

TravelWatch- *ISLE OF MAN*

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Representing and promoting the interests of Isle of Man
Passengers

www.travelwatch-isleofman.org

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TRAVEL WATCH backs the Government's proposed negotiations with the Steam Packet on the Strategic Sea Services Agreement

1. Passenger watchdog, TravelWatch welcomes Minister Gawne's publication on 7 July 2016 of the "Report on Liverpool Landing Stage and Strategic Sea Services Agreement." After only a short period for scrutiny, the complicated contents of the Report are to be considered at the 19 July sitting of Tynwald. This media release is to give TravelWatch's view on the proposed Strategic Sea Services Agreement.
2. TravelWatch believes that the recent Steam Packet Strategic Sea Services Offer has the potential to successfully replace the current User Agreement with improved benefits for passengers. But in the rapidly changing economic circumstances since Brexit, it is not known for how long the Steam Packet's Offer will remain open. Therefore TravelWatch urges that the progress on negotiations on the Offer should be continued, as well as efforts to resolve concerns on the future Liverpool terminal and ferry berth.
3. TravelWatch consider that further negotiations on clarifying and improving the offer should include specific improvements directly benefiting passengers:-
 - Regulation to ensure any commitments about the number of "Special Offer" fares are delivered and that other charges – eg. seat reservations and booking changes – are regulated

- Encouragement of more experimentation with reduced fares especially cheap single tickets for lightly used sailings.
- Improved information service to passengers
- Regular public reports about service delivery especially reliability and punctuality
- More transparent complaints system
- Open published Reviews to learn lessons after any serious period of service disruption
- Independent published reviews of passenger satisfaction

Note to Editors

Brendan O’Friel (833636) - TravelWatch Chairman - and
John Pennington (835410) - TravelWatch lead on Sea issues - will be
available for further comment and follow up interviews