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FUEL PRICES AFFECT GREAT BARRIER ISLAND SERVICE

SeaLink will increase its Great Barrier Island freight prices and alter its winter timetable in response to rising fuel prices from June 2006.

Donna Gauci, General Manager of SeaLink comments, "These changes have been unavoidable due to recent fuel increases and we are one of many businesses affected. We operate year round – the only operator to Great Barrier that does - and in order to maintain this service we must be cost conscious – especially during the winter months."

SeaLink will be reducing its sailings commencing Thursday, 8 June to three per week. The timetable change will effectively combine the Thursday freight sailing and Friday passenger sailing.

The proposed timetable – yet to be confirmed through authorities - is Friday 8.00am departure from Auckland, arrival 12.30pm in Tryphena and 4.00pm departure from Tryphena arrival into Auckland at 8.30pm.

Donna Gauci continues, "We have been able to maintain our freight pricing at a constant since 2004. However, now our costs have risen dramatically in recent months, due to fuel increases, we need to increase our freight prices effective 1 June 2006."

It is expected that passenger/vehicle fares will be maintained until 01 October when an already published minimal average fare increase takes effect.

All freight customers will be contacted with the new price structure once finalised.

Notes:

SeaLink remains the only year round freight/passenger/vehicular service to Great Barrier Island as smaller operators have discontinued services.

Oil prices continue to rise, pushing costs of operating to an all time high. Fuel prices are up 30% since August 2005.

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