From: [Redacted]
Sent: 28 January 2023 10:53
To: [Redacted] Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; **[Redacted]**
Cc: [Redacted] Minto J (Jenni), MSP <Jenni.Minto.MSP@Parliament.scot>; **[Redacted]**andrew.kain@argyll-bute.gov.uk; **[Redacted]** Hampsey, Amanda <Amanda.Hampsey@argyll-bute.gov.uk>; **[Redacted]** Lynch, Jim <Jim.Lynch@argyll-bute.gov.uk>; **[Redacted]** willie.hume@argyll-bute.gov.uk; Scottish Islands <info@islandsteam.scot>; Minister for Transport <MinisterFT@gov.scot>
Subject: Re: CalMac Ticketing T&Cs Consultation: Stakeholder Feedback

Dear **[Redacted]**, **[Redacted]**and Cabinet Secretary,

The following addressed **[Redacted]'** completely unacceptable response on behalf of CalMac:

Tickets becoming invalid if passengers arrive after check-in closes
You have obfuscated around the subject and have not answered the question. You seem to be suggesting that the solution to the issue is to change the terms and conditions to match what you propose?!?
This is completely unacceptable, both in terms of procedure and outcome.
An ICIA process was followed last year to address potential changes to CalMac's terms and conditions, as expected under the Islands Act. The conclusion to that ICIA was there would be **no** changes to your existing terms and conditions. This proposal is explicit and significant in its deviation from your existing T&Cs. So therefore either:

a) You are disregarding the outcome of the ICIA from last year, and are going to change the T&Cs regardless.
b) You believe that this change was not covered by last year's ICIA, and also believe that no ICIA (or community consultation of any kind) is required before implementing these new policy changes.
c) You believe that you are adhering to your existing T&Cs.

It is unclear from your response which of these possibilities apply. Any of them is completely unacceptable. All that you have committed to is "…to consider your comments and suggestions when formulating our updated communications.". We do not expect you to adjust your ***language*** in response to community consultation, we expect you to adjust your ***decision***.

Please clarify which of a, b, or c applies.

Not only is the procedure unacceptable, but the outcome is **utterly** unacceptable. All of your rationale for T&C changes has had the objective of better utilisation of deck space. That is a legitimate aim, with mutual benefit to both users and operator. We have accepted some painful changes, because they are focussed on addressing this issue. However, this proposal does **nothing** to encourage better deck utilisation. It is entirely punitive, and places a significant stress and financial penalty on users for absolutely no purpose. Just to remind everyone – you are proposing that if a vehicle arrives less than 30 minutes before sailing on a bookable route, that our tickets will become null and void. We will not only loose the certainty of deck space (as is the case now), but we will lose the entire value of our fares. The only behaviour you are incentivising is dangerous driving (if a vehicle has been delayed for some reason); and the only benefit is to the company, in the form of increased fare revenue.

Concessionary tickets for LGV drivers

This issue is of lesser significance than the other two the list, and I will take it up with Transport Scotland as you advise. I would point out however that it has nothing to do with the length of the van. All vans regardless of length are issued a combined ticket.

Advanced Standby
As others have already said, we very much question the basis for saying that the system "…reflect(s) the combined community view." As we understand it, holiday makers were added to list of qualifying travellers as a result of suggestions from community consultees. Can you say how many people made this suggestion? Were they individuals, or were they representatives of formal groups? If so, which formal groups? After the community suggestions were collated and changes made, was there any opportunity for community reps to respond to your presentation of the 'combined view'? We are repeatedly told by management that you cannot discriminate between types of passenger. Whenever we have argued for some form of prioritisation for local users, we have been told that it just can't be done because it would break the terms of the CHFS contract. But you seem to have no problem giving preferrential treatment of tourist visitors **ahead of islanders**. To be clear – in the circumstances of a fully-sold sailing and faced with queue of vehicles attempting to take any available remaining space, a car full of holiday makers will be prioritised over **any** islander travelling, unless they are going to a funeral, have a hospital appointment or are driving a van full of shellfish. So far as the view from Mull and Iona is concerned, we can say that our proposed 'Samso system' of islander prioritisation has the support of 96% of islanders, and even among the tourist industry there was more than 90% approval. This proposal is the exact opposite of the system that has gained overwhelming support on our islands.

[Redacted] - As soon as [Redacted] returns from holiday we would like to have a meeting to discuss these matters.

[Redacted] – Can I please request a phone call or meeting to discuss these topics (and others from other recent correspondence) as a matter of urgency.

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Islands – I'd be grateful if you can please consider whether this process and outcome conforms to the letter and spirit of the Islands Act, and respond to all copied.

With best regards

[Redacted]

Mull & Iona Ferry Committee
www.mullandionaferrycommittee.org
[Redacted]

[Redacted]