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BC Ferries CEO resigns - Natalie Dunsmuir

By spring of next year, BC Ferries will need to find a replacement for its CEO.

Mike Corrigan, who has been President and CEO of the corporation since 2012, has handed in his resignation. He'll step down on March 31, 2017, the day his contract runs out. BC Ferries says it has already begun the search for his successor, both within and outside of the company.

Corrigan's decision to leave BC Ferries comes at a time when the corporation is doing better—revenues are up over last year and three new intermediate ferries are currently being built in Poland to replace the venerable *Queen of Nanaimo* and *Queen of Burnaby*. Traffic is recovering this summer (see detailed article, *Island Tides*, August 25).

Corrigan has been working within BC Ferries for 13 years, since he joined the company in 2003. He was made chief operating officer in 2006 and held that post until he was made CEO in 2012.

Since 2013, the company has come under intense criticism: cumulative hefty fare increases, a number of service cuts on smaller routes, and the installation of a cable ferry across Baynes Sound have angered residents and visitors alike. Proposed

massive restructuring of Southern Gulf interlinking routes, destroying islands' economics and culture, led to heated public consultation in the summer of 2015 and a withdrawal of the proposal.

However, Brian Hollingshead, Chair of the Ferry Advisory Committees, said Corrigan took community concerns seriously. According to Hollingshead, his 'time on the operations side of the company before becoming CEO gave him an appreciation of the complexities of the system.'

Corrigan has said that his decision to step down was a hard one, and it is not yet clear what he will be do once he leaves BC Ferries. 'It is never easy to step down and let someone else take the helm,' he said. 'So I'm stepping down with mixed emotions, because my time at BC Ferries has been tremendously rewarding and satisfying, and I've had the opportunity to work with an outstanding group of people—and a very supportive board. But I am at a stage in my career that I feel it is time to pursue new opportunities.'

BC Ferries is hoping to find Corrigan's replacement quickly so that the transition to a new CEO will be as smooth as possible. ✍

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