

Dear Sirs,

I do not know whether you accept evidence from members of the public but, just in case, here goes.

Living in Southsea I am a fairly frequent traveller on the Ferries to France on the Western Channel routes and I am very concerned about the effect on fares the withdrawal of the P&O services will have, and already has had even though P&O is still operating to Le Havre pending the outcome of the Commission's inquiry. With the withdrawal already of P&O on the other routes, Brittany Ferries now has a monopoly on those routes, which has already resulted in greatly increased Fares on those routes!

An example:

Last year I took a five-day (four-night) break in northern France from Monday 25th October to Friday 29th October 2004, arranged by a travel company. I travelled by car on the Monday morning Brittany Ferry from Portsmouth to Caen, returning on the Friday early evening Brittany Ferry. The travel company's brochure prices are based on the short sea crossing and so a supplement has to be paid for the longer, Western Channel crossings. The supplements totalled £20: £10 for each sailing

This year going with the same travel company for the equivalent dates (24th to 28th October 2005), for the same number of days (and nights), on exactly the same crossings with Brittany Ferries, the supplements amount to £92: £34 for the sailing from Portsmouth to Caen on the Monday morning plus £58 for the sailing from Caen on the Friday early evening.

Last year, of course, I had the option to travel by P&O Ferries, this year I do not and so Brittany Ferries has used its monopoly to increase the supplements four-fold! Goodness knows what will happen to fares if they are permitted to take over the Le Havre sailings from P&O. In so far as I am concerned I would not want that to be permitted.

Yours faithfully,

Philip Haestier