

Ministerial Offices | Government of Jersey | Union Street
Jersey | St Helier | JE2 3DN

By email

17th December 2024

Dear Chair,

Ferry Service Operating Agreement

Thank you for your letter of 10th December, in which you ask a number of questions following the appointment of DFDS as the Government of Jersey's preferred bidder for ferry services. I have set out answers to each of your questions below in turn:

- 1. It is indicated greater frequency of ferries to the UK and France in peak periods is anticipated, has a preliminary timetable been established and if so, can this be provided?*

The proposed fleet configuration of conventional and high-speed vessels means that Jersey will benefit from a very good baseline service throughout the year. Bidders were asked to set out their proposals based around Minimum Service Level requirements set out in the Government's Invitation to Tender.

A bespoke Jersey-only service will mean that the Operator can add capacity or frequency at periods of high demand, or around specific on- or off-island events. It can also mean faster sailing times to the UK. For example, in its proposal, the preferred bidder outlined that it intended to have two daily rotations to St Malo on the southern route to Jersey during the week and three rotations during the weekends and every day during the peak season, but until timetables are published, we will not know the frequency of all services.

A full timetable is being finalised and will be published in due course.

- 2. It has been highlighted that a flat rate card for freight will be established, can you confirm if this will be published, and if so, when?*

A flat freight rate card is identified as an important measure to increase competition in the freight logistics market. A volume-based rate card (as currently operated) makes it more difficult for smaller freight logistics operators or new entrants to compete or begin operating at all. With greater competition in the market, the Government sees opportunity for operators to compete on service and price. Price competitiveness can, in turn, be passed on to operators' clients and, in turn, consumers.

As the freight card is being finalised, the Government will take a view on its publication, mindful of possible market sensitivities, in due course.

- 3. It has been confirmed that DFDS has committed to similar ticket prices to now plus RPI for next year. How will affordability for passengers be ensured over the course of the operating agreement?*

Equity and good value for money were essential elements of bid evaluation. In addition to there being maximum caps on each type of passenger fare based on agreed inflationary metrics (as per the current Operating Agreement) the mean average price per passenger fare will be regularly reported by the Operator, and closely monitored, through Government oversight functions, for the duration of the future agreement. Government has insisted on this metric because it gives a much more accurate insight into what customers are actually paying per fare rather than just the maximum allowable yield for the Operator.

- 4. The Panel understands that the current operator undertakes a frequent traveller club. Can you confirm if discussions with DFDS have taken place to identify if they will be honouring previous discounts or accumulated traveller rewards?*

Transfer of any existing statuses under Condor Ferries Ltd's existing loyalty programme did not form part of the bid evaluation. The preferred bidder has indicated that it does not plan to carry over any previous discounts or accumulated traveler rewards from the incumbent Operator's frequent traveler club.

- 5. What provision for pet travel has been identified, and how will this differ from the current service in terms of logistics and cost?*

The preferred bidder has indicated that it plans to offer pet travel on one conventional vessel Ropax vessel. The company is also investigating the option of offering a pet option on the High Speed crafts but I understand that is still to be confirmed.

More broadly, as contractual negotiations conclude on the basis of the proposal put forward by DFDS as the preferred bidder, Officers and Ministers seek to finalise a regime that provide an excellent service and security for the island, and fairness and opportunity to the Operator in turn. Final proposed scheduling, pricing, and customers service agreements in the contract will be reviewed in detail by the Minister prior to any Concession Agreement being signed.

I hope the above information provides clarity to the areas you have raised.

Yours sincerely,



Deputy Kirsten Morel
Minister for Sustainable Economic Development