

World's first hybrid ferry enters service

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The world's first hybrid ferry sailed its maiden voyage this week (25th November) on its route between Sconser and Raasay.

The MV HALLAIG is the first passenger and vehicle roll-on, roll-off ferries in the world to incorporate a low-carbon hybrid system of diesel electric and lithium ion battery power and has now begun carrying passengers after its launch in December 2012.

Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) started the Hybrid Ferry Project following a Scottish Government investment worth over £20 million to build the two world-first hybrid ferries and continue the proud heritage and tradition of shipbuilding on the Clyde. MV HALLAIG will be followed into service by another of its kind, the MV LOCHINVAR, which was launched in May of this year.

MV HALLAIG passed its recent sea trials and amazed onlookers by sailing part of the trial on battery power alone. The reduction of noise levels when running on battery power was so great that locals have already christened it the 'stealth mode'.

Local communities in Sconser and Raasay will be the first to benefit from the green technology investment with the ferry becoming a vital lifeline to islanders. MV HALLAIG is capable of accommodating 150 passengers and 23 cars or 2 HGVs, with a service speed of nine knots.

Guy Platten, CMAL's Chief Executive, commented: "We are really excited to announce that MV HALLAIG has entered service and that we have delivered the ferry to her operators, CalMac. It is very satisfying to see the first stage of the Hybrid Ferry Project completed and we are proud to have contributed to developing green technology within the transport industry, as well as supporting Scottish shipbuilding."

Notes to editors

1. Key ship information as follows:

- Length 43.5m (142ft)
- Breadth 12.2m (40ft)
- Deadweight 135t
- Service speed of 9 knots
- Passengers – 150
- Cars – 23
- Commercial Vehicles – two fully laden 44t HGVs, but with space for four

2. The MV HALLAIG and its sister ship, MV LOCHINVAR, are the world's first seagoing passenger and vehicle roll-on roll-off ferries to incorporate a low-carbon hybrid system of diesel electric and lithium ion battery power. The technology is cleaner, quieter and cheaper to operate and maintain than ever before. The vessel will be powered by small diesel generator sets, feeding power to a 400 volt switchboard, which will supply power to electric propulsion motors that turn the propellers.

3. In addition, the ferries, which will be operated by the current operator of the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services, CalMac Ferries, are designed for use on many of the short crossing routes around the Clyde and Hebrides and will use some of the most innovative new green technology, including battery banks supplying a minimum of 20% of the energy consumed on board.

4. Benefits of the hybrid ferries include reduced fuel consumption and impact of CO2 emissions and other pollutants, noise reduction and lower maintenance requirements. The ferries will charge overnight while they are moored on the islands they will serve. It is anticipated future energy from local wind, wave or solar systems will be used to charge the batteries, reducing further the carbon footprint.

5. Ferguson's is working alongside Glasgow-based ship design specialists Seatec and electrical specialists Tec-Source to deliver the project.

6. CMAL (Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd) owns the ferries, ports and harbours and infrastructure necessary for vital ferry services serving the west coast of Scotland and the Clyde Estuary. CMAL are wholly owned by Scottish Ministers. Scottish Government is providing CMAL with a loan of £20m for the procurement of these vessels.

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