

Bruny Island Ferry Reference Group – Communiqué

Attendees: Mathew Fagan, Trevor Adams, Lindon Haigh, Siobhan Gaskell, Deleeze Chetcuti (proxy for Belinda Loxley), Aaron Archer (proxy for Joe Bennett)

Absent: Alan Gluyas, Paul Davis, Belinda Loxley, Joe Bennett

The purposes of the meeting held at SeaLink office on the 31st of March, 2025 was to work through the community concerns raised by the introduction of a winter timetable effective 5th May, 2025.

The meeting was informed (via Mathew Fagan, who had made direct inquiries with the Transport Commission) that the Transport Commission requested SeaLink propose an optimised winter timetable reflecting the reduced off-peak season demand.

This request was made by the Transport Commission to SeaLink due to the decision by the Tasmanian Minister for Transport (strongly supported by the FRG) not to implement a booking system.

The structure of the existing contract between the Transport Commission and SeaLink is based on a booking system being implemented and not an ongoing queuing system. SeaLink is of the view that a queuing system is a higher cost model than a booking system. The Transport Commission did not wish to make any alterations to the existing agreement and instead requested SeaLink to manage any higher ongoing operational costs through operational efficiencies, such as a winter timetable.

SeaLink informed the meeting that acting upon the Commission's request, it developed a timetable based on passenger data and operational insights and submitted it for approval to the Transport Commission.

Currently, SeaLink are operating 32 departures Monday to Friday all year round. Also, when required, SeaLink operates the third vessel (The Bowen) with 13 departures either side to help manage demand, allowing an average of 45 services per day. In contrast, the publicly available timetable in the original contract allowed for a minimum of 24 services (with up to 15 additional 'on demand' services that would only be available and published subject to

forward bookings). The new winter timetable allows for 25 departures either side, still more than the minimum contractually agreed.

Nonetheless, based on the feedback received thus far, SeaLink will provide a recommendation to the Transport Commission to make changes to the timetable – including adding a 7.10am service ex Roberts Point on Sunday morning, and retaining a 7.00pm service ex Kettering daily.

The meeting noted there is still ongoing concern on the potential impacts to school excursions and students attending off island activities due to the removal of the 2.10pm ex Kettering/2.30pm ex Roberts Point. There is also concern that there are too few services operating from Kettering after 4.00PM, which has an impact on residents returning from town.

There was also concern from the community that the winter timetable would have direct impact on SeaLink marine crew. SeaLink informed the meeting that the timetable will allow SeaLink to retain their highly skilled staff, complete maintenance through the window of the middle of the day which will be undertaken by their staff.

Following questions from community members, SeaLink advised the group there is no consideration being given to reviewing the fare structure of residents and landowners.

SeaLink will provide State Growth a summary of this meeting including the current feedback received thus far from individuals, community groups, business operators and the FRG for better community consultation when such major changes like this occur.

An update will be provided once a response is received from the Department of State Growth/Transport Commission and provided to the FRG members.