

Richard Leonard, Convenor
Public Audit Committee
Room T3.60
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

By Email Only

Our ref:A41619965
5 January 2023

Dear Convener,

New vessels for the Clyde and Hebrides: Arrangements to deliver vessels 801 and 802

Thank you for your letter of 9 December 2022 requesting further information following my letter and committee appearance in November.

I have set the responses out against the specific requests below.

The date on which the Ministerial Engagement Briefing for the preferred bidder announcement on 31 August 2015 was issued to you.

This submission was sent to my office on 28 August 2015. The covering email that confirms this has already been provided to the Committee in Annex B of my previous letter.

How and when the former Minister for Transport and Islands signed off the quotes attributed to him in the news release for the preferred bidder announcement, given he indicated he was on annual leave at this time. All correspondence relating to the clearance process for this news release is also sought.

The committee has already received all of the exchanges held in relation to the preferred bidder announcement as part of my previous letter. There is no specific note from the former Minister for Transport in relation to the quote attributed to him, however as Mr MacKay confirmed in his evidence to the Committee, he had returned from leave the week of the preferred bidder announcement.

Confirmation as to whether a minute or note of the meeting with the former director of the former organisation Ferguson Marine Engineering Ltd (FMEL) on 31 May 2017 exists and whether any other material relating to what was discussed at this meeting is available. If so, please provide a copy of this information to the Committee.

Officials have been unable to locate a note of this meeting over and above the document already provided. As I confirmed in my last letter, in compliance with the Ministerial Code, a Special Advisor was present at the meeting and actions arising were relayed to officials and clearly indicate the topics discussed. The Committee already has that email.

A copy of the response to Transport Scotland's submission of 20 August 2015, which recommended that the Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities approve the award of two shipbuilding contracts by CMAL to FMEL.

I understand that this will be shared with the Committee under separate cover by the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans in his response to your recent letter.

I hope this information assists the Committee in concluding its inquiry.



NICOLA STURGEON