



The Honourable Michael Ferguson MP  
Deputy Premier  
Treasurer  
Minister for Infrastructure and Transport  
Minister for Planning  
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28 September 2023

Dear Deputy Premier,

I write to you in your capacity as Minister for Infrastructure and Transport.

Oysters Tasmania is the peak body representing Tasmania's oyster farmers, who directly employ around 350 Tasmanians and sustainably produce around \$40 million worth of a healthy delicacy each year.

Twelve of our 42 growers are on Bruny Island. They rely on the Sealink ferry to transport their employees, produce, and customers.

It is therefore concerning that the current number of trips is less than the number set out in the Bruny Island ferry service contract that applied at the time of the commencement of the second new vessel. It is also concerning that the number of trips is set to fall further from 23 October 2023.

Fewer trips negatively affect the experience of potential customers and undermine the transport of our time-critical produce. Fewer weekday morning trips also undermine the ability to employ staff for a full day (particularly in the context of no booking system and potentially full ferries).

Oysters Tasmania requests:

- the consideration of priority boarding arrangements for oyster farmers (noting contract provision 5.5(d) relating to livestock, perishables, and other time-critical produce);
- the earliest possible introduction of a general booking regime, which I understand may be possible once ramps are duplicated this year;
- the prompt addition of more trips if high demand and queuing are experienced from 23 October (rather than waiting until June 2024);
- a commitment to not approve any future timetable proposals involving fewer trips; and



- supplementary funding to Sealink consistent with your recent supplementary funding to Metro, given that Sealink faces similar issues recruiting staff and offering attractive rosters.

I have had a helpful and positive discussion about timetabling with Simon Tamlyn, General Manager, Sealink Tasmania, and appreciate that there are numerous complexities involved.

I also pass on the appreciation of the oyster growers of Bruny Island for the Tasmanian Government's ongoing support for the highly-valued Bruny Island ferry service.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Duncan Spender".

Duncan Spender  
CEO, Oysters Tasmania