

From: [TS official]
Sent: 30 May 2023 20:59
To: Minister for Transport
Cc: [TS officials]
Subject: MV Hebridean Isles - Update and other vessel deployment options

Good Evening Minister/PO

[REDACTED]

Using the route deployment matrix, CalMac are advising that the MV Isle of Arran would remain on the route, (MV Alfred to stay on Ardrossan-Brodick) and would be joined by MV Lord of the Isles, removing her from the Lochboisdale service. MV Loch Bhrusda would be redeployed to provide additional sailings on the Sound of Barra. This option is recommended as this would impact on the least number of customers and offers displaced Lochboisdale customers alternative routes for travel via sound of Barra and Castlebay or Lochmaddy connections.

[REDACTED]

They will also continue to pursue other options including looking into the charter of the MV Arrow which at present is not available until mid June (she covers the Isle of Man TT races).

I have attached the full paper from CalMac. They are keen to get the details out to communities tomorrow, and would be happy to have a call with you in advance to answer any queries.

[TS official]

Extract from CalMac Ferries Ltd paper

Caledonian MacBrayne
Clyde & Hebridean Ferries



Islay Options During MV Finlaggan Overhaul 30 May 2023

Background

MV Finlaggan is due to depart for annual overhaul on the morning of Sunday 4 June to allow passage to Dales Leith ahead of her MES deployment on Wednesday 7 June. The Kennacraig – Islay service was due to be covered by MV Isle of Arran and MV Hebridean Isles operating an amended 2 vessel timetable to provide the most capacity possible to the route.

MV Hebridean Isles had been undergoing extensive investigations, repairs and trials due to the ongoing CPP Control issue. However, post overhaul trials on Monday 29 May showed that the issue had not been resolved which is impacting on the vessel's ability to safely berth the vessel. The vessel will be dry docked to allow change of the propellor blades to a more manoeuvrable type to ascertain if this will resolve the issue or help mitigate the symptoms. This work will commence on Wednesday 31 May and is expected to take 2 days plus a further set of extensive trials.

Deployment Options

In order to provide the required capacity on the Kennacraig – Islay route, the following deployment options have been considered:

Option 1 – Redeploy MV Lord of the Isles to Kennacraig – Islay service

Option 2 – Redeploy MV Isle of Mull to Kennacraig – Islay service

Option 3 – Redeploy MV Alfred to Campbeltown – Port Askaig service

Option 4 – Operate Islay with single vessel MV Isle of Arran – DISCOUNTED as demand could not be accommodated and no other alternative routes available to support

Option 5 – Delay MV Finlaggan overhaul – DISCOUNTED as no further extensions permitted from MCA

Other Options Being Explored

We also continue to explore other options to support services including:

- Provision of more sailings with MV Alfred to allow a longer operating day – could impact on maintenance time so being considered by Pentland Ferries
- Chartering MV Arrow – only available from 15 June – end July but could be used to supplement Lochboisdale services
- Chartering of Greek vessel – operational suitability still being determined although wouldn't be immediately available
- Chartering vessel from Northlink – considered but feedback from Serco is that they have no vessel available.

We will continue to explore these options as the situation progresses.

Recommendation

Based on the Route Prioritisation Process, Option 1 is recommended as this would impact on the least number of customers and offers displaced Lochboisdale customers alternative routes for travel via sound of Barra and Castlebay or Lochmaddy connections. Removing the MV Isle of Mull from the Mull service would have much wider impacts as there would be many more customers affected, there are no alternatives for cancelled customers and there is limited alternative routes off the island due to Corran Ferry not currently operating.

From: [TS official]

Sent: Thursday, June 1, 2023 6:26 pm

To: Minister for Transport

Cc: [TS officials]

Subject: Lochboisdale Service Disruption - note for FM

Evening PO

Please find attached a draft note for the Minister to review in light of ongoing disruption and his engagement to provide as an update for FM.

[TS official]

Extract from Note

Deployment Options

MV Finlaggan (Islay service)

Vessel is required to depart for annual overhaul on the morning of Sunday 4 June to allow passage to Dales in Leith. CalMac approached the MCA on Wednesday to ask for a further extension to her certification but they have refused the request. The Kennacraig – Islay service was due to be covered by MV Isle of Arran and MV Hebridean Isles operating an amended 2 vessel timetable to provide the most capacity possible to the route.

MV Isle of Arran - remain on the Islay route, (MV Alfred to stay on Ardrossan-Brodick given she cannot currently operate to Islay due to thruster).

MV Lord of the Isles – to join the MV Isle of Arran serving Islay, removing her from the Lochboisdale service. Unfortunately, this will result in the cancellation of the Lochboisdale service from 3-30 June, which is when MV Finlaggan is expected to return from annual maintenance. If the Hebridean Isles is back in service before the end of June, this cancellation will be reviewed.

Additional crew will be deployed to provide additional sailings on the Sound of Barra service which then offers connection via Oban-Castlebay for displaced traffic.

Little Minch services will be reviewed to provide additional sailings to Lochmaddy for displaced South Uist traffic.

Engagement

I have a meeting scheduled with the Ferry Community Board, and have discussed with CalMac the need for them to review their current Route Prioritisation Matrix to ensure this is taking into account the economic impacts to islands, particularly given South Uist has already seen a significant number of services cancelled in the last year. I expect this to be done in consultation with the Ferry Community Board, as well as myself and TS officials.

KS

2 June 2023

From: [TS official]

Sent: 01 June 2023 09:06

To: Minister for Transport

Cc: [TS officials] **Subject:** Minister meeting South Uist Business Group

Please find a general summary attached for the Minister ahead of the meeting later this morning. If there are any queries please come back to me. I will also ask CalMac for a round-up of this mornings work at the yard prior to the meeting.

[TS official]

Extract from Briefing for MfT meeting South Uist Business Group 01.06.23

South Uist – update 01.06.23

MV Finlaggan (Islay service)

Vessel is required to depart for annual overhaul on the morning of Sunday 4 June to allow passage to Dales in Leith. CalMac approached the MCA on Wednesday to ask for a further extension to her certification but they have refused the request. The Kennacraig – Islay service was due to be covered by

MV Isle of Arran and MV Hebridean Isles operating an amended 2 vessel timetable to provide the most capacity possible to the route.

Deployment Options

MV Isle of Arran - remain on the Islay route, (MV Alfred to stay on Ardrossan-Brodick, she cannot currently operate to Islay due to thruster).

MV Lord of the Isles – to join the MV Isle of Arran, removing her from the Lochboisdale service. Unfortunately, this will result in the cancellation of the service from 3-30 June, which is when MV Finlaggan is expected to return from annual maintenance. If the Hebridean Isles is back in service before the end of June, this cancellation will be reviewed.

MV Loch Bhrusda to be redeployed to provide additional sailings on the Sound of Barra.

The option of providing additional sailings on the Sound of Barra and on the Little Minch to support displaced traffic are currently being investigated by CalMac.

During the period of Lochboisdale cancellations, additional sailings will be provided on the Sound of Barra service to provide connections via Oban-Castlebay for displaced traffic.

Little Minch services will be reviewed to provide additional sailings to Lochmaddy for displaced South Uist traffic. If possible, overnight freight sailings on Ullapool-Stornoway may operate in passenger mode. This is currently under review.

The above option is recommended as this would impact on the least number of customers and offers displaced Lochboisdale customers alternative routes for travel via sound of Barra and Castlebay or Lochmaddy connections.

[REDACTED]