

# Evaluation summary – Update Evaluation of the Grant to the Province of British Columbia in respect of the provision of ferry and coastal freight and passenger services

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From: Transport Canada

## Evaluation summary – June 2023

### About the program

- The Grant is based on a **1977 agreement** between the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia (BC), where the federal government provides an annual indexed subsidy to BC. In return, BC supports specific water links between BC mainland and Vancouver Island, totaling at least **337 statute miles**.
- The agreement has no end date and **cannot be changed or terminated** without the consent of the Government of Canada and the Province of BC.
- In 2021-22 the grant totaled \$32,182,708.

## About the evaluation

Under the Policy on Results, it is **mandatory** to conduct evaluations of ongoing programs of grants and contributions with five-year average actual expenditures of \$5 million or greater per year. Given that the Grant is very low risk and that the context for this program has not changed since it was last evaluated five years ago, a **streamlined evaluation approach** was adopted, consisting of an update of the key findings of the 2017 evaluation.

## Methodology

- Document review
- Media scan
- Interview

## Evaluation findings

### Program relevance

The Grant is required to fulfil the federal government's obligation as set out in a legally binding agreement and is therefore relevant.

The Grant is a legacy commitment and its alignment with federal priorities will vary over time.

The Grant supports the departmental core responsibility of an efficient transportation system.

BC Ferries applies the funding towards the cost of providing services on its routes, thereby supporting Transport Canada's core responsibility of an efficient transportation system.

### Program performance

The Province of BC has met its primary grant obligation of supporting ferry services in specific water links between BC mainland and Vancouver Island by covering a minimum of 337 statute miles.

Currently there are four routes that service these links, totaling 365 nautical miles (420 statute miles).

1. Vancouver to Victoria - 24 nautical miles
2. Vancouver to Nanaimo - 38 nautical miles
3. West Vancouver to Nanaimo - 30 nautical miles
4. Prince Rupert to Mid Coast to Port Hardy - 273 nautical miles

**For the evaluation period, the Province of BC met its two key commitments of 1) providing reasonable and adequate service and 2) publicly identifying federal financial participation.**

1. It is the Province that is responsible for ensuring these commitments are met because it best understands the needs of users and local communities supported by the ferry services. That said, to determine whether the ferry services provided were reasonable and adequate, the evaluation team considered the following elements:
  - Customer satisfaction: 4.07/5 (generally above BC Ferries' targets)
  - Passenger safety: 1.79 passenger injury incidents per 1M passengers (82% improvement since 2017)
  - Reliability: 99.68% of round trips not cancelled due to reasons within BC Ferries' control (within or above BC Ferries' targets)
2. The evaluation team also noted that BC Ferries reports on the Grant in its publicly available financial statements.

As with the 2017 evaluation, this evaluation makes no recommendations.



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