



PRESS RELEASE

M/V Melissa Ann damage assessed, could return to service next week

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BREMERTON, Wash. – On Wednesday, Kitsap Transit’s marine mechanics discovered that the M/V Melissa Ann didn’t experience a fire at all during a scheduled sailing last Saturday.

They found that the flow of seawater to an engine’s heat exchanger was interrupted, causing the engine to overheat. The overheating caused the coolant to be expelled from the engine and create hot steam, setting off the temperature alarm in the engine room. The steam appeared to be smoke coming from the engine room, prompting the crew to follow their training and evacuate passengers from the vessel.

Kitsap Transit plans to make repairs to the Melissa Ann this week, take it on sea trials and seek permission from the U.S. Coast Guard to return the ferry to service next week; while Kitsap Transit is optimistic the ferry can be returned to service soon, its engine still needs to be assessed for damage.

Kingston Fast Ferry service has been suspended since Saturday’s incident. Melissa Ann, a 172-passenger vessel, is the back-up ferry to M/V Finest on the Kingston/Seattle route. Finest, which has been out of service for scheduled repair work, is returning to service on Thursday, September 9.

The latest assessment is a dramatic turn of events: On Saturday, a fire was reported in Melissa Ann’s engine room after it had departed Seattle bound for Kingston with five passengers and three crew members aboard.

U.S. Coast Guard and Seattle Fire Department boats responded to the Melissa Ann’s distress call, as well as M/V Reliance, one of Kitsap Transit’s fast ferries operating the Bremerton/Seattle route. Passengers on Melissa Ann donned life jackets. Once Reliance pulled next to Melissa Ann, the crews conducted an overwater transfer of the passengers, who were transported to Bremerton, where a Kitsap Transit bus picked them up to transport them to Kingston.

Melissa Ann’s crew then piloted the vessel to Seattle’s Pier 90. The vessel remains there, pending repairs and Coast Guard acceptance of the repairs.

“Last Saturday, Kitsap Transit’s ferry crews demonstrated their professionalism and skill,” said Raymond Scott, Marine Services Director. “We are grateful that nobody was injured and relieved to find that in fact we did not have a fire on our ferry.”

About Kitsap Transit

Kitsap Transit has been operating friendly, convenient public transit since 1983. The transit agency for Kitsap County carried more than 3.8 million riders in 2019 across a multi-modal system of routed buses, passenger ferries, paratransit shuttles, vanpools, and worker/driver buses for the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

Hablar español?

Por favor llame al 1-800-501-7433 durante las horas normales de oficina. El personal de servicios al cliente se conectará con un intérprete para ayudarle a responder sus preguntas.

Nagsasalita ka ba ng Tagalog?

Paki-tawagan ang numero 1-800-501-7433 normal na oras ng trabaho. Customer Service kawani ay kumonekta sa isang taga interpretor upang tulungan sagutin ang iyong katanungan.

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