

COMMUNIQUE

Bruny Island Ferry Reference Group

10 December 2019

The Bruny Island Ferry Reference Group (BIFRG) held its 16th meeting on 10 December 2019. A summary of the major items discussed is included below. This communique has been compiled by the Department of State Growth, and approved for publication by BIFRG members.

First new ferry

Construction of the new Bruny Island ferry continues at Richardson Devine Marine in Goodwood. The \$7.5 million, 45-metre vessel will provide a more reliable, efficient and comfortable service for passengers. The first new ferry will commence services as soon as final commissioning and crew training is completed in January 2020.

SeaLink announced to the BIFRG that following broad consultation with Bruny Island community groups the new vessel has been named the *MV Nairana*. SeaLink and the BIFRG would like to thank Dr Tonia Cochran of Inala Nature Tours for suggesting this name. “Nairana” is the local indigenous word for (Wedge-tailed) Eagle or “Eagle of the Sun”. The Wedge-tailed Eagle can be seen on Bruny Island. There was also a HMS Nairana in the Royal Navy in the early 1900s. SeaLink announced that they are planning to hold an official welcoming ceremony for the new vessel in early 2020.

SeaLink advised that the second new ferry is still on track to be delivered in 2021.

SeaLink service update

SeaLink will undertake a renewal process for **new residents/residents with changed status** from 1 July 2020. Gill Fowler, SeaLink Customer Service Officer Team Leader, will be in touch with those residents and landowners that need to renew over the next few months. Keep an eye on www.sealinkbrunyisland.com for the latest details.

SeaLink advised that they are looking at providing further discount passes and travel offers for landowners and residents with caravans from 1 July 2020. More information will be provided closer to this date.

SeaLink's acquisition of Transit Systems Group

SeaLink advised that it is in the process of acquiring Transit System Group. Transit Systems Group is Australia's largest private operator of metropolitan public bus services. Transit Systems Group also provides bus services in London and Singapore. This process is now completed.

SeaLink explained that there are no changes to SeaLink Tasmania Pty Ltd's structure or the Bruny Island ferry service as a result of the acquisition. Sealink will remain a wholly Australian owned entity listed on the Australian Stock Exchange.

More information can be found on SeaLink's corporate website at www.sealinktravelgroup.com.au.

BIFRG update

The BIFRG is pleased to announce it has invited a representative from the Kettering community to join the BIFRG. As Kettering is the gateway to Bruny Island, the Kettering community has a keen interest in Bruny Island ferry related matters. It is hoped that the Kettering community will be able to bring a unique perspective to the BIFRG meetings.

In other news, the review of the Terms of Reference is now complete. The revised Terms of Reference clearly set out the purpose and objectives of the BIFRG, explain how meetings operate and how minutes and communiques will be communicated to the community. The revised Terms of Reference can be found at SeaLink's dedicated BIFRG website at <https://www.sealinkbrunyisland.com.au/our-plan/bruny-island-ferry-reference-group>

Traffic management update

Traffic management on Ferry Road will again be managed by Stornoway this summer.

Works have started on an overflow queueing lane at the Oyster Cove Inn site. The overflow lane will be used on high demand days to effectively extend the available queueing space on Ferry Road. This measure is aimed at reducing the number of instances that ferry queues reach the Channel Highway and minimising congestion on Ferry Road. This overflow queueing lane is expected to be operational in January 2020. More information will be made available soon.

SeaLink has introduced a trial utilizing a second ticket booth at Kettering ahead of the summer peak period. This ticket booth is designed to be used when three ferries are in operation to allow SeaLink to fill the queuing yard faster.

Please make sure you observe the 'keep clear' zones along Ferry Road. These 'keep clear' zones are designed to allow other road users to enter and exit the driveways along Ferry Road, which reduces congestion along Ferry Road.

Pre-purchase tickets

Don't forget that resident and landowner tickets for vehicles less than six metres can be pre-purchased online from SeaLink's website. These pre-purchased tickets can be used on any departure within 30 days from the date of purchase. Ten trip return tickets are also available which can be used on any departure within 365 days from the date of purchase.

Pre-purchased tickets greatly speed up the time a vehicle spends at the ticket booth. On days of high demand, getting vehicles through the ticket booth and into the queuing yard quickly is critical to reducing the impacts of queueing.

SeaLink has developed a helpful guide to assist Bruny Island residents and landowners with pre-purchasing tickets online. The guide can be found on SeaLink's website by following the links to the 'Resident and Landowner Information' page.

Bruny Island Main Road roadworks update

The Bruny Island Main Road roadworks have been delayed by two weeks due to bad weather. The expected completion date is now mid-April. For further information about the project, please feel free to contact the Project Manager, Mary O'Hare, on (03) 6166 3435 or by email info@stategrowth.tas.gov.au. More information can also be found here:

www.transport.tas.gov.au/road/projects/brunyislandmainroadupgrade.

Community matters

A question was asked about sea spray splashing vehicles while on the ferry. SeaLink advised that they are aware of the issue which occurs mainly on days of bad weather and rough waters. The unique design of the new ferries will offer greater protection from sea spray. The new vessels have much higher sides to protect cars and its catamaran hull design cuts more efficiently through the water which will result in less sea spray.

A question was also asked about SeaLink's commitment to employ local workers. SeaLink advised that they have had a 400 per cent increase in staff since commencing ferry operations and that they aim to support local jobs where they can. SeaLink explained that they had sourced some staff from interstate and other SeaLink ferry operations for the summer peak period. SeaLink advised that anyone interested in a role at SeaLink can get in contact with their team for more information.

Next Meeting

The next BIFRG meeting will be held on Wednesday 12 February 2019 at the Jane Finn Room, Alonnah Medical Centre, commencing at 9:30 am. Community members are invited to attend a question and answer session to be held prior to the meeting, between 9:00 am and 9:30 am.