

J. C. M. P. 10 March 1983

## Axe falls today to cut firm's ferry losses

Residents of Mei Foo Sun Chuen will find their ferry services to Central drastically cut from 32 a day to just nine, covering peak hours only, from today.

The reduction in service by the private ferry operator, Wing Fat Transportation and Tug Co, has been brought about by poor patronage resulting in daily losses exceeding \$2,000.

The new schedules, a Transport Department spokesman said yesterday, will allow six departures from Mei Foo Sun Chuen at a 20-minute frequency between 7.20 am and 9 am each weekday.

Three sailings will depart from Blake Pier in Central between 5.20 pm and 6 pm and on Saturday between 12.20 pm and 1 pm.

There will be no service on public holidays.

This is the second cut in service that the Wing Fat Co has made in the past 30 days. Last month it virtually halved its service from 62 to 32 because of the heavy losses.

The secretary of the Traffic and Transport sub-committee of the Shamshui District Board, Miss Esther Chan, said the sub-committee had not opposed the cutback.

Miss Chan said when the issue was raised on Friday, members were convinced that the reduction was necessary to keep the service viable.

Miss Chan said members had resolved to urge for an expedient decision on the operator's application to have a new pier at Rumsey Street.

A spokesman for the Lands and Works Department said the operator's proposal is still under consideration.