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Mr. Gordon Macatee
BC Ferry Commission
RPO Box Hillside
Box 35119
Victoria BC
V8T 5G2

November 30, 2011

Re: Review of Coastal Ferry Act

Dear Mr. Macatee,

On behalf of the Powell River Regional Economic Development Society (PRREDS), I am writing to express our organization's strong support of the submission made by the Ferry Advisory Committee Chairs (FACC) on October 20, 2011 (Attached). Our organization fully supports the position the Chairs have taken in regards to the Coastal Ferry Act and the recommendations that they have put forward.

Our society's mandate in the Powell River Region is investment attraction, business retention and expansion and capacity building (investment readiness). In addition to our organizations endorsement of the position and recommendations submitted by the FACC, we felt it important that we share further input from our region's businesses. Also included with this letter you will find an aggregate report that was extracted from interviews with 136 local businesses through our Business Retention and Expansion program. As part of the interview the businesses were asked to rate services in the region, and in this particular case BC Ferries (Fares and Service), from Excellent (1) to Very Poor (5). As you can see in the report, 56.6% of the respondents rated BC Ferries service as Poor or Very Poor, and another 25% ranked it as just fair.

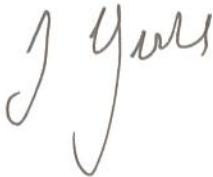
In addition to the information collected from Business Retention and Expansion Interviews, PRREDS partnered with the Powell River Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Powell River to survey local companies to generate more detailed information about how increases in BC Ferry fares have impacted their business. As can already be surmised, a majority of the 40+ businesses that responded related that fares had significantly impacted their bottom line. Whether it is shipping product and supplies, employee travel or attracting customers and tourists to the region, the majority reported that it was costing their business too much and some noted that they had considered relocating to another community. Others noted that relocation was not an option as their business was Powell River dependent and if they were no longer profitable they would simply close their doors.

As part of the survey, businesses were asked if fares were to be reduced, by what percentage did they think was reasonable to make their business profitable and sustainable? A majority of the respondents indicated that a reduction of 25% or more was reasonable.

PRREDS invites your office to read the surveys provided as it believes this sampling of the Powell River business community is a fair and accurate representation of the how local companies feel about the increase in BC Ferry fares over the past 9 years and at what levels they should be set at to allow the community to prosper in the future.

In closing, on behalf of our Society I would like to once again express our support for the submission made by the Ferry Advisory Committee Chairs and the recommendations contained therein. PRREDS would also like to thank you and your staff for the consultation process that has been conducted as part of the review of the Coastal Ferry Act. As has been stated before by our agency and others, action must be taken to correct the negative impact increases in BC Ferry fares have had on the economic and social well being of the Powell River region. The cost of access to our community is a critical issue in ensuring the future success of local businesses and the attraction of new investment.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Yule". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jay" and last name "Yule" clearly distinguishable.

Jay Yule
President

Aggregate Report on Local Services from BR&E Surveys		
(Rating: 1 - Excellent; 2 - Good; 3 - Fair; 4 - Poor; 5 - Very Poor 6 - No Opinion)		
Please rate the following: - BC Ferries (Fares and Service)		
	Geographic Area 1	
	Count	Percent
1	9	6.62
2	15	11.03
3	34	25
4	18	13.24
5	59	43.38
6	1	0.74
Totals	136	100
Legend:		
Date Range:		
1/1/2010 - 11/30/2011		
Date Field:		
Date of meeting		
Note:		
Detailed information will not be available for companies outside of your geographic view rights/scope.		
Note:		
Reports represent information from participating companies only and, therefore, may not provide an accurate representation of the market area.		
Note:		
Companies with multiple visits during the specified timeframe will only be counted once in this report: Only the most recent visit for these companies will be returned in this report.		
Company Agreed:		
Yes		
Geographic Area 1:		
Vancouver Island/Coast - Powell River - Powell River North; Vancouver Island/Coast - Powell River - Powell River Proper; Vancouver Island/Coast - Powell River - Powell River South; Vancouver Island/Coast - Powell River - Texada Island		

Survey of Powell River Businesses Regarding BC Ferry Fares and Service

The Powell River Regional Economic Development Society (PRREDS) is preparing one last submission to the BC Ferry Commissioner's Office regarding the review of the Coastal Ferry Act. In an effort to help validate its argument that a rollback in fares is necessary for the continued profitability of existing businesses and the attraction of new investment, PRREDS is asking local business owners and managers to fill out the following survey and return it to its offices no later than November 28, 2011 (srandolph@prreds.com or 201A 7373 Duncan Street, V8A 1W6). The answers provided will be included in the Society's submission to the Ferry Commissioner. Thank you for taking the time to help us with this matter.

Business Name: Accurate Location Surveys

Owner/Manager: Glenn Allen

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Most of our business is local supply of professional services so we are affected only slightly in a negative way.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_X__

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

A small amount of our work is done on the Sechelt Peninsula, Vancouver Island and the Interior so if ferry fares increase it will increase our overhead slightly depending on individual projects.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

N/A

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

We would notice 30%.

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Business Name: Thomas Cook Coccoła Travel Agencies

Owner/Manager: Anne Parker

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

All of our clients have to take ferries to complete their travels. Of course it adds on about \$150 just for 1 person & their gas. It is always a bone of contention. We cannot attend any training sessions as it costs too much to send us away & the owner is not prepared to pick up the cost whereas in the past we were able to attend trade shows, & training seminars.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_x

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

As stated in question 1 it adds onto our clients vacation plans considerably & of course it can be a deciding factor as to whether they even go. All of our supplies come from out of town & the cost has been passed on to us, even though our bottom line has not increased.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

N/a

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

At the minimum 25%

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Business Name: Agius Builders Ltd

Owner/Manager: Jim Agius

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Negatively---freight charges are an issue, no professional construction consultants in PR means they come over from VI, we have staff, vehicles and machinery that travels back and forth weekly, Also PR being a destination recreational destination, ferry fares will always have an impact on people buying or renovating in PR.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes__X_ No__

Comments:

We have two office locations, PR & Courtenay...PR being the primary. We are considering having Courtenay become the primary because of less travel for consultants, staff etc.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Same as above and a major factor is the ferry schedule. It should be berthed in PR to give us longer work days on VI.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Pick-up trucks, one ton cube vans, large freight trucks.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

20%

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Business Name: Alof!i Consultancy, a division of Alof!i Enterprises Inc.

Owner/Manager: Christien Kaaij

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Not so good: we are a consultancy firm and work outside of this community too. Our travel expenses have gone up and it is getting harder to compete.

We also bring in trainers and our cost per course will go up do to the travel expenses.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes x_ No____

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

To go to our clients.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.) n.a.
5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

30%

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Business Name: Beach Gardens Resort & Marina

Owner/Manager: Joan Barszczewski, General Manager/Director.

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Freight charges on every product purchased, no matter whether it is a local product or out-of-town product keep increasing. Tourism is down considerably due to the continual increase in the cost of travelling to Powell River.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No X

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Travel to and from Powell River/bring in customers and products. Due to the cost of the ferries, family traffic is much less than a few years ago when the ferry was a more reasonable price.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

ACE, Purolator, DHL, as well as mail. The price of each one is directly affected by increased ferry costs.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

20%.

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Business Name: Breakwater Books

Owner/Manager: Sean Dees

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

We have seen a drop off of sales during our main tourist season.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No X

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Every single item that we sell or use has come by Ferry.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Freight Truck

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

Rolling them back 25%-35% would be helpful. They have gone up 80%+ over the last few years. If I tried to tell my customers that a cup of coffee or a book was going to go up 80%+ over 4 years, I would be out of business. If there was any other reasonable option than using the ferry, I would. (ie Toll Road)

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Business Name: **Coast Realty Group (Powell River) Ltd**

Owner/Manager: **Dawn Adaszynski**

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Ferry Fares have had a NEGATIVE affect on our business. In the last few years, as ferry fares have increased, we have seen an approx. 20% drop in our "out of area" Buyers. We were sitting between 55% to 60% out of area Buyers/45 to 40% Local Buyers – those numbers have now shifted to 40% "out of area" and 60% local. This is not a result of the poor economy – as the total overall percentage has drop, but rather it is the proportion of Buyers who regard living in Powell River as prohibitive because of the ferry rates. Most of these Buyer's are retired, and are often purchasing New Construction. When the Real Estate industry suffers – the whole town suffers.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No__**X**_

Comments:

Given the nature of our business that is not an option, but we have decreased the amount of space we accommodate and have cut expenses as revenue declined.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

We currently rely on 40% of our Buyer's reaching Powell River and shopping for a home in PR, via the ferries. A simple little weekend jaunt to look at some real estate has become costly.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

N/A – but as our head office is in Nanaimo, I will often wait till a Manager's meeting to pick up supplies.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

45% - or make it so we only pay one way to Vancouver or Vancouver Island – as Langdale is.

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Business Name: Dave Formosa Holdings

Owner/Manager: Dave Formosa

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

- Less people coming into our air & ferry dependant community to buy our homes & land we develop. As well as for our seasonal tourism businesses on Powell Lake & in Lund, they have affected us very negatively. The high costs of fares are keeping travellers away from the upper Sunshine Coast. We are told this directly by those affected.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_X__

Comments: I can't re-locate, but have considered moving away because of the negative impact fares have on doing business in Powell River. Although, I would never leave Powell River – I love it.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

- Land sales
- Products for our retail & hospitality stores & facilities
- Bring customers to our tourism businesses – hotel & restaurants/pub

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

- Freight truck

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

- 25%

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Business Name: **Studio on Dogwood**

Owner/Manager: **O.C. Dobrostanski**

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business?

I used to average three to five sales of painting or art print orders per week (average approx \$800.00) during the summer from off-island tourists. I now rarely get any tourist traffic to come to the studio during the tourist season. This year was exceptionally poor for tourist based business.

In order to attract more tourists I have advertised (as of late June, 2011) that I will reimburse patrons for the ferry costs based on the amount they spend, but that cuts into my already diminished profit margin. People have commented that they are interested but no takers have yet responded. (This is November)

Costs for shipping my products off-island and getting supplies (even if I have to go ashore personally) back to Texada have increased. These costs when passed on to the customer discourage purchases. If I absorb the increases then my profit margin is diminished.

I also have had to consolidate my orders if special framing supplies, paint or support materials are needed. In other words, I have to wait to accumulate a number of orders to make one large supply shipment rather than several small ones to save on shipping charges. This makes for longer time for completing projects and thus income is slower. Creating an inventory of supplies is wasteful and costly. That is not an option because my work is largely commissioned and thus no two products are the same.

Costs for services (maintenance and repairs to utilities and shop equipment, have increased as a result of having fare increases for the commercial tradesmen's vehicles. The added costs make the business less viable.

There have been a number of people who have moved off the island because the ferry costs affect their financial status. Ferry costs cut into their living expenses and made the margin too narrow for comfort. This reduction in that demographic has affected my own business by about 15%. The reproduction market is very high profit compared to the material and labour intensive making of original art. People in that sector were more likely to buy reproductions of my art and smaller items, but even that part of the market has diminished due to those who have left. The loss of this part of the market has strong negative repercussions for my business.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes **X**

Comments: **I considered this as a possible solution, but it would have meant I would have to rent space, move my equipment, and spend money for fuel and ferry fares and over two hours each day travelling to and from the ferry landing and on the ferry.**

I would have had to also redo my website, stationery, advertising brochures and contact galleries, patrons and suppliers to info them of my re-location.

If I were to sell my residence and buy a replacement property in Powell River (and much less so in Courtenay) I would be losing half of what we have here in equity. This is not possible with the disparity in property values, taxes and living expenses.

It takes time to build a thriving art business. A move of location for the studio would be catastrophic for my already reduced business.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Products and supplies are mostly shipped by truck (some by my personal vehicle, but only small quantities of supplies) on the ferry. All our tourist business is totally ferry dependent. Only a small proportion of my business is from the Web.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

It depends on the situation. Most of our equipment, larger materials and finished products are shipped by truck, smaller ones by Canada Post. If people come from Powell River or are tourists they take the products in their personal vehicles if the art is small. I ship larger pieces by truck.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled back, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? **It will take time to build back up but I believe if the rates were cut sufficiently by half or 40% my business could probably increase by at least 60%. The tourist trade would have to be rehabilitated, and my old customers contacted and the reduced ferry costs promoted avidly by myself, the community and BC Ferries Corp.**

I believe the financial damages to outlying ferry dependent businesses resulting from these fare increases are cause for class action and deserve serious provincial/legislative attention. The damages will never really be fully regained but the lessons learned are invaluable for future consideration.

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Business Name: Dr. Ashok Varma Inc

Owner/Manager: Dr. Ashok Varma

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Freight charges are definitely an issue, it is getting more and more costly to have products brought here.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_X__

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

We do have quite a few patients who come over via ferry, from both Texada and Comox, however they are having challenges with rising ferry costs. I have had two families recently relocate to other communities as the cost for their children and grandchildren to visit was prohibitive. There were also issues with getting onto the ferry, even with pre-purchased reservations (mostly the Comox side).

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Freight truck

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

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Business Name: Down to Earth Clayworks

Owner/Manager: Brenda Neall

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

I believe increased ferry rates, combined with a downturn in the economy, have adversely affected my business. Many of my customers are tourists and my sales volumes are down ~50% in 2011 compared to years 2009 & 2010.

Although my suppliers are on Van Island and the lower mainland, I only order supplies 4-6 times a year – see #3.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No__X_

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

I am dependent on ferry services for both access to some of my customers (tourists) and supplies. To minimize costs of obtaining supplies which fortunately I only need to do 4-6 times a year, I combine trips to the island and lower mainland for supplies with personal trips or ask family and friends travelling to and from Powell River to pickup supplies on my behalf.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Van

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

I don't know. I don't know how much of the downturn in tourist traffic is due to the increased ferry fare costs or simply a reflection of the overall current economic situation.

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Business Name: **Encore Toner Exchange**

Owner/Manager: **Bob Davey**

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business?

Ferry fare increases have had a substantial negative effect on my business. Since early 2008 fares for a vehicle and driver have risen from approximately \$31.10 to \$46.20 each direction which has raised my annual travel cost by approximately \$785.00 per year. As a small business, this is very substantial. $(46.20 - 31.10 = \$15.10 \times 2 \text{ (both directions)} \times 26 \text{ trips per year)}$

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No__**X**_

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service?

The nature of my business warrants the pickup of empty toner cartridges from my customers in order to re-manufacture them and deliver back to clients. My customer base covers Powell River, Lower Coast, and the Sea to Sky corridor which requires travel through the area every two weeks. Also supplies are shipped from other points in Canada via couriers which also depend on the ferries.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use?

Van

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled back, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable?

I truly believe that the coastal ferries are a part of our highway system and should be free, just like the inland ferries. This is especially important considering that the inland ferries have alternate road

routes available which the coastal routes do not. If this is not possible, then I think rolling back the 70% increases since BCFerries was privatized would be suitable (adjusted annually per COLA rates).

Survey of Powell River Businesses Regarding BC Ferry Fares and Service

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Business Name: FIRST CREDIT UNION Group of companies

Owner/Manager: David Craigen , CEO

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Ferry fare increases and terrible scheduling have affect us negatively as our company have staff that travel between Powell River and Comox several times in a week. The increase costs have caused us to curtail our regular meetings and try to make less trips to keep costs down. Which of course effects our business protocol and culture throughout our group of companies. AS THE ONLY MEANS OF AUTO TRANSPORT OUT OF OUR COMMUNITY WHY ARENT WE A FREE SERVICE FERRY LIKE ROUTES IN THE INTERIOR OF BC? Those interior routes actually even have the option of alternative routes and we do not! Someone please explain that logic to me?

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares?
Yes_X__ No__

Comments:We have this discussion many times and will continue to as long as the BC ferries continue to increase costs!

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

We have managers and staff commute between our operations in Comox and Powell River, sometimes daily during the week. PLUS we have a daily courier service between branches!

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Car and walk on

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

Not sure as I would need to review but off the top 33% would be a reasonable start, however as I mentioned in question 1 how can some BC routes that have driving alternatives be free and Powell River that does not have an alternative pay that is UNBELIEVABLE and a business decision that I would love to have explained to me!

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Business Name: Flowers by Cori-Lynn

Owner/Manager: Shawna Graham

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

This has affected my freight charges. They have increased by about 12% this year. We don't seem to have the tourist that we use to have. I also find that the locals are not spending as much.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_X_

Comments: I have considered the possibility of moving to another location to get cost down. If the spending in our community continues to diminish, then I will have to look at what my options are to keep my business alive.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

I have to travel back and forth to Vancouver on a regular basis to pick up product. I also have my flowers and other items shipped in on a regular basis.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Freight truck, Pick up with a truck or van.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

I would say 25 to 30 %.

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Business Name: Footprint Nature Explorations Ltd.

Owner/Manager: John Hermesen / Christy Krebber

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Fewer people travel to the Sunshine Coast; Lower Mainland, rest of Canada and abroad (U.S. and Europe).

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_X__

Comments: We need this location to execute our business (tourism)

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

We need people traveling to and from Powell River, we've always promoted CirclePac. Which is discontinued by BC Ferries because their lack of transparency and promoting.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Car, pick up

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

Go back to 5 years and only add inflation.

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Business Name: **Malaspina Soap Factory Inc.**

Owner/Manager: **Lindalu Forseth**

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.) **Terrible - Due to the Ferry Price increase I saw a definite drop in my business since the tourist season was simply not there. My freight costs have gone up and my ability to get to my out of town shows was greatly diminished by the high cost of the ferry. I ended up having to close my shop down because I was relying heavily on the tourist season starting in May as is usual here.**
2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? **No**____
Comments: **Instead of shutting the business down completely since I am unable to relocate I have had to turn it into a part-time weekend business and seek work elsewhere.**
3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...) **The ferry impacts everything I do, receiving raw goods for product, shipping, getting to customers and simply everyday life.**
4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.) **Canada Post**
5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...). **The ferry prices need to roll back at least 30% to start bringing people back into our community as tourist.**

Survey of Powell River Businesses Regarding BC Ferry Fares and Service

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Business Name: Modern Windows

Owner/Manager: Dan Agius

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Our issues are directly related to internal and external freight, we spend approx \$5,000 per month on ferry fares.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes_x__ No____

Comments:

It is definitely on our radar, Modern would still operate as a service provider but the manufacturing would make more sense to be located on Vancouver Island.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

In going and out going freight.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

The majority is handled with our own trucks.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

30%

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Business Name: Newport Electric

Owner/Manager: Henri Newport

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

They have increased our freight costs and thereby increased costs to the customers decreasing the amount they will spend on a project. The HST has probably made more of an impact than the price of the ferry costs

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_/___

Comments: our service industry relies on local people

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)
4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Freight truck

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

20%

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Business Name: Owlworks

Owner/Manager: Karen Andrews

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Ferry costs have always helped local people to decide to use my service and product since I am local and seem to offer a fairly unique service. However in order to meet my clients needs I have to shop in other communities on Vancouver Island or down in the lower mainland. I generally have to defer my clients requests until I have several lined up or have another need to travel, whereupon I can then access suppliers to obtain the materials needed, otherwise the cost to the customers would be prohibitive.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_x__

Comments:

This is my home and I have no desire to leave it. To relocate would be prohibitively expensive with no guarantee that I could do enough business to make up for that.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Primarily my business usage of the ferry requires personal travel to obtain materials, although I occasionally have some basic materials shipped.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Picking up supplies, I use a pickup, shipping is by freight truck.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled back, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

It would require a minimum rollback of 25%

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Business Name: [Powell River Phoenix Printers](#)

Owner/Manager: [Colin Palmer](#)

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

[My freight charges continue to rise as the ferry fares increase.](#)

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_[No](#)__

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

[Receiving product and supplies](#)

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

[Freight truck or courier](#)

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

[Difficult to answer but 50% would be a start for my business](#)

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Business Name: Powell River Building Supply Ltd

Owner/Manager: Patrick Hull

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

The thought that high fares might keep people home shopping is unlikely to any great extent. The people who shopped out of town did so generally when required to leave for doctor appointments or other family reasons. I believe ferry fares most affect my business by increasing courier rates, cost of business travel (ie training, meetings and freight we pick up ourselves on the Island) and most definitely by deterring people from moving here in the first place. Economic growth is crucial for any community and BC Ferries is having a direct impact on young people and retirees. Why would they choose here when it is now too high and will be absurd in less than a decade at the rates being promoted by our provincial government.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No X

Comments: This is not an option for me. I have a building supply and we require steady growth or we will not survive. We have no options if we wish to stay in business. We have an excellent location, building and business plan. We just need economic growth.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Receiving product, travelling for various business purposes and taking our trucks out of town for service and product.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

We haul Super-B trailers (60' units) into town with our main product. This is a \$1000 return trip on BC Ferries. It was aprox \$500 in 2003. Couriers deliver a fairly large amount of product to us and we take our crane trucks to the Island to pick up local Island product.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled back, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

At least 30%. This would be an aprox 20% increase over 2003 by me estimation.

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Business Name: Powell River Gymnastics Society

Owner/Manager: Joyce Percey – Executive Director

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Not good... not as many competitors attend our competitions, workshops, training events. The high cost of ferries and the drain on our fundraising efforts limits the amount of competitions our club attends – no competitions are offered in Powell River except the ones we try to host..

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_x__

Comments: No, but my staff has moved on to other communities frustrated by the cost and time required to coach and operate from Powell River

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Travel to and from competitions...judging and training courses/certification...attendance at meetings for Vancouver Island and BC boards of directors that we are required to sit on.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Freight truck/barge

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

The max...families already have to pay for food, gas, accommodations on the road...makes competitive sport only accessible to the wealthy which cuts our enrolment...

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Business Name: Powell River Living Magazine

Owner/Manager: Isabelle Southcott

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

High fares and freight charges are hurting businesses which results in less money to spend in other areas such as advertising. Decreased ferry traffic due to high fares means fewer shoppers which impacts businesses bottom line which in turn affects advertising revenue, my sole source of income.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes X No___

Comments: Yes I have considered moving to Vancouver Island where there is a larger population to draw from. Although the island is also ferry dependent its larger population base provides more stability.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

We have advertisers on Vancouver Island who we check in on. We are always looking to expand our market so we visit the island to pitch prospects.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

We pick up our products in a truck or a vehicle.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

Between 15 to 20 per cent.

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Business Name: Powell River Sea Kayak Ltd.

Owner/Manager: Adam Vallance

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Not good. Some tourists simply do not come due to the high costs of ferry travel. Others who still come do not stay as long as the ferry fares have eroded their budget.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No x

Comments:

My product is fixed with the destination and my locations in Lund and Okeover (for Desolation Sound).

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

95% of my customers come from outside of Powell River. In addition to this, I use ferries for receiving supplies and shipping of kayaks.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Truck and trailer

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled back, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

25%

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Business Name: Powell River and Region Transition House Society
and
Powell River Community Services Association
(We provide all the Victim Services in Powell River.)
Owner/Manager: Executive Director: Julie Chambers

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)
 - Almost all our professional development and training is completed out of town. This means that we pay the high cost of travel for staff members to attend conferences, workshops and courses. The specific course work cannot be found in our small town and is necessary to keep staff informed with current information.
 - All our programs have Regional Meetings on Vancouver Island. Usually these meetings are in Nanaimo to balance travelling for all in the region. This means that the staff members must take a vehicle in order to travel the rest of the distance from Little River, by car to Nanaimo.
 - I have a three staff members and a volunteer that live on Texada Island. They are trained and very good at their work. Both societies are Non-Profit. We pay for professional development but we do not pay their transportation costs to and from home. It would be very unfortunate if good employees were lost because they could not afford the travel costs.
 - Between Comox Valley and Powell River and Region Transition House Society, there has been collaborative work for clients in a Bridging for Employment program. The Ministry level program contract was awarded to Comox Valley with the rider that they introduce the program to our clients in Powell River and to the clients in Campbell River. This was during the Winter of 2010 and Spring of 2011. They travelled twice a week for nine months. Most of the time, the presenters from Comox Valley walked on the ferry, but on the occasion that a car was needed as part of the program content, this was an added cost to the program.
2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No___ Absolutely not

Comments: We provide services for victims of physical, mental, sexual and in the case of Poverty Law Advocacy, financial abuse. Powell River is very fortunate to have these programs for vulnerable members of the community.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)
 - See Number One above.
 - Also, we occasionally transport clients to sister city Transition Houses if there is reason to believe that the client's abuser is extremely dangerous. These costs are absorbed by the Powell River and Region Transition House Non-Profit contracts. The higher the ferry fares, the higher the bus costs.
4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)
 - Courier
5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).
 - We are Non-Profit; however, the more the costs increase, the less the staff is able to participate in meetings, conferences, workshops, presentations and collaborations with sister-city programs.
 - A tiered system would make sense:
 - For businesses: - 30 % reduced rate with official business documentation
 - For school teams - 25 % reduced rate with official school documentation
 - For local residents - 20% reduced rate with official residential documentation
 - For visitors - 5 % reduced rate because we need to support Tourism

Local community, business people and community residents should be able to travel on BC Ferries' "highways" at a lesser rate than visitors on holiday.

Thanks for the opportunity to have input.
Sincerely,
Julie Chambers
Executive Director

Survey of Powell River Businesses Regarding BC Ferry Fares and Service

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Business Name: Relay Rental & Sales

Owner/Manager: Jim Agius

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Negatively---freight charges are an issue, we have staff, vehicles and machinery that travels back and forth weekly,

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes X No

Comments:

We have two office locations, PR & Courtenay...PR being the primary. We are considering having Courtenay become the primary because of less travel for trucks, merchandise, staff etc.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Same as above and a major factor is the ferry schedule. It should be berthed in PR to give us longer work days on VI.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Pick-up trucks, one ton cube vans, large freight trucks.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

40%

Survey of Powell River Businesses Regarding BC Ferry Fares and Service

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Business Name: Seabreeze Resort

Owner/Manager: Elaine Thoma

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good - customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good - freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.) Seabreeze relies on out of town business. Tourists think twice before getting on a ferry when they have to pay for a family of 4. Since there is no alternative access to Powell River the ferry has always been an essential service and should be priced as such.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_x__

Comments: How do you relocate your home and business? We would just have to shut the resort down.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...) All of these.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

5. All of these forms of transportation

6. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...). 20% in the off season to encourage the traffic to use the ferries in those months.

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Business Name: Sheridan Dance Academy

Owner/Manager: Mariah Sheridan-Runions

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

With more ppl staying in town to shop I've had more customers purchasing items from my dance store, but the only reason I run the "store" portion of my business is to help my customers from having to go out of town (ie. Spend money on ferries) to purchase their children's dance attire. It's extra work for me to even HAVE a dance apparel shop, and I wouldn't run one if I didn't have to.

I cannot afford to bring in guest teachers and choreographers from out of town. This is something that MANY dance studios do in other places. There is no way I could pull that off with the additional \$100 round trip it would cost to have them come.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes X

Comments: If the ferries costs become so inflated that we can no longer afford to live here AND travel to the island and Vancouver to visit our families then we would be forced to move. This would require me to close my business here, and open a new one wherever we chose to live.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Receiving of products for my dance apparel shop. Which is, of course, affected by ferry prices – if the ferry charges more, I pay more in shipping.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Freight Truck

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

I think that a 25-20% roll back would be something we would ALL benefit from – the only people losing out would be the people at BC Ferries that are already making too much money. We, the people who USE the ferries deserve a break. We help Powell River stay alive by living here and running/owning businesses, why must we pay such a large price to do so? Will we all eventually be forced to move away from our beautiful home? I sure hope not.

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Business Name: Southwatch Enterprises Ltd.

Owner/Manager: Kel Reid

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Not so good

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No X

Comments:

This would be an absolute last resort, but I suppose it could happen. I know of other families that have moved away because living here was unsustainable.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Receiving product, customers travelling

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Truck

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

25%

I believe it would also make a difference to local families if some form of resident card could be used to obtain a local discount to travel to the island. Courtney/Comox. I know we would be able to obtain more local goods (at better prices for our family) if the cost of travelling by ferry wasn't so expensive. Although this doesn't necessarily increase Powell River business, it does make it more affordable to live here.

Survey of Powell River Businesses Regarding BC Ferry Fares and Service

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Business Name: Powell River SPCA

Owner/Manager: Audrey Hill

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Not good that is so expensive for potential adopters to travel to other communities for the pet they want to adopt. Also conversly it affects our ability to transfer animals into Powell River.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_X_

Comments: That would not work for obvious reasons.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

One to four times a month.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Truck or airline.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

30%

Survey of Powell River Businesses Regarding BC Ferry Fares and Service

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Business Name: Spick and Sons Ltd.

Owner/Manager: John Spick

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

They make it more difficult to have affordable access to customers, consultants and suppliers. It also increases our freight costs which negatively impacts the end cost of our projects.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_X__

Comments: I chose to live in Powell River and have centered my life here. Moving would be the option of last resort as my customer base is here.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (eg: access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

We travel to the Mainland and Vancouver Island to meet engineers, architects, suppliers and customers. We also use the ferries for transporting supplies in with which to build our projects. It is a vital link to our business.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Pick up and freight truck.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

We could live with a 25% rollback. We understand that living on the coast has it's challenges and associated costs. We are happy to pay a reasonable fare. Other than the fares we are very happy with BC Ferries service record.

Survey of Powell River Businesses Regarding BC Ferry Fares and Service

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Business Name: 95.7 Sun FM

Owner/Manager: Liz Dick

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Businesses have closed in Powell River at a faster rate than new businesses opening.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No___

Comments: Vista Radio who owns Sun FM has many stations throughout BC. Powell River is just one location.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Receiving supplies, and by staff travelling for business meetings.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Freight truck.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

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Business Name: [SunLund By-The-Sea RV Park](#)

Owner/Manager: [Ann Snow & Ron Cochrane](#)

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

[There has been a significant reduction in RVs \(motorhomes, trailers, etc\) making the trip to Lund from the lower mainland and from Vancouver Island. Almost without exception, our regular customers and new inquirers cite the cost of taking an RV on BC Ferries as being excessive. Our business has had to offer financial incentives in the peak and shoulder seasons to encourage visitors to come to the area. Considering these difficult economic times, this stresses our business' financial situation and is limiting growth both to our business and to our community.](#)

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_X__

Comments:

[We have considered moving to another community however, since we operate an RV park, it would involve selling our business since we can't take it with us.](#)

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

[Our business does not use the ferry service per se. However 90% of our customer base uses the ferry service and about 80% of our customers are in RVs. The Under Length Rates are high but it's the Over Length Rates that really affect our business. Those rates are very hefty.](#)

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

[We would use a courier or freight service.](#)

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

We would like to see ferry fares rolled back by 20%. This would be marvellously marketable. Barring that, perhaps the occasional Fare Saver Discount would help promote the area.

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Business Name: Sunny Side Coffee Break

Owner/Manager: Dee Little

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Not so Good. My business is directly affected with a negative impact because other local businesses are affected by the lack of tourism happening in Powell River because of the increased Ferry costs. I am in marketing and because of the lack of tourism, there is a lack of potential customers to see the marketing efforts, thereby causing local businesses to hold onto more of their marketing dollars.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ **No**

Comments: This is not an option for me at this time. If my personal circumstances were different, then yes, this is something I would strongly consider doing.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

I do receive items shipped that do come on the ferry, but the main way my business is affected is the lack of visitors to Powell River affecting my potential clients businesses.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

I receive my shipped items by courier

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

I believe it would need to be a minimum of 25% rollback, but ideally it would be closer to 30%-50%

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Business Name: [Sunshine Coast Tours](#)

Owner/Manager: [Bryce Christie](#)

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Cost of travel to a destination is always an obstacle when tourists make a buying decision. Ferry fares form part of that cost. Several things have been done in the last few years to help ease our tourist customers through the process. We, the tourism sector needs to build on things like:

- i) packaging ferry fare into packages so there is no opportunity for the tourist to pause and reconsider
- ii) make use of the reservation system to ease the anxiety associated with ferry travel
- iii) highlight the excellent value of BC Ferries against similar services in other areas

Cooperation from BC Ferries in these areas is as important as pricing.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No__x_

Comments:

The tourism industry has an opportunity to use the ferry access as a selling point. It's part of what separates us from other areas. It's one of the nicest boat rides in the world! It makes us elite and somewhat exclusive. Riding the ferry is like being allowed access into a special wonderland.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

[Almost all of our customers arrive by ferry. All of our supplies arrive by ferry.](#)

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Freight truck would be the most common.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled back, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

A rollback needs to be considered to be fair to everyone.

It makes sense that this essential service be government owned and run on a not for profit basis. It hurts to see one route turn a profit and then have that profit used to subsidize another area. This seems unfair. Roll the fare back so the cost recovery percentage is consistent among all routes.

I support the argument that the ferry routes are similar to highways. The level of service (quality of highway or frequency of ferry runs) isn't always equal but most communities have some access provided. I'm not aware of any situation in a remote area where a user fee is charged on the one highway leading to town. Even the Coquihalla toll has been removed.

Attn: Kim

Survey of Powell River Businesses Regarding BC Ferry Fares and Service

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Business Name: Texada Transfer Ltd

Owner/Manager: Gord & Ann-Marie Milne

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

I'm in the freight business and I have commercial Trucks on ferries daily. Average monthly costs app. \$22000⁰⁰ - Not very good for P.River or my company

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes ___ No X

Comments: My business in servicing P.R. customers, we have no other options, other than barging not viable for my size of company.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

- Daily Freight carrier - Vancouver - P.R.
- P.R. - Texada Isl.
3 1/4 times - RR - Comox
week

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

- Freight Trucks, 5 tons, tandem axle trucks,
- pup trailers - Commercial Rates highest of
all B.C. Ferry customers.

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled back, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

- Ferry fares make freight expensive
- Very Time consuming - waiting / schedules /
not matching up / cancellation of 5:35 AM
sailings in summer
- Reduction of 25-30% - Align schedules to
lower Mainland Better, year round.

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Business Name: The Knack

Owner/Manager: Mar Grantham/Janette Agius

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Aside from increasing freight costs, which are absolutely are an issue, I have found many residents commenting that they are avoiding out of town shopping due to high travel costs on the ferries.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_x__

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Receiving products and transporting tourists

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Freight truck and courier vehicles

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

About 5 to 10 %

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Business Name: TMS Moving, Storage and Restorations

Owner/Manager: Robin Tremblay

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Answer: Being in the Transport business we see Fare increases as a increase to our customers costs therefore we see less business because of them. We also see increases to our freight expenses to bring in our Packing materials and have considered getting out of selling packing boxes and supplies due to the high costs.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_X_

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Answer: We own a Moving Company. We require the ferries to get our clients in and out of Powell River.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Answer: Freight Truck

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

Answer: 20%

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Business Name: Vision Marine Consulting Ltd.

Owner/Manager: Mark Biagi

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Not so good. It costs me more to get materials and equipment to Powell River; my costs for work outside the community have gone up making me less competitive. I have to take the hit from my profit margin and that limits my ability to grow. We should not have to pay to get out of Powell River, we should not have to pay at all given that the ferry system is part of the highway network in BC. Fares should be cut back. The more expensive they become, the less I will use the ferrys

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No X

Comments:

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

My business is affected by the increase in ferry fares in all of the ways mentioned above as well as increasing my costs to attend conferences and workshops that are organized in other communities.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Freight Truck

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

20%

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Business Name: Vancouver Island University

Owner/Manager: Arlette Raaen

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

Access to Vancouver Island for essential business meetings is becoming more and more difficult financially. This will have a serious impact on our viability. The Powell River – Comox run is intended to service Powell River, as a remote community.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes___ No_x__

Comments: Relocation is not possible in this case. We are stuck with the ferry fares.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Staff and customers use the ferry to work and access services.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Not applicable

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

I think if fares were held at their current level with no increase, and an investment was made to address other issues such as home porting in Powell River we would be much better served. The schedule is also very problematic.

Survey of Powell River Businesses Regarding BC Ferry Fares and Service

The Powell River Regional Economic Development Society (PRREDS) is preparing one last submission to the BC Ferry Commissioner's Office regarding the review of the Coastal Ferry Act. In an effort to help validate its argument that a rollback in fares is necessary for the continued profitability of existing businesses and the attraction of new investment, PRREDS is asking local business owners and managers to fill out the following survey and return it to its offices no later than November 28, 2011 (srandolph@prreds.com or 201A 7373 Duncan Street, V8A 1W6). The answers provided will be included in the Society's submission to the Ferry Commissioner. Thank you for taking the time to help us with this matter.

Business Name: Your Dollar Store with more

Owner/Manager: Eve Camenzind

1. How have Ferry fare increases affected your business? (ie. Good – customers are shopping locally, travelers and customers can access my products, not so good – freight charges are an issue, out of town shipping is a problem, etc.)

-Freight charges are one of the highest in BC according to suppliers.

-Fewer out of town tourists

-Sales Reps refuse to visit Powell River due to travel costs resulting in limited selection of products and service.

Out of town buying trips for my business have become almost unaffordable and I had to cut the amount of these trips in half due to rising costs which makes it that much harder to purchase stock.

2. Have you considered relocating your business to another community as a result of the increase in Ferry fares? Yes ☒ No ☐

Comments: I'm definitely evaluating the viability of my business not just because of the cost of doing business, but because of the viability of the community it self. People won't move or stay here at the current cost of transportation.

3. How does your business use the ferry service? (e.g. access to customers/ receiving product and supplies/ shipping product/etc...)

Refer to 1.

4. If you are shipping or receiving products and supplies what mode of transportation do you normally use? (ie. Car, pick up, freight truck, etc.)

Freight truck, courier (cube van), car

5. If Ferry fares were to be rolled backed, by what percentage do you think would be reasonable to make your business profitable and sustainable? (e.g. 30%, 25%, 20%, 15%, 10% etc...).

I don't feel that I can honestly attach a % to this question. But if things continue as they are it will kill the community and hence my business. Not to mention the real-estate investment I made in Powell River.

Ferry Governance: A Matter of Ideology

Presented

to

the BC Ferry Commissioner

by

the Ferry Advisory Committee Chairs

October 20, 2011

Ferry Governance: A Matter of Ideology

In the beginning . . . BC Ferries was born July 18, 1958 in response to critical service disruptions in the ferry service between the lower mainland and Vancouver Island. WAC Bennett created the organization to provide reliable, safe, affordable transportation to Vancouver Island and to the many coastal communities that depended on lifeline ferry service.

It was a matter of ideology.

In 2003 . . . British Columbia Ferry Services, Inc. (BC Ferries), a quasi-private company was born April 1, 2003, a creature of Bill 18, the *Coastal Ferry Act*. The March 12, 2003 press release, under the heading “**Guaranteed Fair Rates**” proclaimed “ . . . annual rate increases will be modest and predictable.”

The position of Commissioner was created as part of the *Act* with six guiding principles (attach 1), beginning with placing priority on the financial sustainability of ferry operators and concluding with the legislation’s bottom line, moving toward greater user pay so that the government could reduce its contribution.

Not one of the six principles made any reference to the interests of ferry users or the communities dependent on the service.

The new and current ideology.

Since 2003 . . .

1. Ferry fares have increased on average over 70% on the 18 minor routes, 80% on the north/central coast routes and 40% on the three major routes (attach 2). Fares have increased over 100% on several minor routes.
2. Ferry passenger traffic, system-wide, has declined 2.9%, or 6.0% from its peak in 2008. Vehicle traffic has declined 2.1%, or 5.6% from its 2008 peak. Minor route passenger traffic has declined 6.6%, or 8.4% from its 2005 peak. Minor route vehicle traffic has declined 5.7%, or 8.4% from its 2005 peak. (attach 3).
3. As a result of traffic losses on the non-major routes, caused largely by the devastating fare increases, the non-major routes have lost money in each year of Performance Term 2, resulting in their being cross-subsidized by the major routes (attach 4).
4. BC Ferries’ Return on Equity has fallen to 1.2% and is expected to be negative this year (FY2012) (attach 5).

The Principles, a closer look . . .

- (f) **financial sustainability** – As long as the Commissioner has no authority over the transportation service fee, he's not in a position to manage the financial sustainability of the operator. The customer is unable to carry the whole load of increasing costs. Current situation is a case in point; all the cost increases have been loaded on the fare-paying customer, with the result traffic has dropped, collapsing net revenues. With one of the two financial levers out of his reach, the Commissioner has been and remains unable to materially influence the sustainability of the operator.
- (b) **commercial approach** – This is an undefined term but suggests something like what Chrysler or Pepsi-Cola might employ to win market share while improving profit for the share-holders. Or to keep from going bankrupt and closing their doors. Commercial, in the sense of a free-enterprise, non-subsidized company refers to a competitive, unregulated, non-essential market. BC Ferries is a government-supported, essential service operating in a regulated, natural monopoly environment. It shares neither the challenges nor the potential rewards of Chrysler or Pepsi-Cola. An approach reflecting consistent high value for money would be more appropriate than a so-called 'commercial' approach. The principle sounds nice but is without practical meaning in this situation.
- (c) **alternate service providers** – This has been repeatedly attempted and borne no fruit for the past eight years. The only service that's been devolved is a passenger ferry - essentially a scheduled water taxi service. The coastal ferry system is a natural monopoly that doesn't lend itself to fragmentation. Rather than trying to bring in competition to keep costs down, it would be more productive to conduct value for money audits from time to time on the operator. While alternate service providers might work out in stand-alone situations, such as the passenger ferry noted or the possible cable ferry, the program has been an expensive exercise in futility, and should be dropped.
- (d) **minimize expenses** – This is a self-evident motherhood statement. In fact, the Commissioner does not have the resources, and possibly the authority, to examine and challenge the legitimacy or reasonableness of BC Ferries expenditures. His attempt to do so in the PT3 preliminary fare cap decision was met with a legal challenge by BC Ferries. Either the Commissioner or the Province, or both, need to have comprehensive audit information to assure BC Ferries are minimizing their expenses, while providing 'safe compliance with core ferry services'. In the absence of such information and authority, this principle is without meaning.
- (e) **cross-subsidization** – In fact, the major routes have 'cross-subsidized' the non-major routes for the past three years. It's been the inevitable outcome of the non-major routes losing money, as they lost traffic due to their fares reaching and exceeding the barrier level for many travelers. There is nothing the Commissioner was, or is, able to do to prevent it. The issue of subsidization between routes is a red herring. Routes 1 and 2 have historically 'subsidized' Route 30. The minor routes and Route 3 have

'subsidized' the north/central coast routes. Whether routes make or lose money is, and will ever be, the result of geography and population distribution. There will always be some routes stronger financially than others. What they share is that they're all part of the British Columbia coast, populated by British Columbians with an expectation of safe, reliable, affordable transportation access. Elimination of 'cross-subsidization' has no place in determining how the system is to be configured. Rather, appropriate, affordable fares need to be determined for each route, and the support funding needs to be available accordingly.

- (f) **user pay** – this presumes the user contribution was artificially low. Yet no evidence to support that conclusion has been presented. As well, no reply has been forthcoming to the question of 'how much user pay is intended?' Tariff revenue on the 18 minor routes has increased by 54.6% while the transportation service fee has increased 4.0% since 2003. On Rte 3, tariff revenue has increased 59.4% while the transportation service fee has *dropped* 26.3%. On the north/central coast routes, tariff revenue has increased only 19.5% due to collapsing traffic. Their transportation service fee has increased by 207.1% due to an infusion to offset the capital costs associated with replacement of two major vessels and related terminal upgrades, and transfer of funding from Rte 3. Briefly, the user has been paying through the nose while the basic service fee has remained frozen for eight years, with the exception of the northern adjustment. The principle has been carried to a costly extreme. Until provincial highways and public transit bear the obligation to increase user pay so that the Province may pay less for their operation, this principle is inappropriately applied to BC Ferries.

Conclusions . . .

1. **Fare increases have NOT been “modest” or “predictable”.** They have outstripped inflation by a factor of 500% to 600%.
2. **Traffic has fallen to its lowest level in decades** primarily in response to barrier level fares, particularly on the non-major routes.
3. **The major routes have been obliged to subsidize the non-major routes each year of PT2** as a result of loss of traffic on the non-major routes, primarily as a result of crushing fares.
4. **BC Ferries have not come anywhere near meeting their target return on equity in any year in PT2** as a result of diminished revenue resulting from traffic declines on both the major and non-major routes.
5. **Communities have suffered economically and socially as substantial declines in minor route traffic have led to businesses shrinking or closing, families being isolated, schools losing enrollment, young people leaving and tourism plummeting.**

Recommendations . . .

1. Go back to basics . . .

Q. Why do we have a ferry system?

A. For the same reason we have a highway system, to tie British Columbia communities together, by providing transportation for people and necessary goods and services.

- ### **2. Then, consider the appropriate ideology. We suggest it needs to be focused on serving British Columbians and British Columbia coastal communities, not trying to make BC Ferries operate as if it were a non-essential service in a competitive, unregulated market.**
- ### **3. To apply an appropriate focus, one that recalls the original ideology, the existing guiding principles should be withdrawn and be replaced with just one . . .**

To provide a safe, reliable, affordable ferry service

The issue of sustainability of the ferry system is a red herring. It's as relevant as discussing the sustainability of the highway system. The ferry system is part of the provincial transportation infrastructure and needs to be operated, maintained and renewed as necessary with appropriate provincial funding as required.

- ### **4. In order to achieve that 'safe, reliable and affordable service', and to restore some of the lost traffic, it is recommended that the Provincial contribution be sufficiently increased in April 2012 to support a major roll-back in fares on the non-major routes, such as occurred in 1997. At the very least, the contribution should be increased sufficiently to permit non-major route fares to be frozen at current levels for the next four years.**

FACC 20 October 2011

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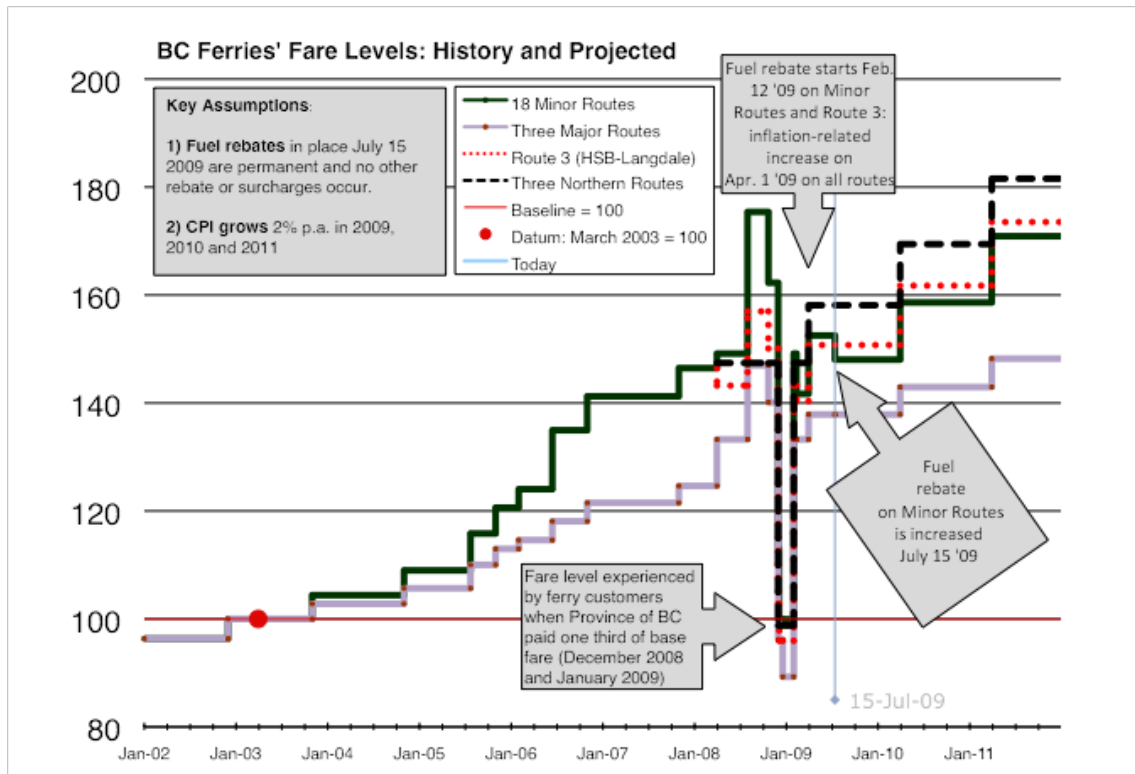
hollingshead@telus.net

Attachment 1

The Six Guiding Principles, from section **38** (1) of *The Coastal Ferry Act*

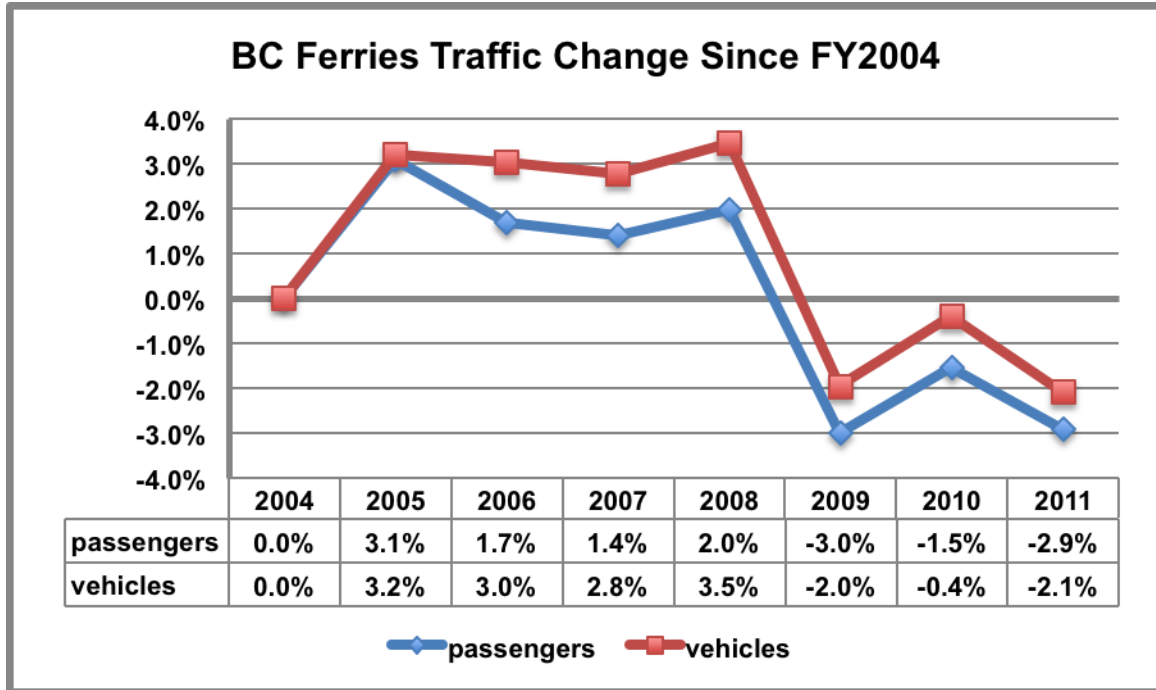
- (a) priority is to be placed on the financial sustainability of the ferry operators;
- (b) ferry operators are to be encouraged to adopt a commercial approach to ferry service delivery;
- (c) ferry operators are to be encouraged to seek additional of alternative service providers on designated ferry routes through fair and open competitive processes;
- (d) ferry operators are to be encouraged to minimize expenses without adversely affecting their safe compliance with core ferry services;
- (e) cross subsidization from major routes to other designated ferry routes is
 - (i) to be eliminated within the first performance term of the first Coastal Ferry Services Contract to be entered into under this Act, and
 - (ii) before its elimination, to be minimized;
- (f) the designated ferry routes are to move towards a greater reliance on a user pay system so as to reduce, over time, the service fee contribution by the government.

Attachment 2

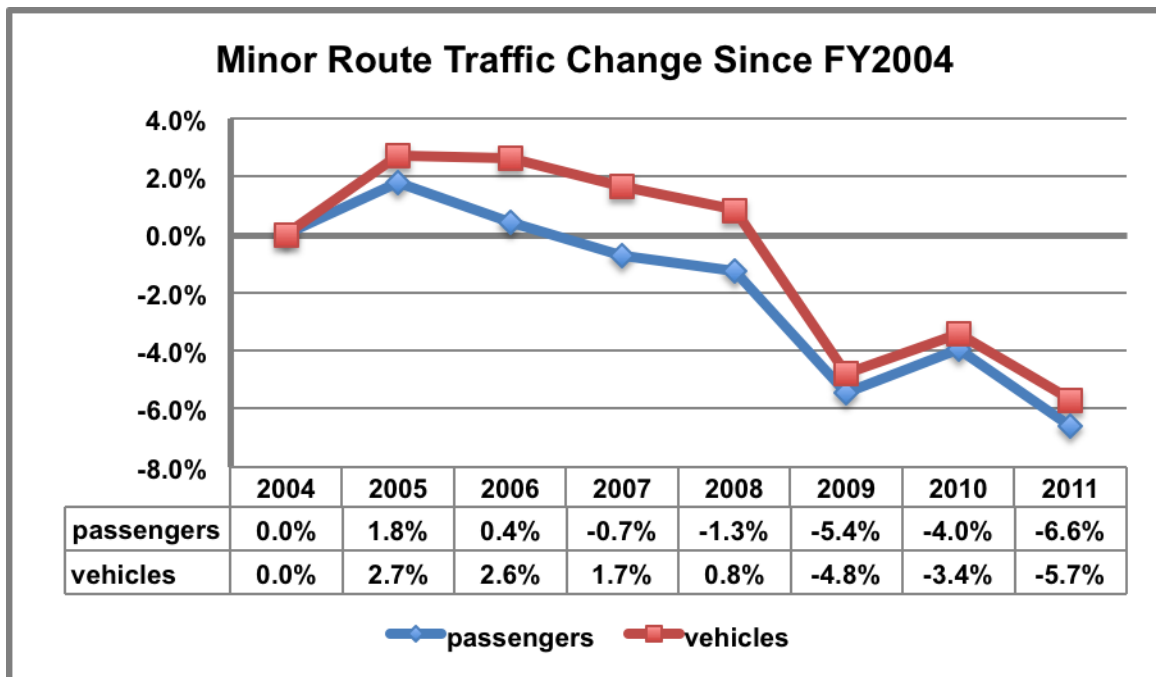


source: BC Ferry Commissioner

Attachment 3

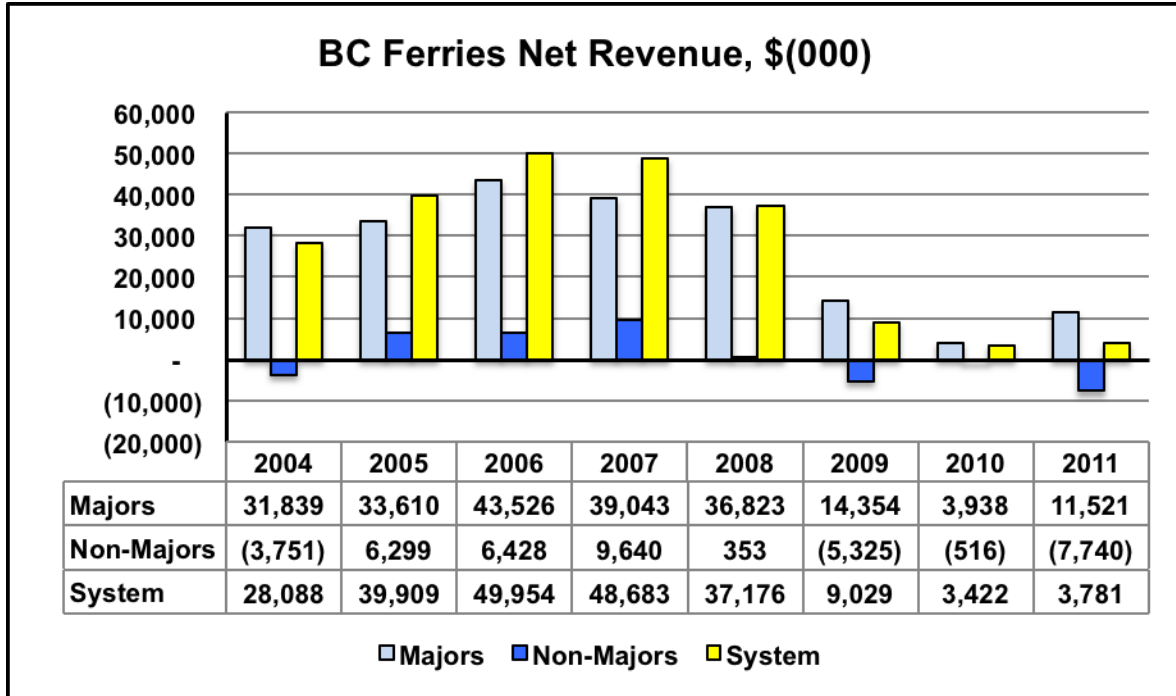


source: BC Ferries Annual Reports



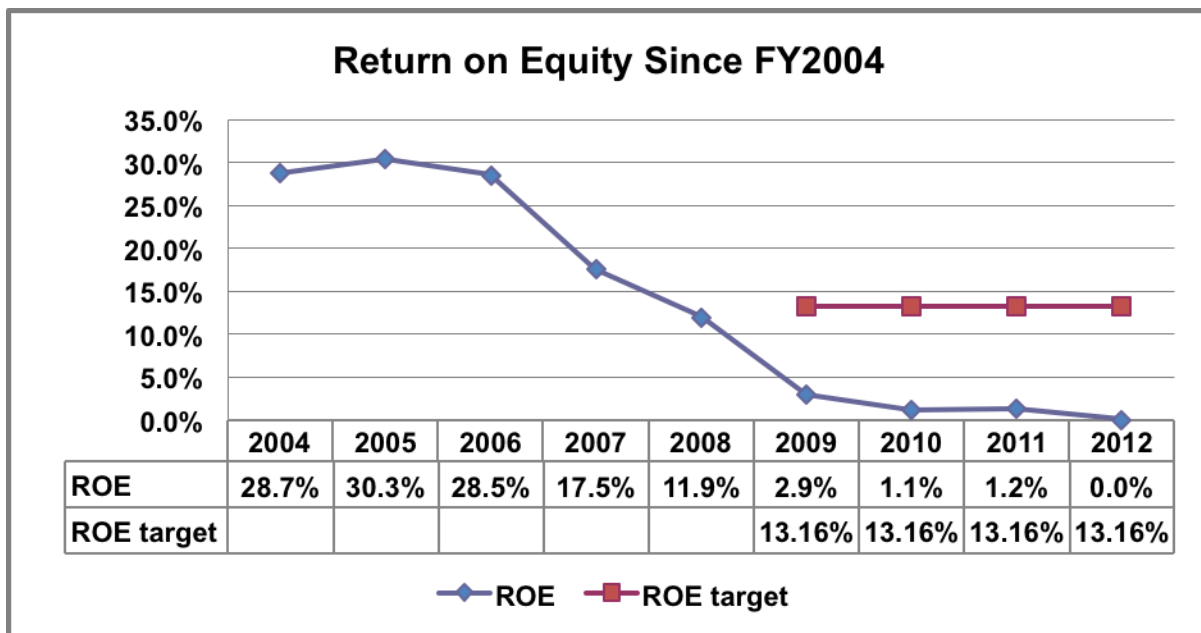
source: BC Ferries Annual Reports to the Commissioner

Attachment 4



Source: BC Ferries Annual Reports to the Commissioner

Attachment 5



source: BC Ferries Annual Reports