

## **Air-conditioning plan for all Star ferries**

**Tad Stoner**

**T**he Star Ferry is planning to install air-conditioning in all of its vessels by the end of next year in response to higher customer expectations.

Four of the Star Ferry boats are already air-conditioned, and the company has asked shipbuilders to design new installations for the remaining eight vessels on the Tsim Sha Tsui-Central, Central-Hung Hom and Tsim Sha Tsui-Wan Chai routes.

The company, which carries 100,000 passengers each day, declined to estimate the cost of the project, but said it

did not form a significant part of its operations.

In June, two of the fleet's older boats, built 20 years ago, were fitted with free-standing air-conditioning units installed in the front cabin of the first-class section.

"This is the trial for the whole fleet, but we're still reviewing the service," a spokesman, Wegan Chiang, said. "We wanted to upgrade our service, and as the economy gets more affluent, passengers are demanding a higher level and better standard.

"It's only a seven-minute ride, but that's what they want."