

Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee
Tuesday 10 March 2026
12th Meeting, 2026 (Session 6)

Evidence from Ferguson Marine Port Glasgow

Introduction

1. The Committee has maintained a watching brief throughout the session on progress in completing two ferries being built by Ferguson Marine Port Glasgow (FMPG). Its scrutiny has focused on tracking escalating costs and the knock-on impacts on ferry services.
2. FMPG is a Scottish Government owned shipyard in Port Glasgow, Inverclyde. The shipyard was established in 1903 and has passed through several private and public owners since.
3. The shipyard is currently focused on completing the MV Glen Rosa, the second of two dual-fuel ferries for Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL), which will be leased to CalMac Ferries Ltd. The first vessel, MV Glen Sannox, was delivered in November 2024.
4. Duncan Anderson was appointed Chair of the Ferguson Marine Port Glasgow Board in February 2025. During this parliamentary session, the organisation has seen several changes in its Chief Executive Officer. Tim Hair served as CEO from 2019 until 2022, followed by David Tydeman, who was in post from February 2022 to March 2024. John Petticrew then took on the role as interim CEO between March 2024 and March 2025. Graeme Thomson was appointed in May 2025.
5. FMPG were scheduled to give evidence on 3 March but [wrote](#) to the Committee on 2 March to say they were “no longer in a position to attend” due to a ministerial statement related to the business and the need for senior management to be on site. The evidence session was subsequently rescheduled for 10 March.

Parliamentary oversight of FMPG

6. In this session, three Parliamentary Committees have had an interest in FMPG as a taxpayer-supported and state-owned concern.
7. Public Audit Committee: in line with its general duty to consider reports published by the Auditor General for Scotland, the Public Audit Committee considered the [New vessels for the Clyde and Hebrides](#) report, and subsequently took evidence and [reported](#) on the findings. The Committee also considered the [2023/24 audit of Ferguson Marine Port Glasgow \(Holdings\) Limited report](#) examining the financial position and governance of Ferguson Marine Port Glasgow (Holdings) Limited, as part of its wider scrutiny of public spending and accountability.

8. Economy and Fair Work Committee: has a general interest in FMPG's viability as a major anchor employer in the area and one of the last major employers of skilled shipbuilders in Scotland. Its interest has mainly been in the long-term future of the yard.
9. Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee: its predecessor Committee's 2020 report, [Construction and procurement of ferry vessels in Scotland](#), concluded that there had been a "catastrophic failure" of procurement practices in relation to Hulls 801 and 802 (now the Glen Sannox and Glen Rosa). Following the report, there was an undertaking by FMPG (supported by the Scottish Government) to provide quarterly updates on progress in the vessels' completion to the relevant transport committee. That has followed on into this session, with the NZET Committee leading on Parliamentary scrutiny of the delivery of the two vessels.
10. In addition to FMPG's quarterly updates, the NZET Committee's scrutiny has included consideration of other correspondence and oral evidence sessions with FMPG, [Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited](#) and the Scottish Government.
11. The Committee last took evidence from FMPG on [26 November 2024](#). The Committee undertook a visit to the FMPG yard on 19 September 2025, meeting management and staff.
12. All correspondence relating to the Committee's work on ferry services in Scotland is available on the Committee [website](#).

MV Glen Sannox and MV Glen Rosa

13. In October 2014, the Minister for Transport launched the procurement process for two large vessels for the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services network: MV Glen Sannox and MV Glen Rosa. The vessels were intended to serve the Ardrossan–Brodick (Arran) route and the Uig Triangle (Uig, Tarbert and Lochmaddy), and were to be powered by hybrid marine gas oil/liquefied natural gas (LNG) engines.
14. In August 2015, Scottish Ministers approved CMAL's decision to appoint Ferguson Marine Engineering Ltd (FMEL) as the preferred bidder. Two fixed-price contracts, each valued at £48.5 million, were awarded on 16 October 2015, with planned delivery dates of May and July 2018. The project soon encountered significant problems and delays, alongside emerging cash-flow issues in 2016, which led to a deterioration in relations between CMAL and FMEL.
15. The Scottish Government, CMAL and Transport Scotland intervened with a range of financial and non-financial support. In July 2017, FMEL submitted a £17.5 million claim for additional costs, which CMAL rejected, resulting in an 18-month dispute that escalated in scope and value. An independent assessment of the claim was commissioned, and in June 2019 the Scottish Government advised that there was no legal basis for payments beyond the contract terms. Contingency planning for the vessels and shipyard began in February 2019. FMEL entered administration in August 2019, and in December 2019 the Scottish Government completed a transaction to bring the shipyard into public ownership.

16. Following nationalisation, work continued under Ferguson Marine Port Glasgow Limited. MV Glen Sannox was delivered in November 2024, more than six and a half years later than its original delivery date, while MV Glen Rosa remains under construction. Total expected costs have risen to around £400 million.

17. Since the Committee last took oral evidence from FMPG, at its meeting of [26 November 2024](#), a further eight scheduled and interim written updates have been received, which are briefly summarised below:

- [19 December 2024](#): MV Glen Sannox was undergoing shakedown¹, with warranty issues being addressed. Lessons learned sessions from MV Glen Sannox will be held and learning applied to the construction of MV Glen Rosa. Revised cost and completion dates for Glen Rosa will be available on 31 January 2025.
- [31 March 2025](#): Significant progress made on MV Glen Rosa. No cost or completion date given. MV Glen Sannox reported as performing well.
- [16 April 2025](#): Response to a [letter from the Convenor of 2 April 2025](#) asking for a cost and completion date for MV Glen Rosa. The FMPG response stated that work was still ongoing and these could not be provided at this time.
- [13 May 2025](#): Confirms an expected delivery date for MV Gen Rosa of Q2 2026 and a total cost to complete of £185.0 million, which includes a £12.5 million contingency. That is an increase of £35 million (23.3%) from the previous estimate of £150 million.
- [27 June 2025](#): Significant progress made on MV Glen Rosa and delivery remains on schedule for Q2 2026, within the £185 million budget.
- [15 September 2025](#): Significant milestones met, increased confidence in the delivery timeline. Project remains within £185 million budget. FMPG continues to provide warranty support for MV Glen Sannox as issues arise.
- [18 December 2025](#): Expected delivery pushed back to Q4 2026 (from Q2 2026).
- [30 January 2026](#): The cost to complete the MV Gen Rosa rises to £197.5 million (from £185 million), including a contingency of £5.5 million. FMPG "...are confident in the updated timeline and cost forecast." This is an increase of 6.6% from the May 2025 estimate.

MV Glen Sannox warranty repairs

¹ Shakedown refers to a period of testing the vessel in real operating conditions to make sure everything works as it should.

18. In March 2025, MV Glen Sannox was withdrawn from service for a weekend to carry out emergency repairs to a five-inch crack in a hull weld near the waterline, reportedly caused by excessive vibration from the vessel's propellers and stern thruster. A further crack in the same area was identified in early October 2025 and temporarily repaired at Inchgreen Dry Dock.
19. MV Glen Sannox entered its scheduled annual dry dock at the Cammell Laird shipyard in November 2025, with an expected return to service before Christmas. The docking period was extended to allow permanent repairs to the hull crack, but the scale of remedial work required has meant the vessel remains in dry dock and is now not expected to return to service until 2 March 2026. Some components have been removed from MV Glen Rosa to expedite the repairs, with replacement parts on order for reinstallation once available.

Shipyard investment and other contracts

20. The Committee has previously heard from FMPG about the need for capital investment in the shipyard to improve efficiency, with a view to allowing it to submit competitive bids for new work.
21. On 16 July 2024, the [Scottish Government announced](#) an investment of up to £14.2 million over two years, subject to the FMPG investment plan passing detailed legal analysis and independent financial and commercial assessments.
22. The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic, [wrote to the Public Audit Committee](#) on 6 October 2025, reconfirming an investment of up to £14.2 million over two years (£9 million in 2024-26 and £5.2 million in 2026-27).

Small Vessel Replacement Programme (SVRP)

23. The [Small Vessel Replacement Programme](#) (SVRP) is a 10-year, two-stage project being led by CMAL to replace up to ten ageing vessels used by CalMac Ferries Ltd on Clyde and Hebrides routes. The first stage of the programme involves the construction of seven electrically powered vessels, at an estimated total project cost of £175 million.
24. FMPG unsuccessfully bid to build up to seven small electric ferries for CMAL under phase one of the SVRP. The contract was awarded to the Remontowa shipyard in Gdansk, Poland in March 2025.
25. On 3 March 2026, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport [announced in the Chamber](#) that:

“...ministers propose to include the two new vessels for the Sound of Harris and the Sound of Barra from the next phase of the small vessel replacement programme as a direct award to Ferguson Marine as part of a wider suite of publicly funded and directly awarded vessel projects. The proposal is subject to a detailed internal due diligence process that is under way to assess viability, including examination of structural organisation matters and subsidy control. Engagement with the Competition and Markets Authority would also

be among the steps that are required before any formal contract award decisions can be made.”

Direct award of two other Scottish Government vessels

26. In addition to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport’s statement about the SCRIP, the Deputy First Minister also announced on 3 March 2026 that:

“...ministers propose to award contracts for a further two vessels to Ferguson Marine—replacements for the marine research vessel Scotia and the marine protection vessel Minna. Together, that represents a programme of four new vessels that it is proposed will be built in the yard. That is a substantial and clear demonstration of our confidence in Ferguson Marine.”

Evidence session

27. On 10 March, the Committee will hear from representatives of FMPG—

- Duncan Anderson, Chair
- Graeme Thomson, Chief Executive Officer
- David Dishon, Chief Financial Officer and Accountable Officer

Clerks to the Committee

March 2026