

Caledonian MacBrayne
Clyde & Hebridean Ferries

Route Prioritisation Consultation Feedback

12 October 2023



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Overview of Process

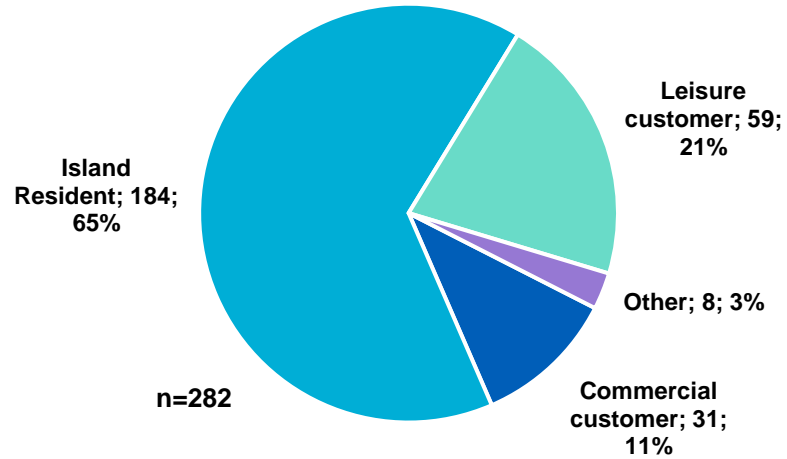


- Full public consultation with feedback gathered electronically via online form
- Proposals shared to range of stakeholder groups, published online and issued via press
- Feedback gathered over 30-day period
- Data reviewed and analysed

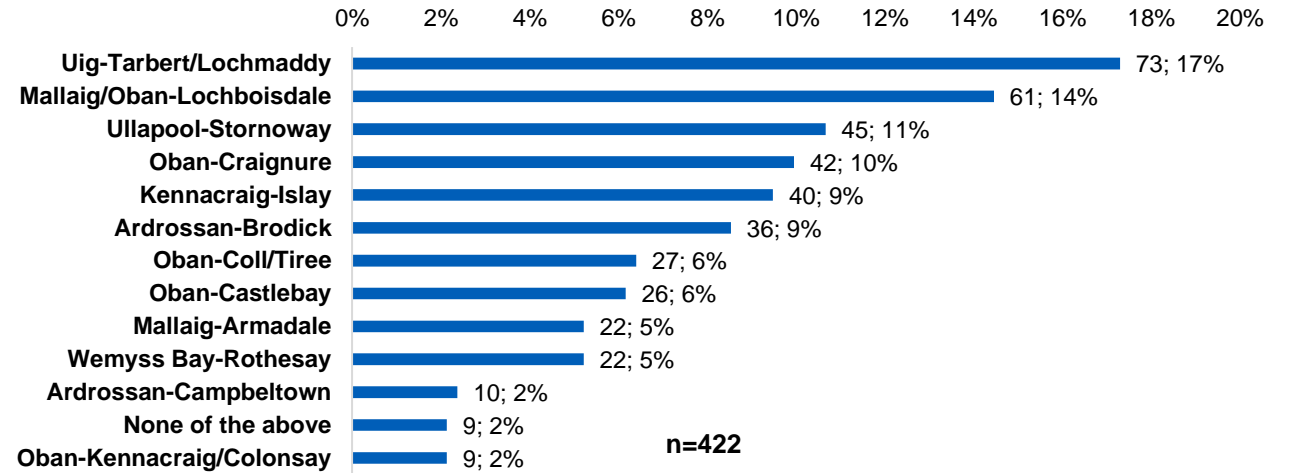
Summary of Respondents



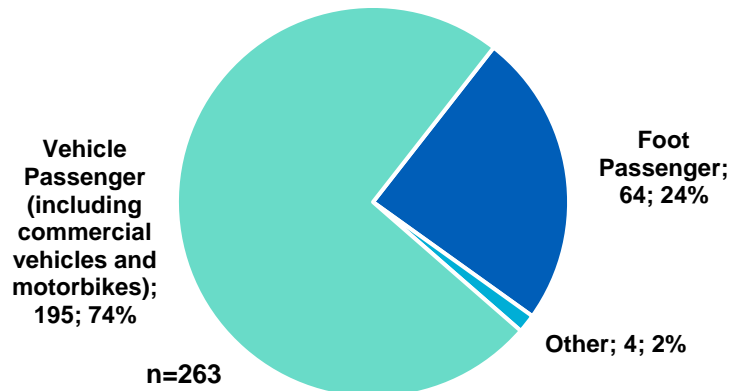
Customer type



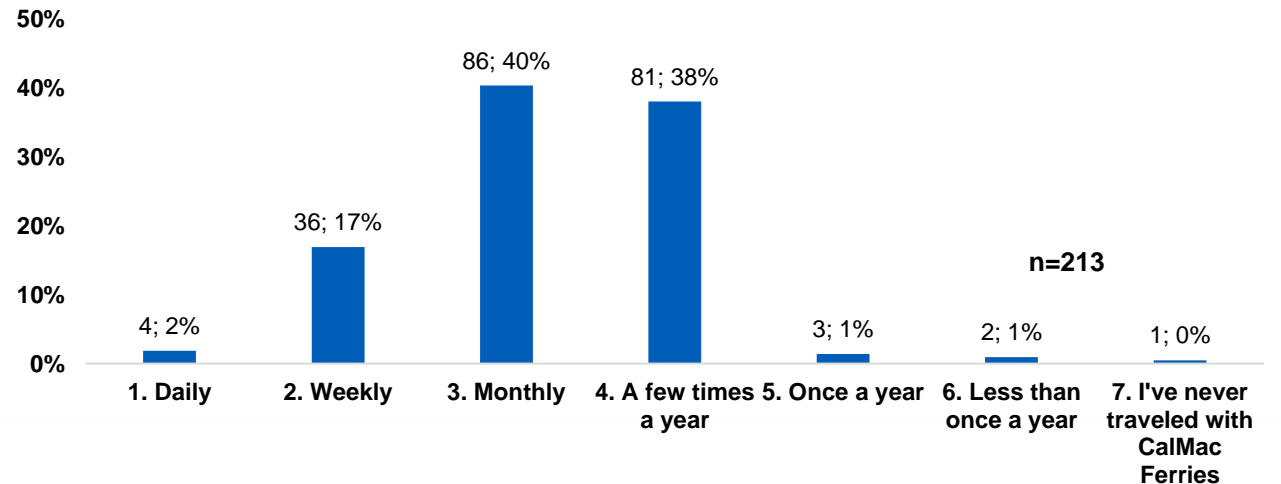
Major Vessel Routes Used



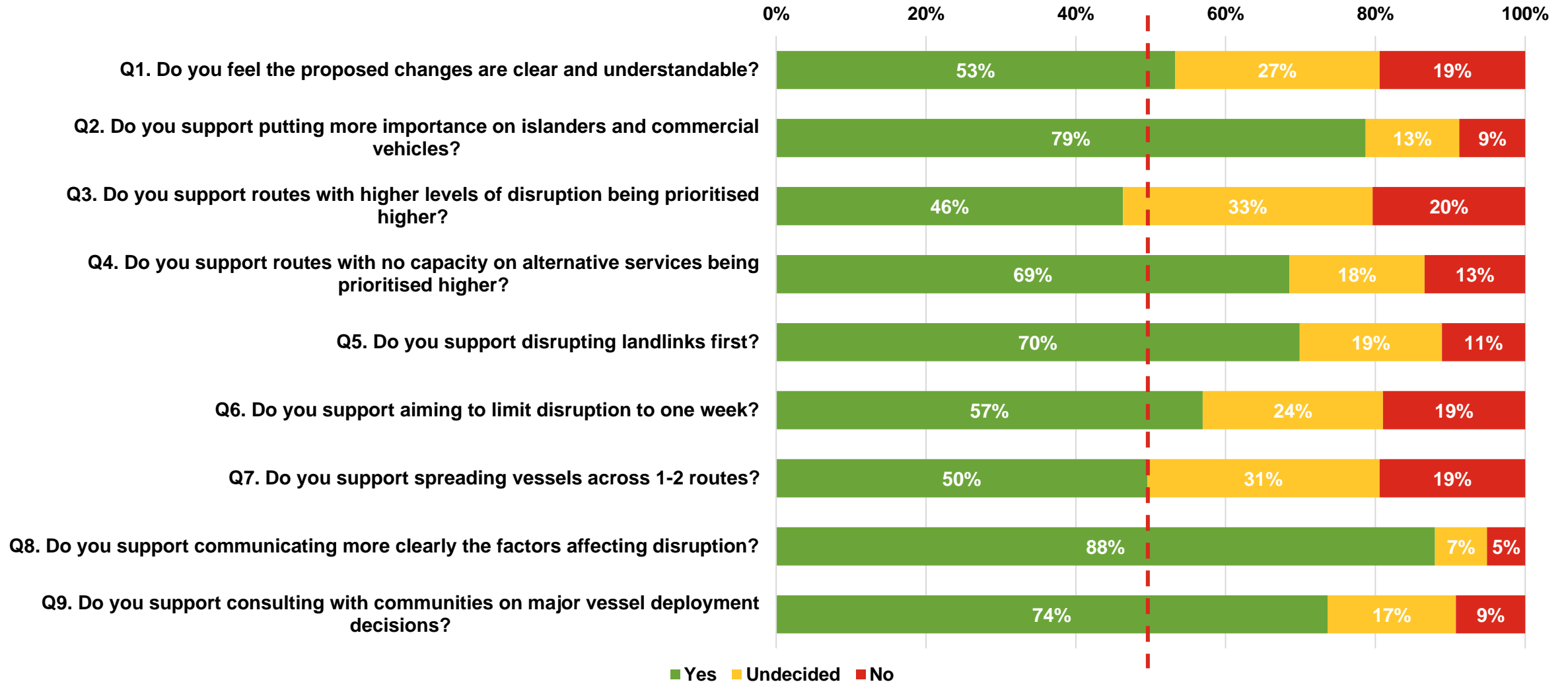
Method of Travel



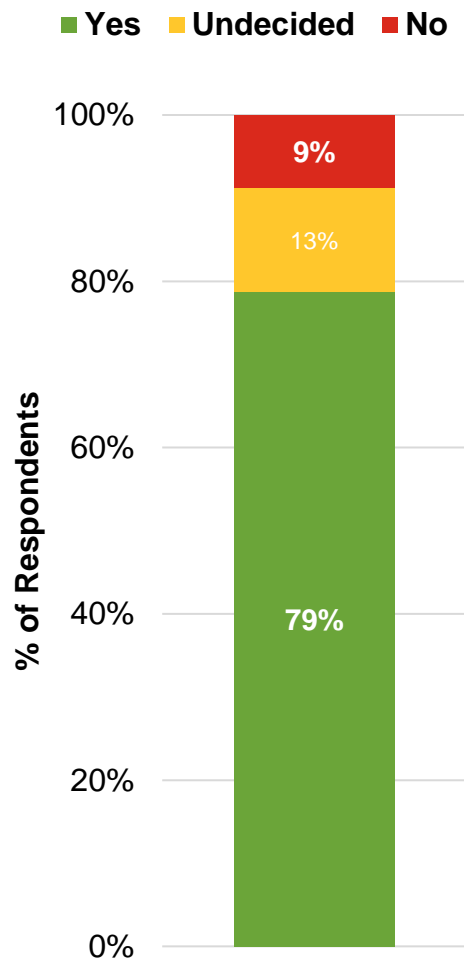
How often do you travel with us?



Results Summary



Do you support the proposal to put more importance/priority on islanders and commercial vehicles when considering traffic volumes?



Supportive Comments

- While tourism is economically important, respondents feel it should not overshadow the essential needs of island residents.
- The economic vitality of island communities is closely tied to reliable ferry services, especially for exporting perishable goods.

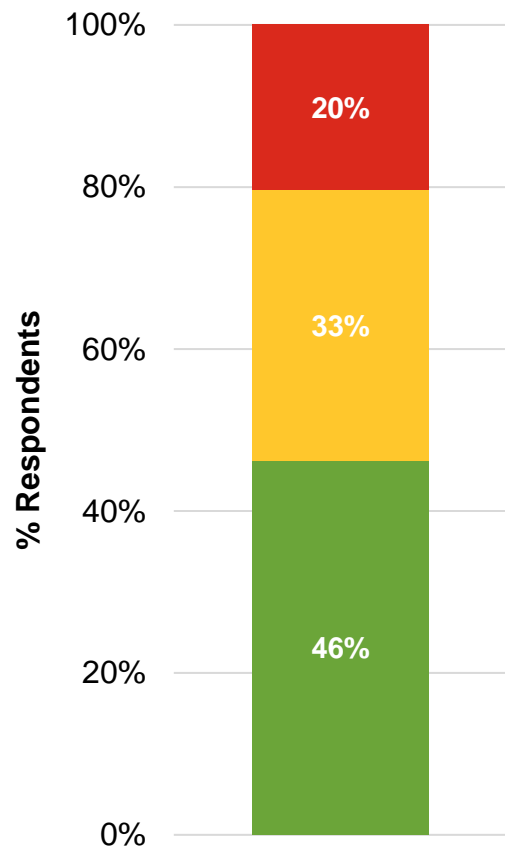
Unsupportive Comments

- Tourism is a key economic driver, and lowering its priority could negatively impact local economies.
- Economic diversity among islands suggests a one-size-fits-all approach to ferry services may be ineffective.

Do you support the proposal that routes should be scored higher based on the total percentage of sailings disrupted and cancelled for weather, technical, and other reasons, against the original timetable for last season?



■ Yes ■ Undecided ■ No



Supportive Comments

- Support for the proposal is driven by a desire for fairness and equitable distribution of resources, particularly for historically disrupted routes.
- Technical issues are frequently cited as manageable causes of disruptions, while weather is generally viewed as uncontrollable.
- Economic impact is a key concern, with respondents advocating for a system that mitigates future losses for critical business routes.
- Suggestions to extend the data timeframe for a more accurate picture of route challenges.

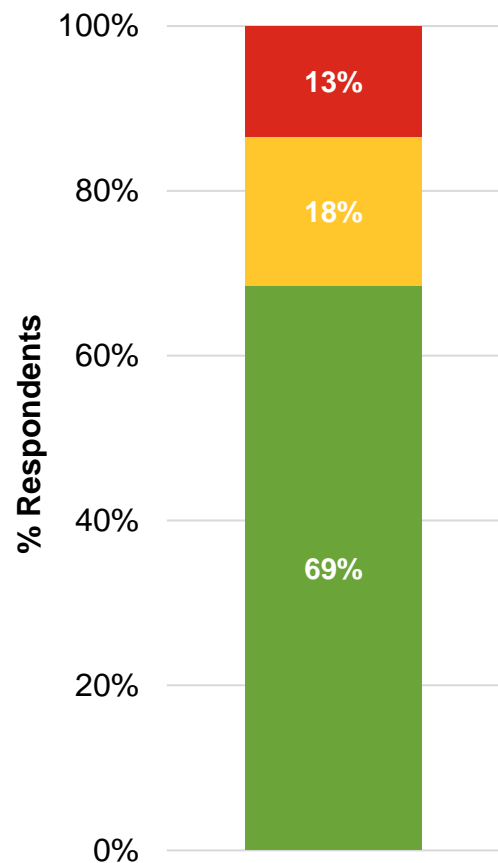
Unsupportive Comments

- Significant scepticism about the use of historical data, with respondents arguing it may not accurately predict future disruptions.
- Mixed views on economic considerations, with some advocating for prioritising high-traffic routes and others emphasising the lifeline nature of all routes.
- Concerns raised about the disproportionate impact on smaller communities and less popular routes.

Do you support the proposal that routes should be scored higher if they do not have capacity on alternative services?



■ Yes ■ Undecided ■ No



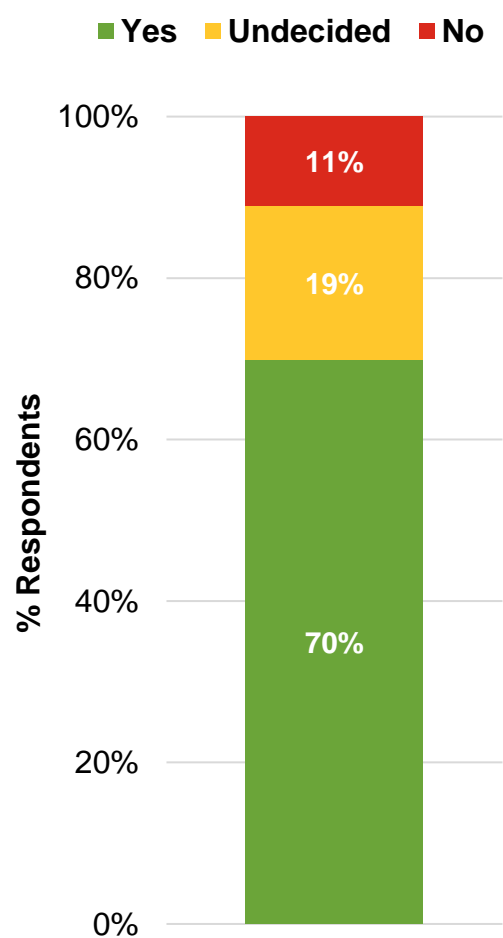
Supportive Comments

- Strong call for fairness and equity, advocating for higher scoring of routes with no alternative services to prevent communities from feeling "cut off."
- Complexity of alternatives noted, with stakeholders calling for a "realistic assessment" that considers factors like public transport availability and additional time and cost.

Unsupportive Comments

- Logistical challenges of alternative routes are highlighted, including extended travel times, the need for overnight stays, and unsuitability for all types of traffic.
- Significant focus on questioning the definition and suitability of 'alternative services,' citing concerns about convenience and practicality.
- Emphasis on fairness and equity, with calls for route-by-route assessments to ensure individual service considerations.

Do you support the proposal to disrupt Ardrossan-Campbeltown and Mallaig-Armadale first if a vessel cascade is needed (and vessel deployment can help)?



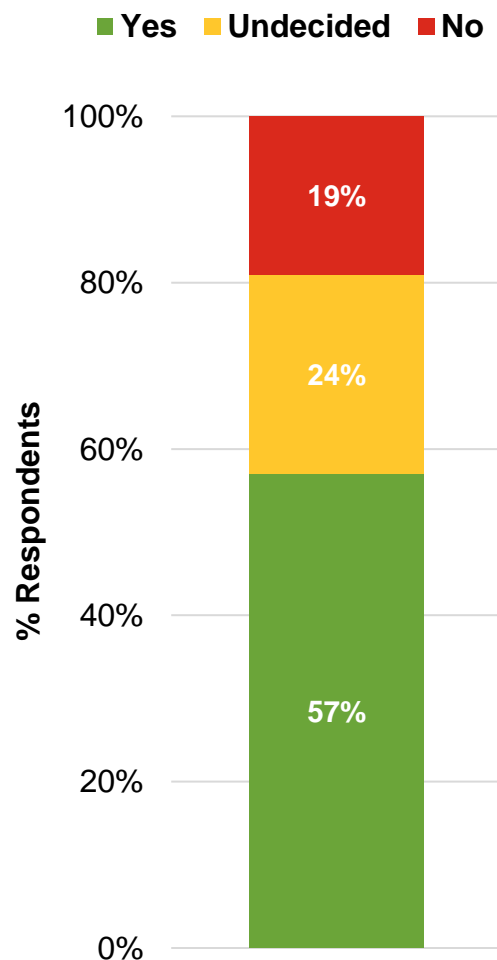
Supportive Comments

- Strong support for disruption based on the availability of alternative land routes for Ardrossan-Campbeltown and Mallaig-Armadale.
- Respondents prioritise "lifeline" services over "convenience" services, advocating for islands without alternative routes.
- A subset of respondents call for robust contingency planning, including foot-passenger charter and direct bus services.

Unsupportive Comments

- Notable critique of using land routes as the primary justification for disruption, citing their length and poor condition.
- Concerns raised about social equity and the social contract, particularly for remote communities like Campbeltown and Skye.
- Some respondents highlight the potential economic impact on local businesses and tourism.

Do you support the proposal to aim to minimise the impact on any single route to around 1 week, given this will increase the number of communities that will be affected by a single disruption?



Supportive Comments

- Many respondents advocated for limiting disruptions to one week as a fairer approach, emphasising that no single community should bear extended disruptions.
- Economic impact was a key concern, with respondents noting that shorter disruptions would be less financially damaging to local businesses and communities.
- Questions were raised about the feasibility of implementing a one-week disruption limit, citing past experiences and potential unforeseen circumstances.
- Some respondents highlighted the need for island communities to be resilient but questioned why longer disruptions should be considered acceptable.

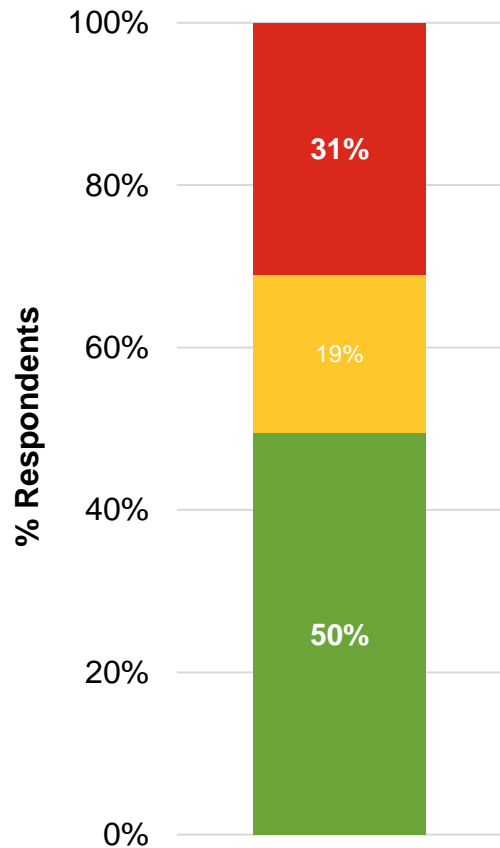
Unsupportive Comments

- Doubts were expressed about the feasibility of a one-week disruption limit, attributing it to potential poor management and calling for better stress testing.
- Concerns were voiced about the impact of week-long disruptions on essential services, particularly on routes with no alternative travel options.
- Issues were raised about the proposal potentially complicating timetables and exacerbating existing communication and reliability problems.

Do you support the proposal to spread available vessels across 1-2 routes, even if this results in less optimal deployment and reduced vessel availability?



■ Yes ■ No ■ Undecided



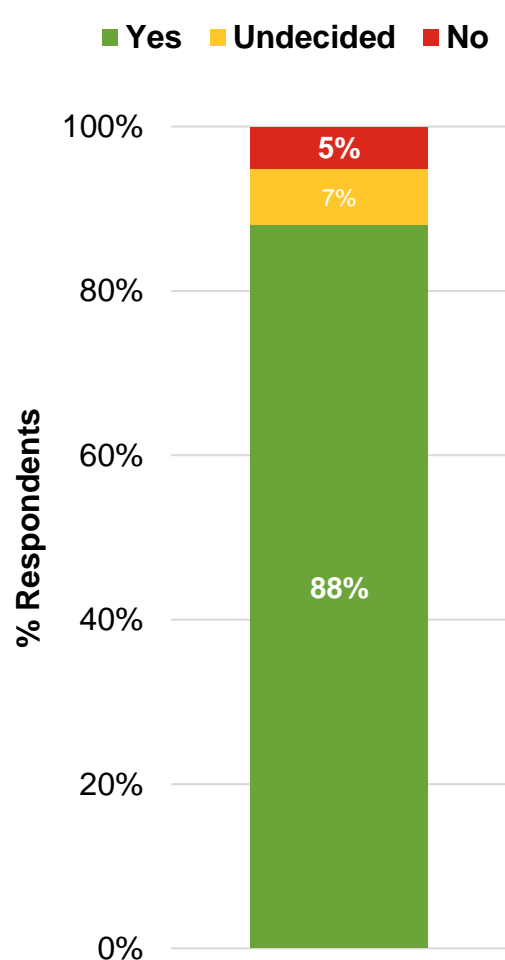
Supportive Comments

- A significant number of respondents favoured maintaining some level of service over no service, advocating for reduced but more widespread ferry availability.
- The concept of fairness in service distribution was a recurring theme, with a call for equitable access to ferry services across communities.

Unsupportive Comments

- Scepticism about the proposal's effectiveness was evident, with doubts raised about its practical feasibility based on past performance.
- Logistical challenges, including crew hours, were noted as potential barriers to the proposal, particularly affecting longer routes.
- Concerns were raised about the negative impact of reduced services on tourism and local businesses, particularly during peak seasons.

Do you support the proposal to communicate more clearly the factors which influenced vessel deployment decision and prioritisation, including all options considered and discounted?



Supportive Comments

- Significant dissatisfaction exists with current communication, described as "awful" and "poor," leading to calls for immediate and full explanations at all times.
- Clearer communication is seen as a way to not only inform users but also to influence higher authorities like the Scottish Government for long-term solutions.
- A community-centric approach is desired, with respondents feeling "in the dark" and calling for more local representation in decision-making.
- Technical suggestions for improving communication include publishing scoring on the app and using decision trees for easier understanding.
- A strong demand for transparency and accountability was noted, particularly given CalMac's monopoly-like status, to build trust and reduce speculation.
- The need for early and accurate information was emphasised, especially in contexts affecting travel for leisure, business, and essential services.

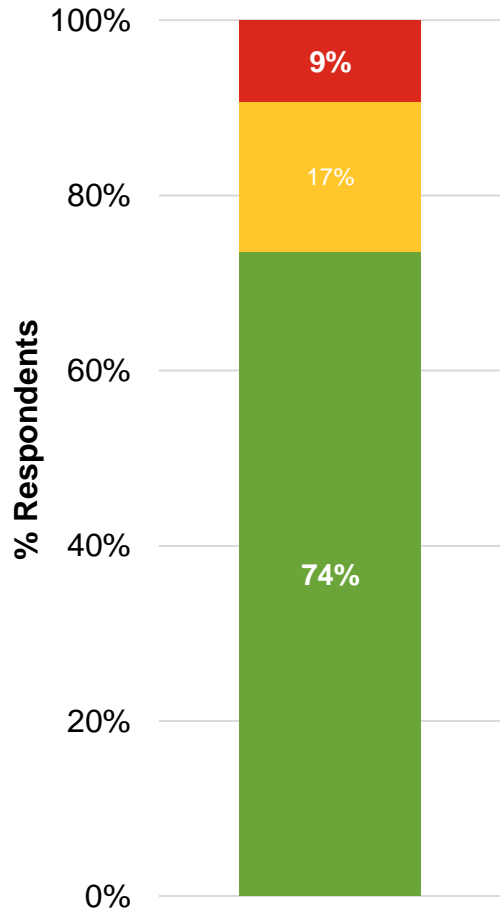
Unsupportive Comments

- The potential for increased dialogue and influence was noted, but with a caution that this could lead to unrealistic expectations or conflicts.
- Scepticism about the efficacy of the proposal was evident, with phrases like "It doesn't change anything" suggesting that the root causes may not be addressed.
- Concerns were raised that the prioritisation strategy merely "shifts problems" without offering long-term, sustainable solutions.
- The emotional and financial impact of service disruptions was highlighted, indicating that better communication alone may not mitigate the toll on communities.
- Ambivalence and uncertainty about the proposal were expressed, suggesting a segment of stakeholders are undecided on its benefits.

Do you support the proposal to consult with community representatives before making major vessel deployment decisions?



■ Yes ■ Undecided ■ No



Supportive Comments

- Concerns about the operational feasibility of consultations, particularly when quick decisions are required.
- Overwhelming support for leveraging local knowledge, particularly concerning the unique needs and challenges of individual communities.
- Strong demand for transparent communication, with calls to avoid "tick-box" exercises and "rubber-stamping" of decisions.
- Widespread dissatisfaction with the current decision-making process, described as lacking in "common sense" and "courtesy."
- High desire for meaningful engagement, ranging from phone consultations to formalised partnering boards.
- Questions raised about the legitimacy and accountability of community representatives in consultations.
- Some respondents argue that failure to consult could be considered "unlawful," highlighting the ethical obligation for community inclusion.

Unsupportive Comments

- Notable scepticism about the ability of community representatives to genuinely speak for entire communities, questioning their legitimacy.
- Concerns raised about potential delays in decision-making due to the consultation process, questioning its operational feasibility.
- Worries about the potential for conflict within and between communities, complicating the decision-making process.
- Some respondents argue for sole decision-making responsibility to lie with CalMac's management, advocating for trust in competent decision-making.
- Concerns about unequal treatment among communities, particularly those with more vocal or effective representatives.
- A few respondents see the consultation process as a potential tactic for shifting blame for unpopular decisions.
- Questions raised about the actual utility of consultations, suggesting they might be more symbolic than substantive.
- A suggestion for a once-a-year consultation to understand local events and seasonal variations, as a compromise to ongoing consultations.

Are there any other changes or considerations you believe should be included?



Suggestions relating to Route Prioritisation Framework

- Community Impact: Specific routes, such as Lochboisdale, are highlighted as requiring special attention due to their economic importance and past disruptions.
- Service Frequency: Suggestions include reducing off-season frequency on some routes to free up vessels for redeployment reducing the need for prioritisation.
- Economic and Community Impact: The importance of ferry services to local economies, particularly tourism, is emphasised. Smaller communities like Uist are mentioned as needing protection from excessive disruption.
- Prioritisation Framework: There's a call for a more nuanced prioritisation matrix that considers various factors, including historical disruptions and community needs.
- Multi-Stop Routes: The idea of multi-stop routes, similar to the Skye triangle, is suggested as a way to serve more islands with fewer resources.
- Alternative Routes: Links between ferry services to cover alternative routes and services are suggested for consideration.

Are there any other impacts we should be aware of?



- Emergency and Medical Needs: There's a strong call for priority spaces on busy sailings for those with medical emergencies or attending funerals.
- Community Impact: Specific routes, such as Lochboisdale, are highlighted as requiring special attention due to their economic importance and past disruptions.
- Service Frequency: Suggestions include reducing off-season frequency on some routes to free up vessels for redeployment.
- Economic and Community Impact: The importance of ferry services to local economies, particularly tourism, is emphasised. Smaller communities like Uist are mentioned as needing protection from excessive disruption.
- Local Preferences: Stakeholders request more input into timetabling decisions, with a focus on islanders' needs.
- Prioritisation Framework: There's a call for a more nuanced prioritisation matrix that considers various factors, including historical disruptions and community needs.
- Multi-Stop Routes: The idea of multi-stop routes, similar to the Skye triangle, is suggested as a way to serve more islands with fewer resources.
- Alternative Routes: Links between ferry services to cover alternative routes and services are suggested for

Recommendations



Question	Recommendation	Outcome
Do you support the proposal to put more importance / priority on islanders and commercial vehicles when considering traffic volumes?	<p>Given the overwhelming support and the specific issues raised, we propose to incorporate this within our forthcoming revisions.</p> <p>However, there was a small amount confusion regarding how this would work in practice with some respondents thinking this related to traffic prioritisation. Therefore, further consideration will be given to how this is communicated given the potential for confusion.</p>	✓
Do you support the proposal that routes should be scored higher based on the total percentage of sailings disrupted and cancelled for weather, technical, and other reasons, against the original timetable for last season?	Given the negative feedback and the large volume of undecided respondents (33%) we suggest not proceeding with this proposal at this time. We will instead consider how we can refine our existing approach to calculating the impact of disruption.	✗
Do you support the proposal that routes should be scored higher if they do not have capacity on alternative services?	Given the overall support and the specific concerns raised, we intend to take forward this proposal.	✓
Do you support the proposal to disrupt Ardrossan-Campbeltown and Mallaig-Armadale first if a vessel cascade is needed (and vessel deployment can help)?	Given the overall support for this proposal, we intend to take forward this change. However, given the potential negative impacts on the Skye community we will emphasise and consider how we communicate this.	✓

Recommendations



Question	Recommendation	Outcome
<p>Do you support the proposal to aim to minimise the impact on any single route to around 1 week, given this will increase the number of communities that will be affected by a single disruption?</p>	<p>Given the overall support and the specific concerns articulated, we intend to take forward this proposal.</p> <p>However, there was a small amount of confusion around how this would work in practice. Therefore, further consideration will be given to how this is communicated.</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Do you support the proposal to spread available vessels across 1-2 routes, even if this results in less optimal deployment and reduced vessel availability?</p>	<p>Given the mixed responses to this proposal, including the large proportion of 'undecided' votes, we would look to adopt it on a case-by-case basis where it can be achieved without impacting negatively on the effectiveness of deployment.</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Do you support the proposal to communicate more clearly the factors which influenced vessel deployment decision and prioritisation, including all options considered and discounted?</p>	<p>Given the overall support and the specific concerns raised, we intend to take forward this proposal.</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Do you support the proposal to consult with community representatives before making major vessel deployment decisions?</p>	<p>Given the overwhelming support for the proposal, we intend to take this forward.</p>	<p>✓</p>

Next Steps



- Complete impact assessment paperwork and compile response to feedback received
- Communicate consultation outcome and issue feedback (including publish on the website)
- Update internal processes
- Go live start of winter 23/24

Appendix 1: Other General Points of Feedback



- Important of ferry service: The ferry service is viewed as a lifeline for islanders, and there is a strong call for prioritising essential services such as healthcare and freight.
- Capacity planning: There is a need for better capacity planning and management, to ensure that there are enough vessels to meet demand, even during peak season and periods of disruption.
- Booking system: The current booking system is inadequate, and there is a need for greater transparency and communication from CalMac.
- Accountability: Stakeholders are calling for better accountability from those responsible for the current fleet issues.
- New vessels: There is a strong call for new, fit-for-purpose vessels to be added to the fleet, especially given the delays with MV Glen Sannox and Glen Rosa.
- Resilience and redundancy: The need for a resilient fleet that can operate 24/7 is emphasised, with suggestions for a shift system to extend service hours.
- Freight services: A dedicated freight ferry from Stornoway to Ullapool is suggested to alleviate pressure on passenger services.
- Mobile homes: Concerns are raised about the size of mobile homes taking up valuable space on ferries.

Appendix 1: Other General Points of Feedback



- Timetabling: Stakeholders request more input into timetabling decisions, with a focus on islanders' needs.
- Emergency and medical needs: There is a call for priority spaces for those with medical emergencies or attending funerals.
- Service bundling: The idea of tendering smaller local vessels for foot passenger and light cargo services is proposed.
- Service frequency: Suggestions include reducing off-season frequency on some routes to free up vessels for redeployment.
- Transparency: Stakeholders request more transparent and effective communication, especially during disruptions.
- Booking system: Concerns are raised about the current booking system's reliability and accuracy.
- Accountability: There is a call for better accountability, especially when disruptions occur.
- Local economies: The importance of ferry services to local economies, particularly tourism, is highlighted.
- Community impact: Specific routes, such as Lochboisdale, are mentioned as requiring special attention due to their economic importance and past disruptions.
- Competition: Some stakeholders suggest introducing competition on certain routes to improve service.

Appendix 1: Other General Points of Feedback



- Management deployment: It is suggested that senior management spend time in local offices to better understand operational realities.
- Amalgamation: A proposal is made to amalgamate Transport Scotland, CMAL, and CalMac into a single organisation based on an island served by the ferries.
- Strategic planning: Stakeholders request insight into long-term plans for vessel refreshment and replacements.
- Regulatory compliance: Suggestions are made to adjust certifications on vessels based on actual passenger numbers.
- Innovation: Stakeholders encourage thinking outside the box, including considering multi-stop routes similar to the Skye triangle.
- Training: More training for local staff is suggested to improve customer service.