



19th January 2026

Deputy M Tadier
Chair, Economic & International Affairs Scrutiny Panel
Scrutiny Office
States Greffe
Morier House
St Helier
JE1 1DD

Dear Deputy Tadier

Ferry Service: Concession Agreement Review

On behalf of the JFU here are my comments and observations thus far.

Unfortunately, before the Concession was awarded no consultation with stakeholders took place leading to unnecessary misunderstandings and a number of immediate course corrections being necessary. However, once awarded and schedules were released, the necessary urgent changes identified by us and others through dialogue both with Government and DFDS quickly delivered a revised schedule that fitted our needs for exporting Jersey Royals during the season. There was the problem of the lost sailings over one weekend due to the Muratti taking place in Guernsey. However, with the little notification that was given, the industry managed to navigate that without losing orders.

Another issue was the departure time of the morning boat during the potato season. Where previously the morning sailing was utilised to either get ahead or catch up with increasing orders during peak season, the schedule last summer showed very early sailings that gave little or no opportunity to get the produce down to the harbour in time, i.e. trailers would have to be presented by 4.00am. Therefore, the only opportunity was to get trailers down to the quay the night before when they may have just as well gone on the evening sailing. Additionally, hauliers would have been subject to additional hours at overtime rate to cover this.

Whilst the early morning sailing has probably been well utilised returning empty supermarket equipment back to the UK, or other such goods that are not time constrained, this loss has not helped fresh produce with short shelf life. Indeed, the Monday morning sailing was particularly useful to get produce over to the UK that was packed over the weekend because of no Sunday sailing between Jersey and Portsmouth. With daily orders, it is very difficult to predict forward orders accurately to get Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday northern depots out on a Saturday evening. A Monday morning boat could be utilised to still reach a late Monday night

southern depot or Tuesday depot. Currently morning boat departures are around 8am which works well for all concerned, so we very much hope this can be continued throughout the year.

The fiasco of the missed billing of 'Port Charges' through 2025 - As we understand it freight has always attracted Harbour Dues based on tonnage and previously a fee per meterage of trailers was included in the ferry charges by Condor ferries to freight companies. The fact that this extra meterage charge was omitted in the tender process between Government and DFDS has meant that the freight companies utilising the ferry service are now being subjected to higher than inflation costs in order to recoup these missed charges. I, like DFDS, was under the impression that the operating model was £50.00 per metre plus harbour dues.

Unfortunately, it has ended up as £50.00 per metre, plus Port Charges, plus harbour dues. With inflation sitting around 3.8% in the UK and 4.0% RPI(X) in Jersey, this should have been the limit to increased shipping costs for 2026. However, hauliers are having to increase rates to in excess of 7.5% as a result of these additional charges that were unexpected.

Finally, our industry's exports to Guernsey have been affected. Where previously Condor provided regular daily services, these were reduced to one sailing per week, with DFDS providing nothing. To manage this our shippers laid on another two opportunities via Portsmouth, but this has now been removed due to being unviable for the shippers due to costs, and the classification under which the trailer is shipped. I will be seeking urgent discussions with the Minister to see anything can be done to resolve this, as well as pleading for services to Guernsey to get back to something much nearer to the service we used to enjoy.

I would be happy for myself and my team to engage with scrutiny more fully should you wish.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Douglas A Richardson', with a stylized, overlapping loop at the end.

Douglas A Richardson
President