

The future of the User Agreement and EU Passenger Rights - presentation Dick Clague

The importance of the Irish sea routes for the Isle of Man is obvious to most residents, especially when there is an interruption to services as there has been in recent weeks.

Dependable sea links are of significant importance and we require reliable, year-round ferry and freight services at competitive prices to meet travel and business needs.

Ferry operations play a fundamental role in our economy and wellbeing. Yet many people do not fully understand the User Agreement under which the IOM Steam Packet Company operates its services.

Dick Clague spent many years working with the shipping industry, is the author of the book "Heysham Port - A Century of Manx and Irish Services" and was a founder member of TravelWatch IOM. He currently is its specialist in maritime passenger matters.

The current User Agreement is in place until 2020 with parties having an option to extend until 2026. The Department of Infrastructure is considering long term options for the continuance of strategic sea services and is seeking expressions of interest from operators who can provide passenger roll on/roll off freight ferry services.

In his illustrated talk Dick explained the pros and cons of the User Agreement and suggested changes needed if it is to serve the current and future needs of the Island. In addition he outlined the rights from which IOM ferry passengers benefit under the terms of EU Regulation 1177/2010.