

13 December 2025 - Anonymous 7

To: Scrutiny Communications <Scrutiny@gov.je>

Subject: DFDS

Dear Deputy Tidier,

Since DFDS has taken over from Condor, my wife and I have made two journeys, one to France and one to the UK. Stena Vinga: The main good point about this crossing is that the Swedish crew are charming and helpful. BUT For a vessel doing alternate day and night passages, there are far too few cabins. Twenty nine in total available to the public.

Last August we booked a Christmas trip to Portsmouth but, even 4 months before our trip, there were no cabins available so we, in our eighties, will have to sleep in a saloon seat. But the saloon seats are all in groups three opposite three seats and these seats are tightly packed with no armrests. You are packed in with five strangers for 8 hours. On our last day trip I was allocated a seat next to an obese man whose bulk overflowed on to my seat. Fortunately there were other seats on that trip but I guess that this will not be the case at Christmas.

This is certainly a downgrade from the Clipper and I think you should hold DFDS to account for this. The Clipper had big wide seats with armrests in their saloon, all facing the towards the bows on the day crossings and adequate cabins for night crossings - and breakfast included for frequent travellers. And if you don't want to pay for a saloon seat, you will spend your eight night time hours trying to sleep at a chair and table in the café. The seating is far better on the fast ferries, both DFDS and Condor despite being for shorter trips.

For what would appear to be a fast ferry, the trip to France is certainly not fast. In mid passage we were doing 18 knots which is slower than the Clipper (19 knots) and we averaged (port to port) 15 knots, around the speed that a 30ft motorboat might manage. There were children running around everywhere (no problem) but where were the crew? From when we left till when we arrived, both ways, we didn't see a single crew member.

Both vessels certainly show their ages. It looks to us as if Jersey has been dealt a lousy hand with unsuitable vessels by DFDS, the largest ferry company in Europe - so they tell us. Further to my earlier email on the subject of DFDS, it seems ridiculous that we have a passenger vessel and a freight only vessel. To do a round trip in winter when DFDS had withdrawn its "fast" ferry, one is forced into an overnight trip with a consequent extra £100 or so for a cabin. And that's if one were available.

When, as a child, I crossed with my parents, we occasionally crossed on a cargo vessel called the Winchester. They all have spare cabins. Why not force the freight vessel to open up some of their cabins for passengers?

Or get DFDS to replace the freight vessel with a passenger ferry when they take the "fast" ferry out of service for the winter? At least Condor had both Clipper and Islander. As well as Liberation.