

# Dunoon-Gourock Ferry Action Group



Nicola Sturgeon MSP  
The Scottish Parliament  
Holyrood  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Duncreggan House  
Blairmore  
Near Dunoon  
Argyllshire  
PA23 8TG  
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Dear Nicola

## **The MV Coruisk – Winter Deployment**

You told us at the last Steering Group meeting that you would make the decision regarding the winter deployment of the MV Coruisk in August. We would like you to take the following into account.

The Coruisk has a restricted certificate which means that she has to operate in the Firth of Clyde during the winter. She is normally on standby as a relief vessel for planned maintenance and breakdown. This costs £516,000.

The additional cost of deploying the Coruisk on the Dunoon Gourock route during the winter of 2013/2014 was £142,000. She was not dedicated to the crossing and continued to provide her primary role as a relief vessel for other crossings on the Upper Clyde in winter. This was demonstrated when she re-deployed to Wemyss Bay-Rothesay when the MV Bute required repairs.

It is disingenuous therefore that the cost to Argyll Ferries Ltd should be presented as £658,000. Groups of companies can legally move cost between subsidiaries for various reasons, however to have done so in this case is highly misleading.

Whilst on the Dunoon Gourock crossing the MV Coruisk:

- Prevented the complete cancellation of the service on 28 occasions
- Performed 133 crossings in addition to those she was timetabled to make.
- Was late by more than 1-7 minutes on only 25 occasions (despite sailing in weather that was cancelling the other vessels).

The Coruisk could have performed even better except:

- Early in its deployment there was still a tendency to use buses.
- For unexplained reasons far greater use was made of the link-span at Gourock by vessels from other routes than was historically the case.

The Coruisk kept the service operating and got commuters to their connections on time. This contrasts with the relief buses which only attempt to minimise damage after the service has failed.

Yours truly



Susanna Rice  
Convenor

c.c. Richard Hadfield