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Convenors,

You will be aware the CEO of Ferguson Marine has provided an interim update to Net Zero and Transport and Energy Committee which sets out delays to the handover of 801 and notes that this could also impact on the handover date of 802.

This interim update and confirmation of further delay is extremely disappointing, and I have again impressed upon the CEO the significant impact which this will have on our island communities. Scottish Government leads weekly meetings of all parties involved in the operationalisation of the vessel and I have made it clear that I expect the continuing and full cooperation of FMPG in these meetings in order to provide the required scrutiny and challenge of any proposed changes to delivery timeframes or costs.

The value for money assessment which was carried out earlier this year remains a constant benchmark against which the cost and impact of delay are being evaluated. I will provide the committee with further information on this when the reforecast costs are received from Ferguson Marine in late September.

NEIL GRAY

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