**Minister, MOTI MOTI:EX**

**From:**minister.moti@gov.bc.ca

**To:**dira.residents@gmail.com

**Cc:**dira@denmanresidents.com,OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX,Minister, EMLI EMLI:EX

Fri, Dec 1 at 1:09 PM

Ron Shepherd, President

Denman Island Residents Association

dira.residents@gmail.com

321562 – Traffic on Denman Island

Dear Ron Shepherd:

Thank you for your letter of October 20, 2023, requesting the provincial government explore a potential direct sailing to Hornby Island from Vancouver Island to reduce traffic on Denman Island.

Under the contract between the provincial government and BC Ferries, the ferry company must meet specific service levels for a set of designated ferry routes. A direct route between Vancouver Island and Hornby Island is not currently being explored. A high-level review of this concept showed that it would result in decreased service to Hornby Island and longer sailing durations. It would also require additional crew in a constrained labour market environment where attracting and retaining certified crew is a significant challenge. As well, a direct route would require investment in an appropriate vessel, which is not currently within BC Ferries’ capital plan.

As you likely know, the provincial government recently worked closely with BC Ferries to implement service improvements for Denman and Hornby islands ferry users, including eight additional daily trips between Buckley Bay and Denman Island between June 22 and September 4. BC Ferries also deployed the Quinitsa between Denman and Hornby islands from May 19 to October 4, providing more capacity. BC Ferries will review the service enhancements provided over the summer and continue to work through the terminal improvement projects, including further engagement with the Denman and Hornby Island communities.

The contract for performance term 6, starting April 1, 2024, includes an additional 996 annual round trips as core service for Route 21 (Buckley Bay to Denman Island) and 308 annual round trips as core service for Route 22 (Denman Island to Hornby Island). In addition, the amended contract now also includes a provision for BC Ferries and the ministry to develop and make public measures that will inform the parties when a review of core service levels on designated routes is required. We will continue to monitor the increased services offered by BC Ferries and work with the company on the measures being developed to inform service level reviews.

You can be sure we will continue to work with BC Ferries and consider additional ways to respond to the concerns of the community and put the public interest front and centre as the company strives to provide the service people expect.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

Rob Fleming

Minister