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Edward Mountain MSP, Convener
Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee
c/o Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
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19 February 2021

Dear Convener,

Re: REC Committee request for update on costs and delivery dates for vessels 801 & 802

Thank you for your letter dated 5th February requesting an update on the costs and delivery timescale for 801 & 802.

Mr Tim Hair, Turnaround Director of Ferguson Marine is preparing an update, for the Committee, on the delivery timetable and budget for vessels 801 and 802. This will be submitted prior to parliamentary recess on the 25th March and will be the first of regular quarterly updates on progress as requested by the RECC in their report on ferry procurement, but it will not be available in time for the Committee session itself.

At the present time Tim and his management team are focussed on working through the implications of COVID-19 and assessing the impact on the supply chain, the availability of labour and of continuing to work at a reduced capacity due to social distancing. In an effort to accelerate production Ferguson's will shortly begin a recruitment campaign aiming to recruit up to 120 additional skilled workers for a minimum of 6 months.

We will be in a better position to provide the RECC with a more detailed update, as requested, towards the end of March. However, if it would be helpful to the Committee, Mr Hair has offered to attend the session on 3rd March to be able to answer questions on progress on the fabrication of vessels 801 and 802. I appreciate that it is for the Committee to determine whether or not it wishes to invite Mr Hair to attend.

Kind regards



PAUL WHEELHOUSE