

Celebrating the end of the gluttony season, but the effects linger

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The Washington State Ferry system has reduced the rated carrying capacity of its fleet because people have gotten fatter: The average weight of an adult passenger has been officially revised from 160 pounds to 185 pounds. (That's from 11 stone 6 to 13 stone 3 in the UK, or from 73kg to 84kg for the rest of the world.) This has happened before: In 1999, the rated capacity of Washington State ferries dropped when the previous method for determining seating density was abandoned due to passengers' big butts. (I recall that *The Seattle Times* printed a ruler next to the article so that for readers could assess their own situation.) In other news: Many hospitals, such as our own University of Washington Medical Center, have installed ceiling lifts in all their rooms due to the high number of obese patients.

(The gluttony seasons begins on Hallowe'en and ends on Christmas, as officially declared by me.)

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