
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2013TRAN0018-000408
March 5, 2013

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Government releases coastal ferries consultation report

VICTORIA - The Coastal Ferries Consultation and Engagement summary report was released today, summarizing the input received during an eight-week public consultation process conducted in fall 2012.

The consultation and engagement provided information to British Columbians on the challenges facing the coastal ferry system. The process sought public input on the principles to guide service adjustment decisions and strategies to further the Province's long-term vision for the ferry system.

Over the eight weeks, senior ministry staff hosted 40 public consultation meetings in 30 communities, along with one webinar. More than 2,000 people attended the public meetings and almost 2,000 feedback forms and written submissions were received. The strong public response clearly reflects how much people value the coastal ferry service.

Given the volume and detail of comments received during the consultation, government will take the time necessary to thoroughly review the feedback and develop a plan for service adjustments to achieve \$26 million in savings to 2016.

The government initiated the consultation and engagement following the review of the Coastal Ferry Act by the independent BC ferry commissioner. The commissioner raised the need for a long-term vision and indicated that all parties – BC Ferries, ferry users and the Province - need to contribute to ensure the sustainability of the system.

In response to the commissioner's review, the government committed an additional \$79.5 million to 2016 to reduce pressure on fares, bringing B.C. taxpayer funding to more than \$180 million this year.

There will be further consultations before any specific service reductions are implemented.

Quotes:

Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Mary Polak —

“I would like to thank all those who took the time to participate in the consultation process. The high level of participation in this process reflects the importance the people of B.C. attach to the coastal ferry system. We will carefully consider this report and take some time to determine how best to move forward to ensure that coastal communities are connected in an affordable, efficient and sustainable manner.”

Quick Facts:

- The consultation began on Oct. 29, 2012 and ended on Dec. 21, 2012.
- More than 2,000 people participated in 40 consultation events in 30 communities, plus one webinar.
- More than 1,200 feedback forms were received (both online and hard copy).
- There were more than 700 written submissions.
- An online public opinion poll surveyed 500 people.

Learn More:

A copy of the Coastal Ferries Consultation Summary report is available at:

www.coastalferriesengagement.ca

Contact: Kate Trotter
Government Communications and Public Engagement
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
250 356-8241

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect