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Interferry2026 Conference in Bangkok: People, Lifelines and Leadership Priorities in Focus at Ferry Leaders Panels

Interferry has unveiled a line-up of senior leaders for the three Ferry Leaders Panels at its upcoming 50th Anniversary Conference in Bangkok, Thailand. Scheduled from October 31 to November 4, 2026, the event will bring together top executives from across the globe to address the most urgent operational, human, and strategic challenges facing ferry shipping.

During the regular conference sessions, Interferry Chairman Götz Becker of FRS and Matteo Catani of GNV, Chairman of Interferry´s Operator Policy Committee, will, among others, provide the latest insights on evolving regulatory demands and alternative fuels. Global operators are navigating complex transitions in technological shifts, workforce development, and public infrastructure requirements. Moderated by Interferry CEO Mike Corrigan (Panels 1 and 3) and Seamus Murphy of San Francisco Bay Ferry (Panel 2), executive panels elaborating these themes will serve as the centerpiece of the business program.

"In Bangkok, we will have the opportunity to discuss many topics relevant to our industry, such as the exchange of experiences regarding the electrification of ferries, or safety initiatives around the world. The Leaders Panels, however, remain among the most highly anticipated sessions every year, as delegates gain access to first-hand leadership and decision-making insights," stated Mike Corrigan, CEO of Interferry. "This year's roster again demonstrates why Interferry remains vital after 50 years: C-suite executives get the dedicated space they need to gather among peers and engage in real, meaningful dialogue on the sector's most pressing opportunities and challenges."

An overview of the panels:

Panel 1: Powered by People – Securing the Future of the Ferry Industry
Rapid technological advancement and new energy solutions require continuous competence building across organizations. This session explores how future-proofing operations depends on investing in people, fostering cross-departmental knowledge, and promoting inclusive leadership and ongoing training.

- **Guido Grimaldi** – Grimaldi Group (Italy)
- **Ronny Øksnes** – International Transportworker Federation – ITF (Norway)
- **Marco Pavoncelli** – E-Dea Transport Technology (Italy)
- **Katy Taylor** – Wightlink, Isle of Wight Ferries (UK)
- **Mark Wilson** – NFL/BFL (Canada)

Panel 2: Essential Connection – Operating Lifeline and Commuter Services
Ferries serve as public infrastructure for island communities and urban centers alike. This discussion focuses on balancing public service obligations with operational efficiency, securing sustainable funding, meeting shifting customer expectations, and building resilient networks.

- **Neil Chapman** – Red Funnel (UK)
- **Worawit Chanchayanon** – Thai Smile Bus (Thailand)
- **Sean Collins** – Uber Boat by Thames Clippers (UK)
- **Paul Gannaway** – Batamfast Ferry (Singapore)
- **Brian Thomson** – Isle of Man Steam Packet Company (Isle of Man)

Panel 3: At the Helm – Leadership in a Changing Ferry Industry
Leaders from major global operators examine strategic priorities, investment decisions, decarbonization pathways, and fleet innovation. The panel highlights how high-level collaboration is building a stronger, more sustainable, and future-ready sector.

- **Robert Blažinović** – Jadrolinija (Croatia)
- **Panos Dikaios** – Attica Group (Greece)
- **Niclas Mårtensson** – Stena Line (Sweden)
- **Marcus Risberg** – Viking Line (Åland)
- **Pierre-Antoine Villanova** – CORSICA linea (France)

Interferry is the global ferry trade association with consultative status at the International Maritime Organization and similar influence at the European Union as well as many other maritime governance authorities. With membership exceeding 280 companies and representing plus 2,200 individuals in more than 40 countries, its primary purposes are to represent the ferry industry on regulatory and policy matters including safety and sustainability; to speak on behalf of the worldwide ferry sector which provides transport for over four billion passengers and 370 million vehicles annually; and to facilitate networking and communications among its members.

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