

To whom it may concern,

as a King Island resident for 63 years, business owner and former member of the shipping group, I would like to submit the following points as a submission to the inquiry into the King Island Freight Services.

1.The replacement vessel must have a cargo hold. We need to protect our export produce and incoming goods that cannot be containerised.

2.The replacement vessel must be able to handle the Bass Strait weather conditions. We cannot afford missed sailings and it damages the King Island brand if we cannot guarantee supply of our exported goods. It is enormously damaging to animal health to be loaded on a trailer only to turn around and return to the farm. It also disrupts farm planning to carry excess stock because they cannot leave when necessary.

3. A King Island to Victoria return service is absolutely essential. Historically, we (King Island) have done the majority of our trade with Victoria and to deny us the capacity to do this efficiently, timely and cost effectively is anti-competitive. As mainly a prime lamb producer, not currently having access to Victoria is costing us \$50,000 annually. Previously, Swift was a major buyer of our type of lamb. However, they have shut their small animal chain and we believe that they will not reopen it as they were sending 5000 lambs a week to Victoria.

The deputy premier, and a spokesperson from Mr Hidding's office have both stated that a government run triangular service would go from King Island to Tasmania and then to Victoria. This denies us direct access to Victorian markets and it compromises animal welfare and quality to ship our livestock twice.

I appreciate you taking the time to listen to the people of King Island.

Noel Cooke.

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