

Ontario Ministry of Transportation

Pelee Island 20-Year Transportation Strategy (2012 – 2032) - Summary Report

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Introduction

Study Background

The Township of Pelee consists of nine islands being Pelee Island, North Harbour Island, Middle Sister Island, Middle Island, East Sister Island, Hen Island, Chick Island, Big Chick Island and Little Chick Island. Pelee Island is the only inhabited island in the township. The northern tip of Pelee Island is located approximately 26 kilometres (km) south of the Municipality of Leamington, in the western basin of Lake Erie and approximately the same latitude as the Ohio-Michigan border. As the largest Lake Erie island, Pelee Island is 14.5 km long and 5.6 km wide and comprises approximately 10,000 acres with about 6,400 acres of arable land. Much acreage is dedicated to conservation and natural heritage, which includes tourist attractions for bird watchers, hunters and eco-tourism activities. Pelee Island has approximately 200 full-time residents.

Map of Pelee Island Ferry Service Routes



The Pelee Island Transportation System operates a ferry service for 8.5 months of the year (early April through mid-December), and an air service for 3.5 months of the year (mid-December through March).

Some highlights of the Pelee Island ferry service are the following:

- The two ferry vessels and three Ontario port facilities are owned by MTO.
- U.S. port usage is through dock fees paid to the City of Sandusky, Ohio.
- The system is operated on behalf of MTO by the Owen Sound Transportation Company.

- The ferry vessels are the M.V. Pelee Islander (built in 1960) and the M.V. Jiimaan (built in 1992).
- The M.V. Pelee Islander has a carrying capacity of 196 passengers and 10 vehicles (no trucks). Because it is side-loading, vehicles must be backed off. Although the Pelee Islander is approaching the end of its service life, it is a reliable ferry vessel.
- The M.V. Jiimaan has a carrying capacity of 385 passengers, 2 transport trucks, and 34 cars if no trucks. Vehicles roll-on at one end of the vessel and roll-off at the other. Although the Jiimaan is in “like new” condition, it is subject to trip cancellations because it can’t maneuver in high winds and is subject to propulsion system breakdowns. It is not used during the first and last months of the sailing season.
- The M.V. Jiimaan averages 1013 one-way trips annually, all between Pelee Island and the Ontario mainland. The M.V. Pelee Islander averages 719 one-way trips annually, with 27% to Sandusky U.S. and 73% to the Ontario mainland.
- The port on Pelee Island is located at West Dock, approximately mid-way along the west coast of the Island, and includes border processing facilities for passengers and vehicles arriving from Sandusky.
- The ports on the Ontario mainland are located at Leamington and Kingsville, each of which is operated for only half of the sailing season.
- The ferry trip distance to Pelee Island from mainland Ontario and the US are roughly the same, as shown in the map above, at 34 km and 37 km, respectively. The distance between Pelee Island’s Scudder (North) Dock (not used by the Pelee Island ferry service) and mainland Ontario is approximately 26 km.
- The primary purpose of the Pelee Island ferry service is to provide a transportation link between Pelee Island and the rest of Ontario. The primary purpose of the U.S. component of the ferry service is to provide access to Pelee Island for cottagers and other tourists during peak periods of tourist travel, which is deemed to be the Memorial Day holiday weekend and the elementary school holiday season (last week of June to first week of September).
- Ontario mainland ferry service varies from two to three round trips per day based upon the season and day of week.
- U.S. ferry service is one round trip weekends only in May and June, and daily round trip service in July through late September (with an extra round trip each Friday and Sunday in July through late September).

Some highlights of the Pelee Island air service are the following:

- No facilities or equipment is owned by MTO.
- Under the current arrangement, aircraft owned and operated by Cameron Air Services hired by OSTC on behalf of MTO, using one Aircraft (a C-208 Caravan), which has a capacity of 8 passengers plus 2 crew.
- The service operates between Pelee Island and Windsor municipally owned airports (from the Great Lakes Flight Centre at the Windsor airport).
- The number of round trips varies from two to four, depending on the day of the week.

Study Purpose

The Pelee Island Transportation Needs Study was initiated by MTO to identify opportunities to alleviate existing capacity and service concerns and future constraints to transportation services provided by the province of Ontario.

The key objectives of the study were the following:

- Identify Pelee Island transportation service problems and transportation needs;
- Consider alternatives to address those problems and transportation needs; and
- Develop a 20-year strategy for the Pelee Island transportation service

Purpose of this Report

This report summarizes the study recommendations. Fifty-eight alternatives within twelve categories were assessed and evaluated to address problems identified with the Pelee Island Transportation System. Collectively, the twenty-one recommended alternatives selected constitute a 20-year strategy for the Pelee Island Transportation System.

Stakeholder Consultation

Stakeholder consultation was an important component of the Pelee Island Transportation Needs Study. Key elements of the consultation program included the following:

- A study web site (www.peleeislandstudy.ca) and a study email address (team@peleeislandstudy.ca) have been operational for the duration of study.
- Public notices were published in area newspapers for study commencement, public information centre #1 and public information centre #2. The Notice of Study Commencement was published in February 2010.
- Two round of public information centres (PICs) were held. Each round of PICs was held at 3 venue locations, which were Pelee Island, Leamington and Kingsville:
 - PIC #1 was held in July of 2010 to introduce the study, present the problems and opportunities, and the alternatives to be considered;
 - PIC # 2 was held in May of 2011 to present a set of recommended alternatives to address the problems and opportunities.
- Meetings of the Pelee Island Transportation Study Advisory Committee (PITSAC) were held at study commencement and prior to each of PIC #1 and PIC#2. PITSAC was formed to guide the study, was chaired by the late Bruce Crozier, MPP for Essex County. Members were the mayors and CAOs of Pelee Island, Leamington and Kingsville, plus senior staff from MTO West Region.
- Several meetings were held with the Pelee Island Transportation Committee (a committee of council) during the study to obtain input on transportation problems, alternatives to address them, evaluation and recommendation of alternatives.
- A meeting was held with the captains of the Pelee Islander and Jiimaan.

Stakeholder input received resulted in changes and refinements to the information presented, including changes made to the recommended vessel alternatives, which are included in the table (Appendix A) on page 16.

1. M.V. Pelee Islander Replacement

The M.V. Pelee Islander is approaching the end of its service life. It will be replaced with a new combined passenger / car / truck roll-on roll-off ferry with conventional bow visor/stern ramp and with hull dimensions similar to the Jiimaan.

This new replacement vessel will look much like an off-shore supply boat, and will include the following:

- Vessel hull dimensions of 63m length and 14.5m beam;
- Partially enclosed superstructure with open vehicle deck aft;
- Sail area of the top sides kept to a minimum;
- Side thrusters, to provide maneuverability for high wind conditions;
- Four (4) engine diesel power plant with two (2) engines per shaft line, which provides engine redundancy;
- Installed engine power of 2650 kW (3600HP at 1800HP per engine) with variable pitch propellers;
- 13 knot service speed;
- Vehicle capacity of 4 tractor trailers plus 16 cars, or 34 cars if no tractor trailers (provided within vessel load line limitations)*;
- Consistent vehicle deck ceiling clearance, so that vehicle height does not limit optimal loading;
- Passenger capacity of 350, or more if can be reasonably be provided;
- Crew compliment of 10;
- “Moderate” passenger facilities;
- Passenger elevator;
- Overnight sleeping accommodation for the crew;
- Bow and stern ramp hull opening 6.1m to clear modern farm equipment;
- Compliance with Near Coastal Voyage Class 2 per Transport Canada regulations (a voyage that is not a sheltered water voyage, and is within 25 nautical miles from shore in waters contiguous to Canada and the United States and within 100 nautical miles from a place of refuge);
- Racks for bicycles;
- Modification of the passenger ramps is NOT required at each of the three Ontario ferry terminals for passenger deck access;
- To accommodate roll-on roll-off design at Sandusky requires a different dock location and dock facilities, and therefore modification of border processing if deployed to U.S. service.

*Note: Vehicle capacity based upon:

- an average passenger vehicle length of 5.5m (18 feet);
- a loaded tractor trailer (not pulling train trailers) needing 15.25m (50 feet) of vehicle lane space; and
- a loaded tractor trailer (not pulling train trailers) weighing approximately 55,000kg (e.g. if loaded with soybeans).

Cost of Vessel Replacement Alternative

Order of magnitude vessel implementation cost is \$56M in 2012 dollars (plus \$600,000 cost of upgrading Sandusky dock facilities for vehicle roll-on roll-off service if it ever provides this service). Cost will be refined after design is complete.

2. M.V. Jiimaan Major Vessel Improvements

The Jiimaan was built in 1992, and is primarily in “like-new” condition. Given its condition, and the fact that the vessel is in service for only approximately seven months per year in fresh water, it is reasonable to expect that the Jiimaan has a future lifespan extending to 2032 and possibly 2037.

Jiimaan manoeuvrability will be improved by installing an additional bow thruster and stern thruster. Reliability will be improved by replacing the propulsion system.

Details of these improvements include:

- Current vessel hull dimensions retained;
- Provide two additional thrusters (for a total of two in the bow and one in the stern), which would allow the vessel to maneuver in 28 knot cross-winds, and which would provide bow thruster redundancy;
- Increase genset capacity in order to power the additional thrusters;
- Replace the two existing diesel engines, gear boxes, shaft lines, and variable pitch propellers and controls with same number of engines and with increased engine power of 2650 kW (3600HP at 1800HP per engine). In the event that one of the diesel electric power plants breaks down, Transport Canada regulations will NOT allow the vessel to remain in service while it is repaired;
- Retain 12.5 knot service speed;
- Replace controls including centre and wing controls on the bridge;
- Vehicle capacity remains at 2 tractor trailers plus 25 cars, or 34 cars (provided within vessel load line limitations);
- Retain passenger capacity of 385;
- Retain crew compliment of 15 (which the vessel design requires for emergency response);
- Replace elevator (cab and mechanism) in existing trunk;
- Modified passenger evacuation system (replacement of passenger emergency escape chutes with slides);
- Provide racks for bicycles;
- To accommodate roll-on roll-off design at Sandusky, requires a different dock location and dock facilities, and therefore modification of border processing;
- Modification of the passenger ramps is NOT required at each of the three Ontario ferry terminals for passenger deck access.

Cost of Vessel Alternative

Order of magnitude vessel implementation cost is \$13M in 2012 dollars (plus \$600,000 cost of upgrading Sandusky dock facilities for vehicle roll-on roll-off service, plus \$300,000 for replacement of elevator, both of which are funded separately). Cost will be refined after design is complete.

3. Two-versus-One Vessel Ferry System

The two-vessel ferry system will be with service to both U.S. and Ontario mainland will be continued, comprised of the M.V. Pelee Islander replacement plus Jiimaan improvements.

This will include:

- One ferry providing service to the Ontario mainland only:
 - the Pelee Islander replacement vessel will be assigned to this service.
- A second ferry providing joint U.S. / Ontario service:
 - the Jiimaan with vessel improvements will be assigned to this service; and
 - annual trips split balance continuing to be approximately 27% U.S. service and 73% Ontario mainland service.

With the current ferry schedule, the necessary increase in weekly July/August Ontario mainland truck and car carrying capacity is exceeded without over-servicing.

In addition to the weekly July/August peak tourist season increases in capacity, there will be:

- Increase in early spring and late fall shoulder season capacity and ability to carry transport trucks during shoulder seasons (the latter is not currently available)
- Convenience of direct access to the ferry system from the U.S for U.S. cottagers and tourists (avoids need for land trip around Lake Erie to access ferries from Ontario mainland ports) is maintained.

4. Ferry Schedule Trip Frequency/Timing

The 5-year average number of annual one-way trips for the Jiimaan has been 1013, and for the Pelee Islander has been 719, with the trip frequency and timing varying with the time of year. The ferry schedule and trip frequency/timing will be modified to enhance ferry service as follows:

- Provide one additional return trip from the Ontario mainland during each day of Pelee Fest, and on the Friday and Monday of each of the Victoria Day weekend, Canada Day weekend, Civic Holiday weekend Labour Day weekend, and Thanksgiving weekend.
- During May, June and September, provide one additional return trip from the Ontario mainland each Saturday evening to increase Saturday service and extend the time available for day-trippers on the Island.
- Continue to limit access to ferry trips between Pelee Island and the U.S. to non-commercial vehicles.
 - This allows service to private vehicles only, in recognition that the primary purpose of the ferry service to the U.S. is to provide access to Pelee Island for cottagers and other tourists during peak periods of tourist travel.
 - It also recognizes that the border-processing arrangements for the ferry service in both Canada and the U.S. are based on no commercial vehicles.

In order to have minimal additional MTO operational costs, elimination of some ferry trips during non-peak times will be considered to maintain the same number of trips per season.

If these schedule enhancements result in under-utilized trips, they will be revisited.

If the increased carrying capacity being provided to U.S. service is under-utilized, the schedule for U.S. service will be revisited.

5. Ferry Trip Reservation and Cancellation (applies to vehicles only)

In order to reduce the frequency of last-minute trip cancellations and their impact on the Pelee Island economy, the following ferry trip reservation and cancellations changes will be implemented for vehicles only:

- Require 5 day minimum advance notification to cancel a credit card guaranteed trip reservation without forfeiture of trip fare (increased from 48 hours)
 - By increasing the time period, this will help to reduce last-minute cancellations and improve access opportunities for other users. This may help address the concerns of tourist operators regarding lost business.
- At the time of a reservation or a change of reservation, charge on a credit card a non-refundable fee to reserve each one-way trip that is credited to the trip fare at time of boarding (there is currently no reservation charge). If a one-day return trip that starts from the Island is cancelled by the traveller, the second reservation fee for that day will be refunded. If a ferry trip is cancelled by the ferry operator, the reservation fee will be refunded.
 - This will help to discourage “just-in-case bookings” and ensure that vehicle capacity is better utilized for each sailing. The initial reservation fee for a standard car would be \$10.00, and would be proportionately greater for larger vehicles.
- For spring-time advance-booking of sailing season trips, at the time of a reservation, charge on a credit card the full fare of each one-way trip, which is not eligible for refund in the event of a trip cancellation.
 - This will reduce “speculative” multi-vehicle bookings and improve access opportunities throughout the booking period. If a ferry trip is cancelled by the ferry operator, the reservation fee will be refunded.
- For farm crop shipments only, require no reservation fee, and require 48 hour minimum advance notification without trip fare forfeiture. If more than 10% of annual crop shipments are cancelled less than 5 days in advance, this policy exemption will be revisited
 - This recognizes that farmers can’t predict the influence of weather variations on the timing of crop harvest.
 - However, in recognition of the impacts to other Island economic sectors, this policy exemption will be revisited if more than 10% of crop shipments are cancelled less than five (5) days in advance.

6. Communications with Ferry System Users

The following changes will be implemented to enhance ferry communications.

- MTO and the ferry operator are to work towards a means of providing improved telephone service for period of peak spring start up ferry trip reservations.
 - This would alleviate frustration and customer complaints during waiting periods at the opening of the booking season.
- Provide on-line ferry trip reservations and cancellations after both the Pelee Islander replacement and improved Jiimaan are both in service (software specific to vessels must be developed).
 - This approach is used by airlines and some other ferry systems. It would alleviate frustration and customer complaints at waiting periods upon opening of booking season.
 - This system would be available for all spaces on the Pelee Islander replacement vessel (which will have consistent ceiling clearance) and for the low-clearance spaces on the Jiimaan (too many variables for trucks in the high-clearance spaces)
- Implement a formal management/communications plan for Pelee Island ferry service disruptions and post it on the web site, in each ferry terminal, and in the passenger area of each ferry vessel:
 1. **A “ferry service disruption” notification service** will be provided on the ferry system web site and through a recorded message on a separate extension on the telephone switchboard. Travelers will be encouraged to check this service, particularly on days of “bad weather conditions”.
 2. **In the event that one of the ferry vessels must be taken out of service for mechanical repairs:**
 - Since the primary purpose of the ferry service is to provide a transportation link between Pelee Island and the rest of Ontario, the U.S. ferry service will go into abeyance until the ferry is repaired.
 - As soon as this situation is known it will be posted on the web site and through a recorded message on the telephone switchboard and travelers waiting/arriving at the ferry terminal will be notified.
 - After the nature and scope of the necessary repairs have been determined, the estimated duration of service disruption will be announced on the web site and by recorded message on the telephone switchboard.
 - When possible and as required, the ferry service will endeavor to run an additional round trip per day to the Ontario mainland to help make up for the temporary loss of vehicle and passenger capacity. This will require an earlier first departure and later last arrival each day, and the full-day modified schedule will be announced on the web site and by recorded message on the telephone switchboard.
 - As soon as the repairs have been completed, service restoration will be announced on the web site and by recorded message on the telephone switchboard.
 3. **In the event that the ferry service is disrupted because of high wind or other weather extremes:**
 - This situation will be posted on the web site and through a recorded message on the telephone switchboard one hour before departure time, and travelers waiting/arriving at the ferry terminal will be notified as soon as it is known.

- Because of the changeable nature of weather conditions, the ferry service will not speculate on the probable duration of service disruption.
 - As soon as weather conditions become acceptable, service restoration will be announced on the web site and by recorded message at the telephone switchboard.
4. **Reservation fees** will be refunded if the traveler does not get a trip on the same day the trip was scheduled, or if the traveler chooses to cancel when service disruptions for the scheduled trip are announced. Reservation fees will not be refunded if the traveler gets a trip at a different time on the same day the trip was scheduled.
 5. **On the day that service is restored**, the ferry service will endeavor to run an additional round trip to the Ontario mainland when possible and as required to get waiting vehicles and passengers off Pelee Island in a timely manner.
 6. **In the event that the ferry sails to a different Ontario mainland port** other than that which was scheduled due to weather conditions, the ferry system will provide taxi service to the intended port without charge.
 7. While the Pelee Island ferry service endeavors to avoid service disruptions, **travelers will not be financially compensated** for their inconvenience and costs when such situations occur.
- Issue trip-specific “return tickets” for walk-on passengers for each day of Pelee Fest, Canada Day weekend, Civic Holiday weekend, and Labour Day weekend, so that fewer passengers find that they are unable to leave the Island at the end of day because vessel capacity has been “maxed out”.
 - In the event of ferry trip cancellations from Pelee Island, provide notification of the Legion Hall’s “Golden Era” program to provide overnight accommodation to stranded users
 - This alternative provides the mechanism to ensure that users stranded on the Island due to ferry trip cancellations are made aware of the Pelee Island Legion Hall’s “Golden Era” program. This is a volunteer program in which Island residents provide the hospitality of overnight accommodation to travellers who can’t avail themselves of commercial accommodations.

7. Pelee Island Port Location

The original west wharf, which forms the north end of the port, requires patching of its sheet piling in order to eliminate an ongoing minor fill subsidence problem. The rest of the dock facilities are in good condition, due to \$9.0M of work completed in 2007. This work included:

- stabilization of the sheet pile dock walls through installation of concrete caissons and a cap beam, all located below lake bed level
- restoration of settlement areas behind the dock walls
- repair of deteriorated components of the docks
- upgrading handrails on the adjustable pedestrian ramps
- modification of the bearings of the roll-on / roll-off (RORO) ramps.

Pelee Island's West Dock will continue to provide service for both the Ontario mainland and Sandusky U.S. This maintains the current situation of an almost equal trip distance between Pelee Island and both Ontario mainland and Sandusky. Negative impacts to businesses near West Dock are avoided because they retain their exposure and proximity to the operating ferry terminal.

This issue could be revisited in the future through initiation of an Environmental Assessment Study to investigate the merits of North Dock if there were a significant change in the ferry transportation service.

8. Ontario Mainland Port Location

Service will continue at both Ontario Mainland ports with each of Leamington and Kingsville operating for only half of the sailing season. The Ontario roadmap and road signs will be modified to reflect the seasonal nature of their operation.

Operation will continue with April through July sailings to/from Leamington port, and August through mid-December sailings to/from Kingsville port.

This issue could be revisited in the future through initiation of an Environmental Assessment Study to investigate the merits of North Dock if there were a significant change in the ferry transportation service.

9. Ontario Port Facilities

Improvements to the Ontario port facilities will include an increase in the size of the under-cover passenger wait area at Pelee Island West Dock (so that waiting passengers don't have to stand in the rain) by one of the following:

- expand the terminal building to the south, to enlarge its passenger wait area;
- repurpose half of the border processing / customs inspection building, which is considerably under-utilized;
- or
- construct a small long and narrow building on a portion of the old "West Wharf".

Modifications to the passenger ramps at the Ontario ports are not required to accommodate the improved Jiimaan or the replacement vessel for the Pelee Islander.

10. Early Spring Sailing Season Vessel Preparedness

After the Jiimaan modifications have been completed, MTO will ensure both ferry vessels are “ready to go” during the “Early Spring” sailing season to provide back-up in event of mechanical breakdowns. This will be possible through the replacement of the Jiimaan’s passenger emergency escape chutes with slides, and establishment of an earlier annual spring escape chute testing/inspection and crew training session so that both ferry vessels are “ready to go” during the early spring sailing season.

This will avoid cancellations (barring severe weather constraints) when the ferries are brought into service at the start of the season and will ensure that ferry service is never totally unavailable during the sailing season.

11. On-Island Transit

On-Island transit will continue as a private sector endeavour.

On-Island transit on Pelee Island is currently available from May until September through Essex County Tours. The Essex County Tours provides two services: an Island tour on the “Big Blue Bus”; and taxi services outside of tour times.

12. Island Winter Transportation Service

MTO will continue to provide air service during the winter season from Windsor Airport to Pelee Island.

Winter service to the Island operates 3.5 months per year (from mid-December through to the end of March). The current arrangement for air service is with Cameron Air Services, hired by the OSTC on behalf of MTO. Facilities and equipment are not owned by the MTO; the Municipality of Pelee Island owns the Pelee Island airport and the City of Windsor owns the Windsor Airport.

Under the current contract, the aircraft used during the winter service season is a C-208 Caravan with a capacity of eight (8) passengers and two (2) crew members. The winter schedule for 2010-2011 was as follows:

- Four (4) round trips on Fridays;
- Three (3) round trips on Sundays; and
- Two (2) round trips each day from Monday to Thursday and Saturdays.

There is an additional freight-only flight on Tuesdays.

Appendix A: Summary of Alternatives Selected for the 20-Year Transportation Strategy (2012 – 2032)

The table below summarizes the alternatives selected for a 20-year transportation strategy from 2012 to 2032.

1. Recommended M.V. Pelee Islander Replacement Alternatives
1(c) Replace the Pelee Islander with a new combined passenger / car / truck roll-on roll-off ferry with conventional bow visor/stern ramp and with hull dimensions similar to the Jiimaan
2. Recommended M.V. Jiimaan Major Vessel Improvement Alternative
2(c) Provide the Jiimaan with improved manoeuvrability by providing a stern thruster and second bow thruster, and improve reliability by replacing engines, gearboxes, line shafts, propellers, generator and controls, while retaining current vessel dimensions and vehicle carrying capacity.
3. Recommended Two-versus- One Vessel Ferry System Alternatives
3(a) Provide a two-vessel ferry system with service to both the U.S. and Ontario mainland, comprised of Pelee Islander replacement plus Jiimaan improvement alternatives. Pelee Islander replacement to be assigned to Ontario mainland service only. Improved Jiimaan to be assigned to joint U.S. / Ontario mainland service.
4. Recommended Ferry Schedule Trip Frequency/Timing Alternatives
4(d) Provide one additional return trip from the Ontario mainland during each day of Pelee Fest, and on the Friday and Monday of each of Victoria Day weekend, Canada Day weekend, Civic Holiday weekend, Labour Day weekend, and Thanksgiving Day weekend.
4(e) During May, June and September, provide one additional return trip from the Ontario mainland each Saturday evening to increase Saturday service and extend the time available for day-trippers on the Island.
4(g) Continue to limit access for ferry trips between Pelee Island and the U.S. to non-commercial vehicles.
5. Recommended Ferry Trip Reservations and Cancellation Alternatives (applies to vehicles only)
5(b) Require <u>5 Day</u> minimum advance notification to cancel a credit card guaranteed trip reservation without forfeiture of trip fare (increased from 48 hours).
5(d): At the time of a reservation or a change of reservation, charge on a credit card a non-refundable fee to reserve each one-way trip that is credited to the trip fare at time of boarding. If a one-day return trip that starts from the Island is cancelled by the traveller, the second reservation fee for that day will be refunded. If a ferry trip is cancelled by the ferry operator, the reservation fee will be refunded.
5(f) For spring-time advance-booking of sailing season trips, at the time of a reservation, charge on a credit card the full fare of each one-way trip, which is not eligible for refund in the event of a trip cancellation by the client. If a ferry trip is cancelled by the ferry operator, the reservation fee will be refunded.
5(g) For farm crop shipments only, no reservation fee, and a 48 hour minimum advance notification without trip fare forfeiture apply. If more than 10% of annual crop shipments are cancelled less than 5 days in advance, this policy exemption to be revisited.

6. Recommended Communications Alternatives With Ferry System Users
6(b) MTO and the ferry operator to work towards a means of providing improved telephone service for period of peak spring start up ferry trip reservations in late February (hunting season) and early March (regular season).
6(c) Provide on-line ferry trip reservations and cancellations after the Pelee Islander replacement and improved Jiimaan are both in service (software specific to vessels must be developed) for all spaces on the Pelee Islander replacement vessel (which will have consistent ceiling clearance) and for the low-clearance spaces on the Jiimaan.
6(d) Implement a formal management/communications plan for Pelee Island ferry service disruptions and post it on the web site, in each ferry terminal, and in the passenger area of each ferry vessel.
6(e) Issue trip-specific "return tickets" for walk-on passengers for each day of Pelee Fest, Canada Day weekend, Civic Holiday weekend, and Labour Day weekend, so fewer passengers find that they are unable to leave the Island at end of day because vessel passenger capacity has been "maxed out".
6(f) In the event of trip cancellations from Pelee Island, provide notification of the Pelee Island Legion Hall's "Golden Era" program to provide overnight accommodation to stranded users.
7. Recommended Pelee Island Port Location Alternative
7(a) Continue both Ontario mainland service and Sandusky, Ohio service at Pelee Island's West Dock.
8. Recommended Ontario Mainland Port Location Alternative
8(a) Continue operating both ports on the Ontario mainland with each of Leamington and Kingsville operating for only half of the sailing season, and modify the Ontario roadmap and road signs to reflect the seasonal nature of their operation.
9. Recommended Ontario Port Facility Alternative
9(c) Increase the size of the passenger wait area at Pelee Island West Dock.
10. Recommended Early Spring Sailing Season Vessel Preparedness Alternative
10(b) Ensure both ferry vessels are "ready to go" during early spring sailing season, to provide back-up in event of mechanical breakdowns.
11. Recommended On-Island Transit Alternative
11(a) Continue on-Island transit as a private sector endeavour.
12. Recommended Island Winter Transportation Service Alternative
12(a) Continue to provide Island winter transportation service by aircraft.