



ICIA Screening Questionnaire

1. Description of Proposal

The proposal is to introduce planned maintenance time into ferry timetables across the network, in line with the CHFS3 contractual commitment that all vessels are provided with sufficient scheduled time to undertake essential maintenance activities. This has been defined as either a minimum of 6 hours per week or one full day per month of dedicated maintenance time, incorporated within the published timetable.

The introduction of maintenance windows represents a change to previous operating arrangements under CHFS2, where such time was not formally required within timetables. As a result, this approach is being phased in across routes, with implementation tailored to individual service patterns, operational constraints and levels of demand.

The primary objective of the proposal is to improve the reliability and resilience of ferry services by enabling planned maintenance activities to be carried out safely and effectively. Modern vessels consist of thousands of individual components, many of which require regular inspection, servicing or repair. While some maintenance can be undertaken while vessels are in operation, a proportion of essential work can only be completed when the vessel is alongside and not in active service. Providing dedicated maintenance time allows defects to be addressed at an early stage, reducing the likelihood of escalation into more serious failures and avoiding unplanned cancellations or extended periods out of service.

The proposal also reflects wider operational requirements, including compliance with safety standards, statutory inspection regimes, and crew working time regulations. Without planned maintenance windows, maintenance and repair activity can place pressure on crew working hours, potentially leading to subsequent service disruption where vessels are required to be withdrawn to ensure compliance with rest requirements.

Implementation of maintenance windows will require adjustments to existing timetables and may result in a reduction of services on some routes. It may include changes to sailing frequency, timing, or daily service patterns, and will be developed on a route-by-route basis. In all cases, changes will be informed by demand analysis, operational data, and engagement with local communities and stakeholders, with the aim of minimising disruption and maintaining appropriate levels of connectivity. Where the introduction of maintenance time has the potential to affect service levels, options to mitigate impacts will be considered as part of the timetable development process.

2. Which community / area / route could be affected?

This screening questionnaire is being conducted for users of the Sconser-Raasay service.

3. Questions

Answer

Rationale/ Explanation / Decision

Q1. Could the proposed change potentially impact an island community?

Yes

- **The proposal relates to ferry service timetables and the introduction of planned maintenance windows, which may affect sailing frequency and timing. As ferry services provide essential connectivity for island communities, including access to services, employment, education and freight, there is potential for impact.**



3. Questions	Answer	Rationale/ Explanation / Decision
<p>Q2. Could this proposal affect island communities in a significantly different way to other islands or to users of the service who live on the mainland?</p>	<p>No</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction of planned maintenance windows may result in some adjustments to sailing frequency and timing on certain routes. • This could affect aspects such as commuter travel, school transport, access to healthcare and other essential services, as well as the movement of freight and lifeline supplies. However, these changes will be developed on a route-by-route basis, informed by demand analysis and engagement with local communities, with the aim of minimising impacts on residents, key workers, and essential journeys. • While island communities are more reliant on ferry services and may be sensitive to changes affecting same-day travel, connectivity and service availability, the proposal is intended to improve overall service reliability and resilience. By enabling essential maintenance to be carried out in a planned way, it reduces the risk of unplanned breakdowns, cancellations and prolonged disruption, which can have more significant impacts on school travel, commuting, delivery of essential goods and access to services. • Potential impacts relating to capacity, accessibility, costs and the operation of lifeline services will be considered as part of timetable development, including maintaining appropriate provision for essential travel, freight and key user groups. • Overall, the proposal is expected to provide longer-term benefits through improved reliability and reduced disruption, and does not disproportionately disadvantage island communities compared to current arrangements.
<p>Q3. To what extent could the proposed change potentially impact an island community?</p>	<p>2 - Low - Some difference for island communities, but the effect is small, localised or easily managed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sconser–Raasay route provides the sole means of access to Raasay, linking the island via Skye to the mainland transport network. It is therefore an essential service supporting residents, visitors, and the delivery of goods and services. • While freight movements currently take place throughout the day without fixed structuring, the introduction of planned maintenance periods may offer opportunities to better organise deliveries and improve reliability, providing greater certainty for businesses and suppliers without significantly disrupting existing patterns. • The route supports daily school travel, with children commuting to and from education on a routine basis. The presence of a published timetable enables forward planning and helps minimise potential disruption.



3. Questions	Answer	Rationale/ Explanation / Decision
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to healthcare and essential mainland services is also facilitated via this connection, and although Raasay's island off an island status can increase sensitivity to service changes, the continued operation of a scheduled and predictable service reduces the likelihood of significant impacts. • Tourism and leisure activities form an important part of the local economy, with destinations such as Raasay House providing accommodation and outdoor activity opportunities. In addition, local businesses, including the expanding distillery, rely on the movement of goods such as ingredients and equipment. • While these sectors are dependent on the ferry service, the structured timetable and relatively minor nature of any proposed changes mean that impacts are expected to be limited and manageable. • Overall, although the route is critical to the island community, the proposed changes are not anticipated to materially affect access to key services, economic activity, or daily travel. As such, the impact is considered low.

Outcome	Date Completed
No impact assessment needed	27/05/26