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TIDAL PHENOMENON AFFECTS SEALINK'S SAILINGS

An unusual lunar phenomenon is expected to affect SeaLink's services in the coming weeks.

At the end of January and into the first week in February (and again at the end of February), the Waitemata Harbour will experience some of the biggest tides that have been seen in this area for several years. Tides as high as 3.6 meters and as low as 0.2 meters are expected, producing a tidal range of 3.4 meters, a variance of more than 20% to normal spring tides.

Tides of this magnitude are referred to as Perigean Tides and occur when the moon is closest to the earth. At the end of January the moon will be only 356,600kms from earth. In comparison, today (19 January) it is 406,400kms away. During a normal spring tide the distance would be 370,000kms.

SeaLink advises that due to the shallow nature of the sea at the Musick Point beacons, the alternative route via Browns Island will be used at low tide during the period Saturday 30 January to Saturday 7 February. This will add 10-15 minutes to the transit times for some Waiheke Island services.

"The Urgent Notices on our website will detail the dates and sailings affected and we would like to apologise in advance for any delays caused by these tidal extremes" said general manager Donna Gauci today.

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