

Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited announces Scottish shipbuilder as preferred tenderer for two large ferries contract

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Date : 31st August 2015

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Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) has announced Ferguson Marine Engineering Ltd (FMEL), Port Glasgow, Scotland is the preferred tenderer for the £97million contract to build two large dual fuel ferries for the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Service (CHFS).

The contract once finally negotiated and entered into, will provide a boost for commercial shipbuilding on the Clyde and follows the shipyard's successful build of the world's first two sea-going passenger and vehicle roll-on roll-off ferries to incorporate a low-carbon hybrid system of diesel electric and battery power. The third hybrid ferry is scheduled to launch in December 2015.

The contracts, when signed between CMAL and FMEL, will see two 100 metre ferries built at Port Glasgow, which can accommodate 127 cars or 16 HGV's or a combination of both and up to 1000 passengers. Care has been taken with the specification to ensure a high level of passenger comfort and ease of accessibility to all areas. The ships will be capable of operating across a range of drafts and speeds to meet the precise requirements of the current operator, CalMac Ferries Ltd, and will be able to service a wide range of ports and routes without significant redevelopment over their expected 30 year plus lifespan.

To ensure the new vessels can operate in the demanding conditions of the west coast of Scotland, the winning design from FMEL incorporates a high level of in-built backup capability to improve reliability and ability. From an efficiency and emissions perspective, they are designed to operate on either marine diesel or liquefied natural gas (LNG), where benefits will be gained by a marked reduction in CO2 and sulphur and nitreous oxides emissions.

The ship will be capable of operating at speeds of up to 16.5 knots and will be fitted with three bow thrusters to provide a high level of manoeuvrability in adverse weather conditions.

FMEL will undertake the detailed design and construction work of new vessels, as well as their testing, equipping, launching and delivery. It is anticipated that the first vessel will enter service early in 2018, with the second following a few months later. It is likely that the first ship will initially serve on the Ardrossan to Arran route, using the new port facilities being built at Brodick. The second vessel is destined for the Uig Triangle.

Tom Docherty, CEO at CMAL commented:

“This project provides a fantastic commercial opportunity for Scottish shipbuilding and we are delighted to announce FMEL as the preferred tenderer for this contract. We have worked closely with colleagues at CalMac Ferries Ltd to ensure that the design of these ferries follows their requirements that are based on future demand both on the initially identified routes and across the network, as well as their desire for an LNG powered ferry, which helps to future proof the vessel.

“CMAL is committed to leading the way in innovative and greener ferry design and this dual fuel ferry is further proof of that. When fully operating on LNG, these ferries will greatly contribute to Scotland’s ambitious climate change targets.

“Subject to agreement on all final contractual elements with FMEL, we hope to be in a position to finalise the award of the contract in September.”

Commenting at the official announcement today (31 August) at FMEL Shipyard in Port Glasgow, First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon said:

“This is an excellent result for Ferguson Marine Engineering Limited and I am delighted to name them as preferred tenderer for the contract to build two new ferries, the largest commercial vessels to be built on the Clyde since 2001. Today’s announcement proves that Scottish shipbuilding can succeed in a competitive market, with the FMEL team submitting the highest quality bid that offered best value for money.

“This contract will see the 150-strong workforce retained and more staff taken on at the shipyard, underlining our commitment to creating the vital jobs needed to boost local economies and help stimulate growth across Scotland. The Scottish Government is committed to supporting ferry users around Scotland by providing safe and reliable services, and this is the latest step to ensuring we have a fleet that continues to deliver for the communities that depend on it.”

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Media contact:

Christina Kelly, Managing Director, Golley Slater

Tel: 0141 548 8028 / 0131 220 8787 / 0787 558 1955

Email: ckelly@golleyslater.co.uk

Notes to Editors

CMAL is a publicly owned company with Scottish Ministers as the sole shareholder

Once the 10 day stand still period and final and detailed contract negotiations are completed, CMAL, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, intends to award to the contract to FMEL following a rigorous procurement process.

Further details and a timeline for development will be issued once the details of the contract have been finalised, hopefully in September 2015.

CMAL own property at piers and harbours at more than 24 locations throughout Scotland and is embarking on a programme of investment and improvements, which will create better facilities.

In addition to its pier and harbour facilities, CMAL owns 31 ferries and lease one further ferry. All 32 vessels are leased to CalMac Ferries Ltd for use on ferry services on the Clyde and Hebrides.

For more information about CMAL visit: www.cmassets.co.uk