



Our Ref 14541/MD/AMcC

22 February 2013

Mr A B MacNeil, MP
31 Bayhead Street
Stornoway
Isle of Lewis
HS1 2DU

Dear Mr MacNeil

Thank you for your letter reference J13/01 dated 13 February 2013 regarding the introduction of Wi-fi on ferries.

We are very keen to make a reliable and consistent Wi-fi signal available on our ships and have undertaken a number of trials of several different delivery methods to do so, including satellite, point-to-point wireless and 3G. The geography in which we operate presents some challenges and we may have to apply different solutions in different areas, but these trials have allowed us to determine which technology is most suited to which area.

This work is being carried out within the context of a major revamp of all on board communications and we are working towards providing an 'always on' connection, allowing the ships to be permanently connected to the corporate network, which will allow us to operate safely and efficiently in delivering our services. Where there is sufficient capacity and network coverage this will allow us to deliver Wi-fi services to passengers.

We hope to tender and transition to a new service model during 2013 and the formal procurement process for this has started. We share everyone's frustration that we cannot progress this as quickly as we would all like but you will appreciate that there are significant technological challenges and costs associated with it and we have to get it right.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Martin Dorchester
Managing Director

