

12 December 2025 - Anonymous 6

To: Scrutiny Communications <Scrutiny@gov.je>

Subject: Questions re DFDS

Regarding the DFDS contract:

I reside in France having grown up and lived in Jersey and my family are in Jersey so my concerns are the France Jersey route.

I find it very expensive to get to Jersey and my children equally with travel to France. This is heart-breaking. Considering Jersey's past with strong links to Brittany and families originating from Brittany it is tragic that in the course of a year the connections with France have been so damaged. Also Jersey needs continental visitors.

DFDS fares are prohibitively expensive, especially as regards vehicles and passengers. I and other people I know cannot afford them. I tried a dummy booking for March 2026 and Condor (now Brittany Ferries) were half the price. I suspect that had Condor been awarded the whole contract that they would be charging a lot more and this is a ploy to get the business away from DFDS. However the DFDS fare structure is far too high considering the distance involved. Also the fare for one passenger with a car is disproportionately high. It seems that DFDS are favouring cars with more than one passenger.

Do DFDS intend to reduce fares to an affordable level and also not discriminate against solo passengers?

Also a question to Jersey States, have you considered lowering harbour dues for passengers and cars to help DFDS and encourage more tourism into Jersey if they in turn lower their fares to equal this?

In the past there were two routes – north and south of Jersey – with separate contracts. This seemed to work better as the interest of the operator was more focused on each route. Condor seemed to work it their way so that there was one route by timing sailings so that passengers could go straight from France to the UK. This resulted in some pretty bad sailing times from France and consequent knock-on delays for all sailings including to and from the UK.

Do DFDS regard their contract as two separate routes or is this a way of having a route to the UK from France in competition with Brittany Ferries?

Day trips to Jersey were always an attraction for French visitors. Now they are only available at weekends and perhaps a Friday in the season. I am embarrassed and saddened at how so many people of my acquaintance are now travelling to Guernsey. All I hear is Guernsey. Many people I know would prefer to go to Jersey as it has more to offer, but the fares and sailings offered by Brittany Ferries favour Guernsey. A friend of mine is a teacher and organises school trips from Saint Malo which have always been to Jersey. She tried to organise this in 2025 but the sailing days and costs prevented this and the school went to Guernsey. DFDS communications were bad in comparison to those with Brittany Ferries/Condor. She tried again for 2026 and it is the same. The communication with DFDS was again appalling she tells me. Maybe school children are not a huge source of revenue for Jersey but those children will become adults with memories of the island and become future tourists.

Will DFDS be offering weekday daytrips next year?

Will DFDS be improving communications with the public?

I cannot say that my own communication by telephone with DFDS has been bad but their website is not good. It is not user friendly as for an example when entering dates of travel the return date automatically is the same as the departure date no matter what the user enters and has to be input correctly in the stage after entering. A regular user will become familiar with this but a new customer will be confused.

Will DFDS be rectifying the problems with their website ?

Brittany Ferries have gone to great efforts to promote visiting Guernsey. This has clearly worked. They have the advantage of being an established operator and are a French company with roots in Brittany. In fairness to Guernsey the previous service they received from Condor was terrible. I can think of many ways to recover the French visitors and up the attraction of the island, a lot of which is down to Jersey but DFDS need to do their bit with better sailings and lower fares.

If Jersey established an office in maybe Saint Malo – much the same as Maison de Normandie in Jersey but more proactive - working with DFDS to promote the island better perhaps with the giving of advice regarding travel issues such as passport requirements. day trips with ID, ETA etc. and marketing what Jersey has to offer better throughout Brittany, would DFDS work sensibly with this?

Facilitating cross border workers is of advantage to Jersey and with the right links this will work. I know plenty of people who used to do this with difficulty due to Condor's schedules and unreliability but did it and now it is hardly possible. I have at times done this myself. There are people who manage to work in Jersey with family in France but since the inception of DFDS this is a tragedy for them. It used to be feasible especially in the days when there was more than one operator on the southern route.

Will DFDS and Jersey consider this and work practically in that direction?

Another question for DFDS – were they fully familiar with the requirements of the southern route? Where they advised of the need for daytrips for instance? Apart from what was in their contract, did they research the situation fully?