



Australian Government

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Cities and Regional Development**

Report on Public Consultations on Ferry services on Cocos (Keeling) Islands

December 2019

Current ferry timetable



**COCOS IS CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD
INTER ISLAND FERRY SERVICES
CAHAYA BARU**



EFFECTIVE AS OF 19th OCTOBER 2018

Departures	Arrivals	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Home Island		6.00 am	6.00 am	6.00 am	6.00 am	6.00 am	
	West Island	6.30 am	6.30 am	6.30 am	6.30 am	6.30 am	
West Island		6.30 am	6.30 am	6.30 am	6.30 am	6.30 am	
	Home Island	7.00 am	7.00 am	7.00 am	7.00 am	7.00 am	
Home Island		7.00 am	7.00 am	7.00 am	7.00 am	7.00 am	9.00 am
	West Island	7.30 am	7.30 am	7.30 am	7.30 am	7.30 am	9.30 am
West Island		7.30 am	7.30 am	7.30 am	7.30 am	7.30 am	9.30 am
	Home Island	8.00 am	8.00 am	8.00 am	8.00 am	8.00 am	
Home Island					8.00 am		
	Direction Is.				8.30 am		10.00 am
Direction Is.					8.30 am		10.00 am
	Home Island				9.00 am		10.30 am
Home Island		10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am	
	West Island	11.00 am	11.00 am	11.00 am	11.00 am	11.00 am	
		REFUELLING	REFUELLING	REFUELLING	REFUELLING	REFUELLING	REFUELLING
West Island		11.15 am	11.15 am	11.15 am	11.15 am	11.15 am	
	Home Island	11.45 am	11.45 am	11.45 am	11.45 am	11.45 am	
Home Island					1.30 pm		3.00 pm
	Direction Is.				2.00 pm		3.30 pm
Direction Is.					2.00 pm		3.30 pm
Home Island						1.00 pm	
	West Island					1.30 pm	
West Island						1.30 pm	
	Home Island				2.30 pm	2.00 pm	
Home Island		2.30 pm	2.30 pm	2.30 pm	2.30 pm	2.30 pm	
	West Island	3.00 pm	3.00 pm	3.00 pm	3.00 pm	3.00 pm	4.00 pm
West Island		3.00 pm	3.00 pm	3.00 pm	3.00 pm	3.00 pm	4.00 pm
	Home Island	3.30 pm	3.30 pm	3.30 pm	3.30 pm	3.30 pm	4.30 pm
Home Island		3.30 pm	3.30 pm	3.30 pm	3.30 pm	3.30 pm	
	West Island	4.00 pm	4.00 pm	4.00 pm	4.00 pm	4.00 pm	
West Island		4.00 pm	4.00 pm	4.00 pm	4.00 pm	4.00 pm	
	Home Island	4.30 pm	4.30 pm	4.30 pm	4.30 pm	4.30 pm	
Home Island			6.30 pm	5.30 pm			
	West Island		7.00 pm	6.00 pm			
West Island			7.00 pm	6.00 pm			
	Home Island		7.30 pm	6.30 pm			
Home Island				8.00 pm			
	West Island			8.30 pm			
West Island				8.30 pm			
	Home Island			9.00 pm			

NOTES:

TIME OF DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL MAYBE CHANGE SUBJECT TO FLIGHT ARRIVAL FOR TUESDAY & FRIDAY, PLEASE CALL THE COCOS IS COOPERATIVE SOCIETY OFFICE ON 91 62 6553 OR 91 62 6640.

Introduction

Overview

Cocos (Keeling) Islanders were invited to contribute to a review of ferry services in line with the [Our Cocos \(Keeling\) Islands 2030 Strategic Plan](#).

In the plan, the community called for ferry services, including timetables, to be reviewed to increase social harmony through expanded opportunities for inter-island interaction and community engagement.

The Department is assessing the current usage and benefits of the existing ferry service schedule and will look at how potential changes may better support the socioeconomic activities of both islands.

This report summarises the feedback received from the CKI community during consultation. The Department's responses to the issues raised will be considered and provided to the community in due course.

Methodology of consultation

It was the intention to ensure as many people's views as possible fed into this consultation process.

The Department welcomed suggestions from local people and businesses on alternative or additional services/times, with community consultation drop-in sessions held on Home Island on 14 August, and on West Island on 15 August 2019.

Three people attended the meetings. Input and suggestions could also be emailed to the Department by Friday 30 August 2019. Four email submissions were received.

Community Views

Night services

Feedback from the community included requests for more night services to enable more interaction between the Home and West island communities and businesses.

Respondents said having only one late ferry service, on a Wednesday night (9pm), meant economic activity for Home Island and West Island is restricted to one night per week and that, for some businesses, this is not economically sustainable.

Community feedback suggested the social fabric on CKI has grown to require three interisland "evening ferries" and that an extra night for ferry services on a Tuesday or Saturday would be beneficial.

A respondent said sports and social activities on Home and West Island continued to integrate, requiring more ferry services between the two islands.

Socioeconomic

Community feedback suggested the ferry service timetable dictates the economic and social life on CKI.

A respondent said the current timetable has a negative impact on the community when it comes economic activity.

Feedback was received that extra services are needed to provide businesses the opportunity to operate beyond 3.30pm.

A respondent said it was important to break the 6am to 4pm mentality.

Employment

Community feedback was that the peak time for usage is the morning and afternoon ferry trips.

Feedback received said the timetable dictates the working hours for West Island businesses using Home Island community members as staff.

Community feedback suggested that as the majority of businesses open at 7am and close by 3.30pm many residents cannot access businesses due to their work commitments, or if they do, it is during a meal break.

A respondent said during the CKI runway upgrade, there may be a need for additional staff to travel between Home Island and West Island for work, and additional services may be required.

Essential services

A respondent said government policy is to have two schools, and two health centres, which impacts upon the use of the ferry services, as to the numbers transported, depending on the services offered by the schools and health service.

Tourism

Feedback from the community included requests for more services to Direction Island - a major tourist attraction on CKI - to benefit tourists and the tourism sector.

A respondent said there are only two days (Thursday and Saturday) where ferry services go to Direction Island and a service should be available on Sundays.

Community feedback suggested that given the Virgin Australia Regional Airline schedule of flights on Tuesdays and Fridays, tourists have limited opportunities to visit Direction Island with ferry services to the Island only available on Thursdays and Saturdays, and that tourists may choose to stay longer on CKI if Direction Island could be visited on more days.

A respondent said to encourage the development of small scale businesses on Home Island that are tourism-related, ferry services may be needed to assist in the development of such small scale tourism enterprises.

A respondent said investment in tourism resorts will require substantial funding, and an adequate workforce, and both the tourism and workforce sector will require ferry services outside of the 6am to 4pm ferry services,

and further, that the Co-op's 'Gateway to Asia' strategy sees the development of new tourism resorts based upon West Island.

Community feedback suggested it will be important to define what ferry services will be provided by the Australian Government and what ferry services will be provided by the private sector.

Community Events

Community feedback suggested having one additional late night ferry once a month would alleviate the conflicting events/meetings that occur frequently on Wednesdays (which is the only night the ferry runs late until 9pm).

Reliability

Feedback received suggested the current ferry service is always reliable and that the community appreciates the service already provided for the cost.

Flights

A respondent said delays to the Tuesday flight can see the ferry delayed or run early, and confidence in service times is needed.

Sundays and Public Holidays

Community feedback suggested a Sunday ferry service could benefit employment and tourism (if Direction Island was also included on a Sunday).

A respondent said ferry services should operate on public holidays to encourage increased island interaction, for example on ANZAC Day and Hari Raya Puasa - Home Island community cannot take part in ANZAC services as there is no ferry service. West Island residents cannot visit Home Island for Hari Raya Puasa as there is no ferry service.

Freight

Community feedback suggested there is a restriction for what can be taken on board the ferry, e.g. large bulky items, freight etc.

Market/Additional services

A respondent said there should be a balance between the ferry services provided by the Australian Government and any future ferry services offered by the private sector saying it is unrealistic to expect the Australian Government to provide all ferry services which pertain to economic development.

A respondent suggested the RJ Hawke or the Cahaya Baru be hired out to community members for events.

Timing

Community feedback suggested a reversal of midday ferry runs so that West Island community members visiting Home Island can be on Home Island for one to two hours instead of the current longer waiting times would be beneficial.

Feedback received suggested the Friday timetable for the arrival of the freighter flight is not locked in which makes it hard to plan for night time activities.

Payment and cost

A respondent said there seems to be times when not everyone pays for their ferry trip, questioning fairness.

Disruptions

Community feedback suggested when the Cahaya Baru is out of service, and the RJ Hawke is needed, the disruption service is not widely broadcast.

Next steps

The feedback from the community summarised in this document is being considered. There will be a further opportunity for community consultation on any proposed changes to the ferry timetable. The Department is committed to working with the community and keeping people informed as the process progresses.