



# MEDIA RELEASE

Placentia, NL, May 8, 2020

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Marine Atlantic announced today that there will be no ferry service between Argentia and North Sydney in 2020.

The Town of Placentia is very disappointed with this decision.

Mayor Bernard Power expressed concern in a letter to Marine Atlantic and government officials last month in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and possible changes to ferry operations. The Mayor requested that consideration be given to an increase in commercial service as well as a reduction in fares for this year because of the reduction in tourist traffic. The company neglected to respond prior to making today's announcement.

Marine Atlantic is mandated to provide a ferry service for both passenger and commercial traffic. A year round service is operated from Port Aux Basques while Argentia has always been a seasonal operation relying strongly on summer tourist travel. Mayor Power stated that with the majority of commercial freight destined for the Avalon, it would be more practical and safer to continue to utilize the Argentia service this summer and reduce the amount of highway travel.

Marine Atlantic employs close to 30 people directly at the Argentia terminal on a seasonal basis and is the strongest economic booster for tourism in the region. The service registered 84 crossings in 2018 with 30,537 passenger movements and 13,269 passenger related vehicle movements.

Mayor Power stated that the loss of the ferry service this year will have a tremendous negative impact on the economy in the Placentia region. The Mayor stressed the importance for Marine Atlantic to review its decision and consider a revised schedule for commercial traffic. Utilization of federal subsidy programs would make this feasible and support continued maintenance and other related work at Argentia.

He also stated that the company needs to give assurance to the workers, business community and public that the service will return to normal operation following the pandemic.

The Marine Atlantic terminal in Argentia is located next to a deep seaport with year round navigation.

For more information contact:  
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