT upgrades in the next fiscal year</li> </ul> <p>ACTION from previous meeting: BC Ferries to look at adding a digital display in the Otter Bay waiting room. COMPLETE.</p>
9.	Service Notices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have heard from the FAC about the importance of timely and accurate service notices, and the importance of emailing updates</li> <li>• We get a high volume of feedback about the frequency of service notices and teams work to balance between flooding people's email inboxes with ensuring major changes to service are well communicated</li> <li>• Customer care and OSC teams are empowered to make decisions as situations evolve and BCF supports the decisions of these teams</li> <li>• Teams have reviewed the Service Notice process at length, and adhere to the following process:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The initial Notice is posted and emailed to all subscribers</li> <li>○ For minor changes (e.g. a delay is now 35 minutes rather than 25) the Notice is updated on the website but not emailed again</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For major changes (e.g. delay has turned to cancellation, sailing reinstated) Notices are reissued and emailed again to all subscribers</li> </ul> <p>ACTION from previous meeting: Take feedback to the team involved in improvements to SN process. COMPLETE.</p> <p>Service Notices for Cumberland seems to be particularly challenging – Notices come for Mayne Queen, and then nothing for Cumberland. Travellers are left to guess about delays. Recommendation to issue SNs as delays accumulate through the day, issue a SN each time Cumberland hits SWB, as well as include information about the Cumberland in the Mayne Queen SN.</p> <p>TSA announcements were not keeping time with SNs coming out. Would be good to coordinate announcements and Notices so all travellers are aware.</p> <p>It can be difficult for people to assess the knock-on impacts to other routes within SGIs as vessels are delayed and create a domino effect.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Community relations to pass on SN feedback to customer care.</b></p>
10.	Route 9 communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website wording and phone messaging around Route 9 afternoon sailing cancellations and customer options for travel was updated</li> <li>• 'Waitlist' message removed and thru fare messaging added</li> <li>• Phone tree process has also been concluded</li> </ul> <p>ACTION from previous meeting: Natalie to look at amending website wording and phone messaging around Route 9 afternoon sailing cancellations and customer options for travel; as soon as reasonable. COMPLETE.</p>
11.	Website and digital signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current conditions</li> <li>• The layout of the schedules on the website have been updated to have thru fares show below the schedules</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeting full launch for the BCF App early December following successful ongoing development &amp; beta testing. We will be seeking FAC involvement in beta testing.</li> <li>• Keeping digital signage current</li> <li>• Saturna concern: highway signage</li> </ul> <p>ACTION from previous meeting: Darin and Natalie to look at adding text to online schedules referring to priority loading for the 3:10 sailing and report back to the FAC by early February. Annotation and text added on each schedule table on BC Ferries website. COMPLETE.</p> <p>SWB pixel signage for Saturna – the sign south of Sidney. Could be used for SGI information.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Terminal Manager and Community Relations to look into possibility of including SGI information on signage.</b></p> <p>BCF will be extending some of the improvements and changes being made with app development to the website, e.g. user interface, booking flow etc.</p> <p>Current conditions working group has been struck to examine user interface and data challenges being experienced today. We are aware of the concerns and issues, and are working on ways to resolve this. Including % full, % available messages.</p>
12.	Terminal loading procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tsawwassen terminal foot passenger accessible washrooms and consistent loading pattern</li> <li>• Separating under and overheight vehicles at Swartz Bay</li> <li>• Foot passenger trailer at Tsawwassen Berth 2 and protocol</li> <li>• BCF dedicated commercial trailer traffic and potential hazards during SGI loading and unloading</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION from previous meeting: Cam to discuss refinement of process and communications around foot passenger loading with the Tsawwassen manager.</b></p>

		<p>Cam has opened discussion with new terminal manager re: loading of foot passengers at TSA and sequence with loading vehicles, desire to have foot passengers load first consistently. Foot passenger trailer at Berth 2 (access to washrooms, signage needed).</p> <p>Overhead walkway at TSA is back in operation, but is dependent on tides for ability to use.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Natalie will look at signage for foot passenger trailer.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Community relations to recommend SN to let people know the overhead walkway is back in service and will check with ops to confirm parameters.</p> <p>Concern over fast moving commercial trailer traffic across SGI lanes and safety of vehicles and pedestrians.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Terminal Manager will talk with commercial services to flag concern around traffic.</p>
13.	Discontinuing Shoulder season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic levels are high between Spring Break and Thanksgiving</li> <li>• Having non-peak and peak schedules only would increase service when it is needed</li> <li>• This would also lessen the number of schedules needed in print and changes made to the website</li> </ul> <p>Main hurdle will be cost as it will require an additional crew for Route 9/9a to maintain peak through shoulder season. It will have a crewing impact as well with the potential to need an additional watch.</p> <p>Demand is growing can BCF look to expand service to match growth? Could BCF try a pilot? If it does require two new crew, hiring crew to fill this could be challenging for a trial. Could be costly as well which may not be conducive as a pilot.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> BCF will look at what needs to be done to extend the season, e.g. crew required, cost involved to help inform this discussion.</p>
14.	Resident/Essential Service and/or Medical Priority Loading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How much of % total deck space to be reserved?</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will there be island deck space allocations for food, water, medical, sanitation deliveries?</li> <li>• Medical priority loading? MAL or TAP?</li> </ul> <p><b>BCF Note:</b> There are no details on priority loading programs at this time though executive is aware of the desire for these programs across the system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We are happy to receive questions/considerations from the FAC at this meeting as we continue to explore how we could deliver such a program</li> </ul> <p>Several routes are feeling the pressure of changing demand and volumes. Priority is a public policy decision which requires provincial involvement. It is with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure for consideration as to what priority policies could look like.</p> <p>It is a challenging request, as there are many facets to a program like this, i.e. who qualifies, what direction of travel is it for, how to enforce etc.</p> <p>Waiting for direction from Ministry on policy and whether it will or won't become a wider public policy, and what that would mean/contain.</p> <p>It may be possible for BCF to consider assured loading programs in place of resident priority.</p>
15.	Reservations on Route 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How far in advance?</li> <li>• What % of total load? Deck space allocations per island?</li> <li>• Would some sailings be blacked out?</li> <li>• What about FT residents that get a last minute referral to medical facilities?</li> </ul> <p><b>BCF Note:</b> There are no details about a reservation program for the SGIs at this time, though we are glad to hear there is interest in developing such a program from the FAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We are happy to receive questions/considerations from the FAC at this meeting as we continue to explore how we could deliver such a program on this complex route</li> </ul>

		<p>Could do Route 5 reservations the same way we do Route 9.</p> <p>Would staging of traffic be difficult at SGI terminals? Changes at terminals are likely needed to support changes and growing demand. Terminal Development Plans are underway to support these changes. In some cases there is no opportunity to expand, e.g. Otter Bay, and in all cases there is a finite amount of space to expand. Reservations are a good way to handle congestion because people will not show up to travel without booking.</p> <p>Concern over limiting access to ferry travel, if reservations are required, e.g. needing a credit card, not everyone in a community can do this and it creates a division between those who can easily access travel and those who cannot.</p> <p>Allocating deck space on the vessels for reservations also has the potential to pit Islands against each other, and FAC notes caution around the impact of doing this for inter-Island relations.</p>
Call for additional items		
	Community Bus Proposal	<p>Community bus on Mayne looking to start a program to bring people with medical appointments over together. If there weren't enough people travelling for medical, they could supplement with others looking to come to Sidney to shop for the day. This takes people out of cars. BCF is open to a proposal for this. There is precedent on Cortes, Klahoose Nation is running a similar program. We could connect the two groups to share lessons learned.</p>