

Bruny Island ferry service

SeaLink

Why SeaLink?

SeaLink is a highly experienced and proven operator of vehicle and passenger ferries across Australia. It has an existing fleet of 78 vessels and carries more than eight million passengers each year. SeaLink has experience operating vehicle and passenger ferries around Australia, including to a number of island communities.

SeaLink's proposal was considered to best meet the current and future needs for ferry users and the Tasmanian taxpayer as required by the Tasmanian Government. The SeaLink service will immediately provide greater certainty for passengers by dedicating two vessels to the service every day of the year, and introducing a booking system. Over time, the introduction of new, purpose-built vessels will provide increased crossing capacity and a higher frequency timetable.

The company will work with the Bruny Island community and has committed to annual contributions to Kingborough Council for infrastructure and the community for environmental projects and sponsorship. It will also use its national and international networks to market the service and Bruny Island as a tourist destination.

New ferry service

What changes and improvements will be made to the current service?

Schedule: SeaLink will operate the Bruny Island ferry service from Sunday, 23 September 2018. Initially the current service schedule will continue, however there will be two vessels dedicated to the service from day one of operations and for the duration of the contract. The MV Mirambeena will continue to service the Bruny Island service, and the SeaLink-owned MV Moongalba will be provided as a dedicated second vessel. This means a back-up vessel can be deployed to meet demand as required.

Bookings: A booking system will be introduced to manage queuing and demand, and provide certainty for both residents and visitors using the ferry. The booking system will be available from mid-August and will bring the service into line with modern practices employed in similar ferry services around the world.

Pricing: A variable pricing model will be brought in for all visitors which will offer cheaper fares in off peak times and more expensive fares at peak times. This will be the first change to visitor fares since 2015, and it is anticipated this will smooth demand and people will have surety of the times they are travelling. At the same time, residents will also be offered cheaper fares to pre-book the ferry.

Will the kiosk and toilet facilities change?

The Bruny Island Gateway at Kettering (previously called The Mermaid Café) holds a lease that is not connected with the ferry service so will continue to operate as per the current arrangement. The Roberts Point kiosk operator has an agreement with the current ferry operator and SeaLink is committed to ensuring a smooth transition.

Crossing capacity

Is there a guarantee the new service will meet demand?

The new Bruny Island ferry service will offer a level of reliability, capacity relative to demand, and customer service that is the same or better than the current service. In line with the existing service, any customer arriving prior to the scheduled last sailing will be transported.

From 23 September 2018 there will be two vessels dedicated to the service this means a second vessel can be deployed to meet demand at any time and on any day of the year. Over the 2018-19 summer period the combined capacity of the Mirambeena and Moongalba will provide at least the same level of service as the existing service vessels including at peak times.

SeaLink will be monitoring travel patterns and car movements to confirm and inform its operational model and the company has a fleet of over 70 vessels from which it is able to bring additional support to the Bruny Service if required.

The Transport Commission will also work with SeaLink, particularly in the first year of operation, to ensure the adequate capacity is available and the service responds to demand.

Ticketing and fares

What is the benefit of a booking system?

A ticketing system that provides for advance bookings is in the interests of all ferry users and will provide certainty about travelling on the ferry. SeaLink will work with the Bruny Island community and ferry users on how the ticketing system will work and the benefits it will bring to residents during community information sessions that will commence in early July 2018.

How will customers be able to purchase tickets for the ferry?

The booking system is expected to launch in late August and ferry tickets will be able to be purchased online, by phone or in person at the terminals or via ticketing agents. SeaLink also plans to launch a mobile phone app through which tickets will also be able to be purchased.

What about people who have unreliable access to the internet? How will they be able to book?

The online booking service will be just one option, SeaLink will have ticketing agents on the island and phone bookings will also be possible. A standby lane will always provide opportunity for people who were unable to pre-book.

Will visitors have to pay increased fares?

A new fare schedule for all ferry users will be released by SeaLink prior to the September handover. A new fare structure is a critical part of shifting demand and managing the peaks and lengthy queues that currently occur at various times throughout the year. This will be the first change to visitor fares since 2015.

The Tasmanian Government has retained responsibility for regulation of the fares for the duration of the contract term.

New ferries

Within the first three years of the contract, SeaLink will build and pay for two new vessels with an estimated value of over \$10 million to replace the Government-owned MV Mirambeena, which will be withdrawn from service in 2021.

The detailed design of the new vessels is still to be confirmed, but they will have a minimum carrying capacity of 36 vehicles and 150 passengers. They will be single deck and have the capacity to load and unload quickly. They will also have a passenger lounge for foot passengers and people who do not wish to remain in their vehicle during the crossing.

The first of two new vessels is due to come into service on October 2019. At that time, and before commissioning the build of the second new ferry, SeaLink will review the requirements and adjust the specification of the second new vessel as required. It is expected the MV Moongalba will remain onsite to operate as a third vessel.

How will smaller ferries deliver the same or greater crossing capacity?

While the exact design and capacity of new ferries is yet to be confirmed, modern, single-deck ferries will have faster loading and unloading times and will be able to cross the D'Entrecasteaux Channel more quickly. This means at peak times more frequent crossings will be possible, so an increased number of vehicles and passengers will be able to travel, even though the vessels themselves are smaller.

When will the new ferries arrive?

The first of the new vessels will be delivered in the second half of 2019, with the second due in the first half of 2021. Once in service, the two new vessels will provide a high frequency timetable with the capability to depart each terminal every 20 minutes when required.

Bruny Island residents and business operators

Will there be changes to fares for Bruny Island residents?

There will be no change to Bruny Island resident fares when SeaLink takes over the service in September 2018. In the first year, the Government will fund discounted fares for residents who pre-book their travel – they will pay \$10 per trip rather than \$16 while Bruny Island resident concession customers will pay just \$5 per trip rather than \$9.

Bruny Island residents will pay the same ticket price irrespective of the time day, week or month they travel.

What if a Bruny resident or visitor needs to travel at short notice?

SeaLink has committed to always retaining some spare spaces on each trip for emergencies and special needs travel, even if a particular service is fully booked. SeaLink will ensure travel is guaranteed for priority travellers like emergency services, school buses and regular service providers.

What about suppliers and tourism operators?

Regular suppliers to the island will be able to pre-book their schedule while businesses who provide crucial services to the island will be provided with individual contract rates. SeaLink will work with businesses to establish accounts, forward booking schedules and contract rates.

Further information

I have some questions about the new service, how can I find out more?

SeaLink will be working together with the community to ensure locals benefit from an improved ferry service that delivers greater capacity and certainty into the future. The company will have a presence at the ferry terminals from mid-July and is organising a series of community forums at various locations on Bruny Island throughout July and August.

These meetings will be an opportunity to meet the SeaLink team, ask questions about the service, and importantly for SeaLink to listen to the community with respect to their needs.

SeaLink will also establish a Ferry Committee and is working with Council and Community groups on the representation of this Committee and the Terms of Reference.

How can I stay up to date?

Information about the new service, including scheduling and fare structure will be available from a dedicated website, which will also provide the online portal for SeaLink's ticketing system.

<https://sealinkbrunyisland.com.au/>

Information about the Bruny Island ferry service is also available on the Tasmanian Government's Transport website at [Bruny Island ferry](#).