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Edward Mountain MSP
Convenor
Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee
Room T.3.60
Scottish Parliament
EH99 1SPAddress line 1

19 January, 2021

Dear Mr Mountain

COVID-19 Impact of Delivery of Ferries

I note that in the report published on 9th December 2020 the Committee requested an immediate update if COVID-19 had a further impact on the vessels.

The Committee will be aware that COVID infection rates in Inverclyde have increased and the area has one of the highest seven-day rates of cases per 100k people in Scotland. In recognition of this, production work was suspended at Ferguson Marine on 10th January to allow a comprehensive review of COVID practices, with particular emphasis on amenities and the recent changes in guidance. It is worth noting that Ferguson has complied with both the letter and spirit of Scottish Government guidelines since work restarted at the yard in June 2020 and has experienced minimal in-yard transmission since then.

As always, Trades Union representatives have been fully involved in the process and our COVID-specific risk assessment has been amended to reflect the changes that have been identified. Production will resume as a controlled ramp-up, echoing the approach used when the first lockdown ended in June. As a pilot project, work on 805 (the Inverlussa aquaculture vessel) will resume this week, with a partial resumption of work on 801/2 week commencing 25th January and a full resumption on 1st February when additional amenity capacity is complete.

Overall, very little production will be achieved 801 and 802 for a period of 3 weeks and there may be a period of reduced efficiency as the revised arrangements take effect. I will continue to review the situation and will write to you again once the full consequences are known.

Yours sincerely,



Tim Hair
Turnaround Director



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