



April 25, 2025

Premier David Eby
Office of the Premier
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Premier Eby,

We are writing jointly on behalf of the ferry-dependent residents of the Sunshine Coast and Bowen Island to express our deep concern about the continuing degradation of service on Routes 3 (Langdale–Horseshoe Bay) and 8 (Snug Cove–Horseshoe Bay).

During the recent Easter long weekend, overloads and multi-hour delays culminated in the breakdown of the *Queen of Coquitlam*, which had to be pushed into berth by a tug after passengers had already spent hours waiting on board. With no additional vessel available all weekend, Sunshine Coast travellers missed appointments and were forced into expensive last-minute hotel stays, while the resulting congestion paralyzed the Bowen Island schedule for most of the day. For visitors to our communities, confusion reigned, and with a lack of BC Ferries resources left our municipalities scrambling to respond. Sadly, these events were not an anomaly but merely the latest illustration of a system on which our communities can no longer rely.

You stated in July 2023 that improving BC Ferries was “a top priority” of your government and that new leadership would “deliver consistent and reliable service.” ([Improvements at BC Ferries a 'top priority' of government: Premier Eby](#)) Eighteen months later, that consistency remains elusive. Despite a provincial injection of \$500 million in 2023 to stabilize fares, core service levels on our routes have not improved, and on-time performance data—when it is released—shows an overall decline.

A governance maze with no accountability

The structural problem is clear to those of us on the front line:

- **Province of British Columbia** – sets the Coastal Ferry Services Contract and controls the public subsidy, yet frequently refers operational concerns back to BC Ferries.
- **BC Ferries Commissioner** – the “independent” regulator, appointed by Cabinet, who does not address day-to-day reliability issues.
- **BC Ferry Authority** – responsible for stewarding strategic direction and capital planning, but rarely visible to local governments.
- **BC Ferries Board and Management** – in charge of operations, yet routinely cite regulatory constraints when communities request solutions.

Each organization can—and often does—point to another for the reason that something cannot be done. Meanwhile, our residents face real-world consequences: lost wages, foregone medical care, cancelled recreation, and escalating costs of doing business.

Continuing gaps in community input

Although BC Ferries announced its *Let's Connect* strategy to replace Ferry Advisory Committees (FACs) today, the glaringly missing guiding principle in this strategy continues to be “accountability.” BC Ferries was not accountable to responding to FACs’ concerns, and FACs were technically accountable only to BC Ferries itself, not to local communities. As long as there is no effectual provincial accountability for BC Ferries’ public engagement, we have little confidence that it won’t continue to be performative. Local knowledge can and should inform schedule planning, loading procedures and customer-experience improvements.

What our communities need now

1. **An accountable governance table.** We urge the Province to convene, by June 2025, a standing task force that includes the Ministry of Transportation and Transit, the BC Ferries Commissioner, the BC Ferry Authority, BC Ferries executive leadership, and elected representatives from ferry-dependent local governments. Its mandate must be results-oriented: establish service standards, monitor performance monthly, and authorize rapid corrective action when targets are missed.
2. **Transparent operational data.** Require BC Ferries to publish real-time and historical route-level data—on-time performance, sailing wait times, deck-space utilization, breakdowns, and crew-related cancellations—so that communities and decision-makers can see where chronic failures occur and track progress toward improvement.
3. **Immediate reliability measures for Routes 3 and 8.**
 - Additional, redundant capacity during peak periods and long weekends.
 - A clearly articulated capital-plan timeline for new intermediate vessels that can relieve the 30-year-old *Queen of Surrey* and provide redundancy for the *Queen of Capilano*; including terminal infrastructure improvements on the Sunshine Coast and Snug Cove.
 - A review—within 90 days—of reservation, loading-priority, and passenger-only shuttle options to mitigate terminal gridlock and allow essential travel (medical, work, school) to proceed.
4. **Restoration of meaningful community engagement.** Whether through reconstituted FACs or a new mechanism, local governments and ferry-dependent First Nations must have a formal, decision-influencing role—not merely an advisory one—in setting schedules, capital priorities and customer-service standards.

A request for decisive action

Premier, coastal ferry service is as essential to our residents as any provincial highway. The current situation is untenable. We therefore request:

- A written response outlining your government's plan to address the four items above, including timelines and accountability measures, by **May 31, 2025**; and
- A meeting with you and the Minister of Transportation before the summer peak season begins.

We stand ready to work constructively with the Province, BC Ferries leadership, and regulators. We also stand accountable to the thousands of residents whose daily lives depend on a ferry system that must function—not in theory, but in practice—every single day.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to your prompt reply and to meaningful, measurable action that restores confidence in the coastal ferry service on which our communities rely.

Respectfully,



Mayor Silas White
Town of Gibsons



Mayor Andrew Leonard
Bowen Island Municipality

cc: Hon. Mike Farnworth, Minister of Transportation
cc: Hon. Randene Neill, MLA
cc: Jeremy Valeriote, MLA
cc: Joy MacPhail, Chair, BC Ferries Board of Directors
cc: Nicolas Jimenez, CEO, BC Ferries
cc: Eva Hage, BC Ferries Commissioner
cc: Peter Lantin, Chair, BC Ferry Authority
cc: Laura Patrick, Chair, Islands Trust
cc: Mayor and Council, West Vancouver
cc: Mayor and Council, District of Sechelt
cc: Mayor and Council, City of Powell River
cc: Board, Sunshine Coast Regional District
cc: Board, qathet Regional District