



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

檳城消費人協會 பினாங்கு பயனர்களர் சங்கம்

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Press Statement

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Ferry commuters inconvenienced because of Rapid Ferry incompetence

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) is shocked by how Rapid Ferry is operated, without alerting the public of a schedule change to one-trip-an-hour from two-trips-an-hour previously. It grossly lacked foresight and planning, causing inconvenience to motorists and pedestrian commuters taking the ferry.

We cannot comprehend how an entire fleet of six ferries between Penang Island and Butterworth be reduced to just one to operate without a backup, as transportation is vital for commuters, particularly pedestrian commuters who have no alternative choice of transport. What the ferry service operator did impacted tremendously on commuters who would be late for work, appointments, or having to miss the express bus or train.

Signboards should be put up to announce the delay some distance away from the ferry terminals on the island and the mainland so drivers planning to queue up for the ferry can decide to wait or to take an alternative route.

Although it was said that the ferry trip schedule is available on the Rapid Ferry Facebook official page, we find that the Facebook page has only 6,726 followers and as at 2pm on 29 July, the ferry schedule has fewer than 30 shares. This means that majority of ferry commuters are still in the dark about the problem awaiting them. Facebook is not the effective way of communicating with the public.

When ferry services operate once every hour, we can anticipate the number of passengers to rise in tandem during peak hours and the passengers' blatant violation of social distancing. To rectify the problem, the ferry operator should arrange shuttle buses to transport pedestrian ferry commuters from the Pangkalan Raja Tun Uda on the island to Penang Sentral on the mainland, and vice versa.

We would like to know how five of the ferries are out of service, leaving just one. Do they undergo regular mandatory maintenance? It is important to maintain the Penang ferry service because it is iconic to the state and having a 126-year history besides being cheap, efficient, and convenient mode of transport.

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