



PRESIDENT'S WEEK IN REVIEW

June 8 - 14, 2020



Hello all,

A few weeks ago, I committed to writing these regularly again thinking I may have a bit more breathing room. Turns out I was wrong, so here I am writing late, but better late than never.

This past week was hectic, and the highlight was a new hair cut – many thanks to Dean Thulner-Veljacic for getting me in for that!

Instead of going through the week, I'm going to highlight the four issues that were most prominent for me during the week:

1. BC Ferries gave notice of Work Adjustment on the Island Class vessels on the basis of Transport Canada issuing a minimum safe manning document for five crew, and this was a total shock for us. Doubly shocking were the timelines – the vessels would be operated with this compliment starting June 10th! Before this, we were squarely of the mind that BC Ferries was going to operate the vessels with a minimum of six crew, which is already too thin.

Since making that announcement, we've heard from members (and even managers) that this number is too low. When we brought this to Transport Canada's Ottawa offices, their initial reaction was surprise! We thought this was a good sign they would reverse the decision. Sadly, this is not the case. In view of all this, we are seeking Judicial Review on this matter (i.e. suing Government).

2. BC Ferries decided to (very suddenly) implement a "Residents First" policy. Interestingly, BC Ferries has been obligated to give resident's priority since [Ministerial Order 84](#) was enacted on March 26 however it seems there had been no clear policy direction issued to ticket agents or terminal staff about this order until last week. For our employees in Horseshoe Bay, the first they heard of it was from irate Langdale passengers who were waiving around an email from CEO Mark Collins. The resulting confusion and chaos also involved a lot of abusive behaviour toward our members. Obviously, this whole situation was less than ideal, with the details still being worked through by folks on the ground.
3. Masks for everyone! Last week, Transport Canada issued [SSB No.: 15](#), which requests BC Ferries and other ship owners risk assess for when non-medical face masks (NFM) should be required for crew (i.e. any situation where work within 2m of another person cannot be avoided). BC Ferries will issue you two NFMs, and BCFMWU also has a (limited) amount of NFMs it will be distributing to the members through our Local Presidents – please contact them if you want a Ferry Workers mask (priority to front line workers). We have ordered more, so if you miss out this round, we'll look to get you one when the new batch comes in!
4. We were also informed BC Ferries would begin applying the [SSB No.: 12](#) requirements for passengers to carry NFMs as a condition of travel on June 15. This was a surprise to us to the extent that SSB No.: 12 was issued on April 17, but this part of it was not implemented by BC Ferries for almost two months.

In any event, the requirement for passengers to have an NFM as a condition of boarding was met

with mostly satisfaction by ship board employees, and mostly dread by ticketing employees who see this as an increased source of friction and abuse with passengers. It has been our suggestion that all ticket agents have NFMs in their booths to hand out to customers who do not have one, with the expectation that they do. I expect anything less than this will cause problems.

5. Finally, last week the Government posted the second [Temporary Service Level Adjustment Agreement](#), which sets the minimum service level requirements for BC Ferries from June 3 through September 7, 2020. If you review this document, you'll see it bodes well for our members who are illegally laid off and hoping to return to work soon (both casual and regular), and for those returned to work on irregular schedules contrary to the Collective Agreement.

Also, thanks to Local 11/17 for inviting me to your Zoom Local Meeting.

Next Week: More Island Class stuff including grievances, etc., lots of documents to review; a local Town Hall, a general Town Hall; and a new KITTEN!

Thanks for reading, and I hope to see you soon!

In Solidarity,

BC FERRY & MARINE WORKERS' UNION



Brother Graeme Johnston
Provincial President