



Date: 03.03.2023

Dear Edward Mountain MSP,

I am writing to clarify some of the information about which you had questions during my appearance at the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee in Edinburgh on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February.

The following pages provide some definition in relation to the cancellation data presented in our previous paper. I hope that this clarification will help to support the inquiry. Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Robbie Drummond  
Chief Executive of CalMac Ferries



**In our previously submitted paper, data was provided to show scheduled sailings, those which did not take place, and reasons for cancellation. The Committee also requested data on the reasons for cancellations broken down by route. During the Committee session held 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023 at the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh, clarity was sought around how some of our cancellation categories were defined.**

Details of scheduled sailings which did not take place can be found in Table 5. Reason for cancellations broken down by route can also be found in Appendix 1.

Whilst there have been growths in cancellations in recent years under the categories of “Force Majeure” and “Scot Government Approved”, this has been in a bid to protect island communities and maintain lifeline connections across the network. Further details on these categories and the rationale behind these cancellations can be found below.

### **Force Majeure**

This is provision within the contract where sailings can be cancelled for unexpected, substantial events. The cancellations noted against this heading were directly related to the Covid pandemic. These cancellations were due to either planned cancellations to service to minimise travel to the island communities in compliance with Scottish Government covid guidance around essential travel, or due to lack of crew/staff due to covid outbreaks. These cancellations were all undertaken in a bid to protect the remote island communities from the widespread impacts of covid and minimise transmission across the country. Exceptions are measured against the timetable published and agreed with Transport Scotland. During peak covid we were running essential only timetables and the lower number of sailings would not appear as force majeure.

### **Scottish Government Approved**

These are sailings which were cancelled to allow a vessel to be cascaded to another route to maintain lifeline connectivity, usually in response to technical breakdowns. Under the terms of the contract, where a technical or operational issue arises which results in a vessel being removed from service, CalMac are permitted to cascade a vessel(s) from an alternative route(s) in order to maintain lifeline connectivity across the network. This decision is made with approval from Scottish Government through an agreed protocol. This protocol recognises that cascading vessel(s), even if this means cancelling services to another island, is the right decision to maintain lifeline connectivity for the network as a whole. These cancellations usually affect routes with two vessels or those where there are other ways to get on/off the island (either using other CalMac routes, or via mainland connections).

Due to a lack of relief vessels within the network and the increased demand in scheduled services, all vessels are now fully deployed across the year with no spare capacity to provide relief. Until such times as a relief vessel is available, CalMac will always need to rely on cascading vessels to maintain lifeline services. However, whilst this can result in higher cancellations, this maintains lifeline services as a whole rather than prioritising one island's needs over another.

**Table 5 – Cancelled Sailings by Cause**

<b>Disruption Cause Name</b>	<b>FY 2019/20</b>	<b>FY 2020/21</b>	<b>FY 2021/22</b>
<i>Action of blue light services*</i>	6	5	7
<i>Adverse weather</i>	6,311	4,550	5,113
<i>All others</i>	5	7	43
<i>Bereavement issues*</i>		2	
<i>Berth not free (cal mac)*</i>	2		
<i>Berth not free (external) *</i>			28
<i>Bunkering issues</i>		2	10
<i>Bunkering issues*</i>		2	
<i>Drills on passage*</i>		2	
<i>Force majeure event*</i>	135	1,194	2,053
<i>Livestock sailing</i>			5
<i>Mechanical problems (ship)*</i>	1,064	498	1,678
<i>Mechanical problems (shore)*</i>	109	18	25
<i>Medical emergency*</i>	6	8	1
<i>Navigational issues</i>	7	3	10
<i>No call required</i>	18	35	12
<i>Pier work (external)*</i>	220	44	16
<i>Scot government approved</i>	120	485	1,551
<i>Ship involved in emergency*</i>	7	6	14
<i>Sub vessel (other reason)*</i>	3	2	2
<i>Substitute vessel (ann o/haul)</i>			5
<i>Very high tide</i>	15	171	81
<i>Very low tide</i>	207	81	167
<i>Vessel changeover</i>	1		4
<i>Vessel redeployed*</i>	91		
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,347</b>	<b>7,115</b>	<b>10,825</b>

Causes marked \* are considered to be within CalMac's control

**Appendix 1 – Causes of Cancelled Services by Route (FY 2021/22)**

**Route Name**

	<b>ACTION OF BLUE LIGHT SERVICES*</b>	<b>ADVERSE WEATHER</b>	<b>ALL OTHERS</b>	<b>BERTH NOT FREE (EXTERNAL) *</b>	<b>BUNKERING ISSUES</b>	<b>FORCE MAJEURE EVENT*</b>	<b>LIVESTOCK SAILING</b>	<b>MECHANICAL PROBLEMS (SHIP)*</b>	<b>MECHANICAL PROBLEMS (SHORE)*</b>	<b>MEDICAL EMERGENCY*</b>	<b>NAVIGATIONAL ISSUES</b>	<b>NO CALL REQUIRED</b>	<b>PIER WORK (EXTERNAL)*</b>	<b>SCOT GOVERNMENT APPROVED</b>	<b>SHIP INVOLVED IN EMERGENCY*</b>	<b>SUB VESSEL (OTHER REASON)*</b>	<b>SUBSTITUTE VESSEL (ANN O/HAUL)</b>	<b>VERY HIGH TIDE</b>	<b>VERY LOW TIDE</b>	<b>VESSEL CHANGEOVER</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<i>Ardmhor (Barra) - Eriskay</i>	200	4			18			85						12				1			<b>320</b>
<i>Ardrossan - Brodick</i>	337				150			32	2				13	263	1						<b>798</b>
<i>Ardrossan - Campbeltown</i>	4				4			35													<b>43</b>
<i>Berneray - Leverburgh</i>	94	10			20			38										70	2		<b>234</b>
<i>Claonaig - Lochranza</i>	74				12			22						16				3			<b>127</b>
<i>Colintraive - Rhubodach</i>	361				255			66						86							<b>768</b>
<i>Fionnphort - Iona</i>	3	420						14										2			<b>439</b>
<i>Fishnish - Lochaline</i>	29							10													<b>39</b>
<i>Gallanach - Kerrera</i>	122				18			2			4	11		2	2						<b>161</b>
<i>Gourock - Dunoon</i>	2	901	2		10	166		73						150				1			<b>1,305</b>
<i>Gourock - Kilcreggan</i>	398	4			150			60							2			2	4	2	<b>640</b>
<i>Kennacraig - Islay</i>	55				25			77						40			1			2	<b>200</b>
<i>Kennacraig - Islay/C'say/Oban</i>	14							27						7							<b>48</b>
<i>Largs - Cumbrae Slip</i>	308	18			377			273		1	2		1		1						<b>981</b>
<i>Mallaig - Armadale</i>	213	4			12			40	6					402	2			1	2		<b>682</b>
<i>Mallaig - Eigg/Muck/Rum/Canna</i>	169	1			1	1	10	15									3		22		<b>222</b>
<i>Mallaig - Lochboisdale</i>	14				10			35						113							<b>172</b>
<i>Oban - Castlebay/Lochboisdale</i>	72				18			24						29			1				<b>144</b>

**Route Name**

	ACTION OF BLUE LIGHT SERVICES*	ADVERSE WEATHER	ALL OTHERS	BERTH NOT FREE (EXTERNAL) *	BUNKERING ISSUES	FORCE MAJEURE EVENT*	LIVESTOCK SAILING	MECHANICAL PROBLEMS (SHIP)*	MECHANICAL PROBLEMS (SHORE)*	MEDICAL EMERGENCY*	NAVIGATIONAL ISSUES	NO CALL REQUIRED	PIER WORK (EXTERNAL)*	SCOT GOVERNMENT APPROVED	SHIP INVOLVED IN EMERGENCY*	SUB VESSEL (OTHER REASON)*	SUBSTITUTE VESSEL (ANN O/HAUL)	VERY HIGH TIDE	VERY LOW TIDE	VESSEL CHANGEOVER	TOTAL
Oban - Coll/Tiree		108				18	1	6						1				1			135
Oban - Coll/Tiree/Castlebay							3							9							12
Oban - Colonsay		16			3			10						15	2						46
Oban - Craignure		115			43			59	2		1			92							312
Oban - Lismore		71			18			21				1						4	15		175
Sconser - Raasay	2	88						6			3										99
Tarbert LF - Portavadie		171			229			30						300	2				18		750
Tayinloan - Gigha		233		28				21													282
Tobermory - Kilchoan		88			54			4						12	2				33		193
Uig - Tarbert/Lochmaddy		57			3			39					2								101
Ullapool - Stornoway		123			29			20						2					1		175
Wemyss Bay - Rothesay		258			420			539							2				3		1,222
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5113</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2053</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1678</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>4</b>	
														<b>1</b>				<b>1</b>			

Causes marked \* are considered to be within CalMac's control