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Convener of the Rural Economy and Connectivity
Committee
The Scottish Parliament
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Our ref:

23 January 2020

Dear Convener,

Thank you for your letter of 4 December noting both the completion of the commercial transaction to bring Ferguson Marine Engineering (Holdings) Limited into public ownership and requesting a further update on the publication of the report on the revised schedule and cost for delivery of vessels 801 and 802.

The Convener will be aware that I have discussed his and the committees concerns in the intervening period around the “Commercial in Confidence” classification of my letter dated 2 December. I agree this could have been handled more sensitively and have asked that we consider the use of such markings in the future.

As you are aware the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work made a statement to Parliament on the 18th December. This followed receipt of the [Report on Updated Cost and Programme for Vessels 801 and 802](#) on 13th December.

I note the Committee’s concerns around the timing of the above report. The priority for the Scottish Government had to be the publication of a robust report that provided a clear and accurate picture of the yard at the point the Scottish Government took control.

I note the Committee’s inquiry into the construction and procurement of ferry vessels in Scotland and this is now underway. I welcome the invitation to attend an evidence session and am happy to respond to any additional enquires that the Committee might wish to raise.

We have and continue to be committed to transparency regarding public ownership of Ferguson Marine. This commitment is evidenced not only in the publication of the report itself but in the decision to undertake proactive publication of a suite of documents setting out the detail of the Scottish Government’s engagement with Ferguson Marine since 2015 until the business entered into administration in August.

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I have copied this letter to the Convener of the Finance and Constitution Committee for information.

Kind regards



PAUL WHEELHOUSE

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