

First milestone reached on CMAL's new dual-fuel ferries

Categories : [Ferries](#), [Press](#)

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Steel was cut today for Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd's two new ferries being built by Ferguson Marine Engineering Ltd (FMEL), marking the start of construction on the £97 million vessels.

The steel-cutting ceremony took place at FMEL's shipyard in Port Glasgow, Scotland, where the ships are being built. Derek Mackay, the Scottish Government's Minister for Transport and Islands, joined Tom Docherty, CEO of Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) and Liam Campbell from FMEL, to push the button to start the steel cutting machine.

The new 100m, roll on roll off vehicle passenger ferries are designed to carry 127 cars or 16 HGVs or a combination of both and up to 1,000 passengers. They will be owned by CMAL and operated by the current operator of the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services, CalMac Ferries Ltd. The ships will be capable of operating across a range of drafts and speeds to meet the requirements of the operator to service a wide range of ports and routes.

The ferries will be dual-fuel vessels so they can operate on liquefied natural gas (LNG) and marine gas oil. LNG is significantly cleaner and has been adopted by ferry operators in Northern Europe in response to tighter emissions regulations. FMEL will undertake the detailed design and construction work of the new vessels in Scotland, as well as their testing, equipping, launching and delivery.

Erik Østergaard, Chair of CMAL, commented:

"Today's steel cutting marks an exciting stage of the ferry building process as work gets underway on construction of the first vessel. The vessels are dual-fuel ferries, allowing them to use cleaner fuel and future-proofing them for the advent of tighter regulations around sulphur emissions and allowing greater flexibility over future fuel costs

"The new ferries will provide a lifeline ferry service for the communities they will serve and are currently earmarked for the crossing between Ardrossan and Brodick and on the Uig Triangle route, although the final decision on vessel deployment rests with the ferry operator. We look forward to taking delivery of the ferries in 2018."

Mr Mackay commented:

"I'm delighted to help cut the first steel for these new ferries, marking the start of construction on this massive project that has brought large shipbuilding back to the Clyde. The Scottish Government is committed to creating the vital jobs needed to boost

local economies and help stimulate growth across Scotland. This £97 million contract means FMEL can retain its 150-strong workforce, as well as take on more staff and apprentices.

It is anticipated that the first ferry will launch in October 2017 and is expected to enter service in summer 2018, with the second vessel following a few months later. The vessels are currently known as hulls 801 and 802 and CMAL will run a competition later in the year to name the new ferries.

Additional information on the new vessels:

Length Overall	102.4
Beam (inc. belting)	17.5
Draught	3.4
Deadweight	900
No of Cars	127/136
No of Passengers	1000
Gross Tonnage	TBC
Service Speed	16.5/14.5
Main Engines	