

Mr Steve Farrell
Clerk to the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee
The Scottish Parliament

Our ref:
FRC/ICI/May2012

Date: 30 May 2012

Dear Mr Farrell

INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT COMMITTEE: FORTH REPLACEMENT CROSSING UPDATE 3

I refer to the commitment given by Transport Scotland to provide a regular written update in relation to the Forth Replacement Crossing (FRC) project. This is the third update and covers the following topics:

- Progress Update
- Subcontract and Supply Opportunities
- Stakeholder Engagement
- FRC Public Transport Strategy

PROGRESS UPDATE

Principal Contract

A major milestone has been reached on the FRC project with the delivery of the first two steel caissons that will help form the foundations of the new bridge's north and south towers (**Photograph 1**). Over the next few weeks, the caissons will be subject to final inspections and preparation at our facilities in Rosyth before being towed out and installed in their final position on the seabed. 2012 is the 'Foundations Year' and the arrival of the caissons is a major landmark in the life of the whole project.

Elsewhere on the Principal Contract, on the southside of the Forth, site clearance works are substantially complete for this season, early tree planting at Echline Strip is complete and the south abutment access road from the A904 is now finished. The construction of the south satellite compound located in Echline Field is progressing and it is expected this will be completed this month to allow staff and operatives to take residence.

On the northside, excavation of rock at St Margaret's Hope is continuing, this is to enable construction of the foundations for Pier N2 of the north approach viaduct (**Photograph 2**). Work is also continuing on the Ferrytoll Embankment, with blasting/excavation works at Whinny Hill ongoing for the next six months. Site clearance works are substantially complete for this clearance season and early planting at Castlandhill Road is now finished, approximately 30,000 trees to date have been planted at Castlandhill. (**Photograph 3**).

On the Forth, dredging work to relocate underwater sediments and soils for the foundations of the south and north approach viaducts are also now substantially complete.

Fife Intelligent Transport System (ITS) Contract

Good progress is being made on the Fife ITS contract. A phase of major surfacing works on the M90 was successfully completed ahead of schedule (**Photograph 4**). The work was originally programmed to be carried out over four weekends, but through careful planning and traffic management, only two weekend closures were necessary, significantly reducing disruption to the travelling public.

Works have continued on piling, grouting, ducting, road pavement, landscaping and earthworks. Gantry support bases are now being constructed at various locations in preparation for the 18 new gantries being installed over the coming months.

Consultation has concluded on the M9/A90/M90 Trunk Road (Kirkliston to Halbeath) (Variable Speed Limits and Actively Managed Hard Shoulder) Regulations 2012 and the A823(M) Pitreavie Spur Trunk Road (Variable Speed Limits) Regulations 2012 to provide for the introduction of variable speed limits (which form part of the Intelligent Transport System (ITS)) and southbound M90 hard shoulder bus running over parts of the FRC project. The regulations have been laid before the Parliament for commencement in September 2012.

The Fife ITS project is scheduled for completion later this summer.

M9 Junction 1a Contract

Works are progressing on schedule on the M9 Junction 1a contract. Construction has progressed on the Overton Road structure, other activities currently being undertaken include drainage works, earthworks, utility diversions, piling and ducting works.

A major milestone was reached in March when the first four gantries were installed, during one night-time closure of the M9 spur (**Photograph 5**). The remaining gantries will be erected during the summer months. These gantries will eventually form part of the 22km long ITS managed corridor which is essential for the effective operation of the new crossing and will deliver significant benefits for cross-Forth travel by improving safety and cutting journey times.

Contact and Education Centre

Construction is progressing with the frontage/exterior works and the roof is complete (**Photograph 6**). Structural completion is scheduled for autumn 2012, with internal furnishing / finishing works following on to allow opening shortly thereafter. The Traffic Control Centre section is scheduled to be operational in early 2013.

SUBCONTRACT AND SUPPLY OPPORTUNITIES

As of 30 April 2012, 130 subcontract opportunities out of 217 have been awarded to Scottish firms with a total value of about £27 million. In addition 1,998 supply orders have been awarded on the Principal Contract of which 1,744 have been awarded to Scottish companies with a total value of £25 million. This represents 87.3% of the total number of supply orders.

Across the project there are currently nearly 800 site based employees and more than 268 Scottish firms have already benefitted directly from subcontracts and supply orders on the project with a total value of £52 million.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The FRC project team held an MSP briefing session on 15 March 2012 at the Scottish Parliament, this was followed by a series of briefing sessions for the media and key stakeholders on 16 March. These events focused on construction activities for 2012/13 and traffic management measures.

The Community Forums continue to be held on a regular basis, enabling Transport Scotland and the contractors to share information regarding upcoming construction activities and the measures proposed to mitigate the effects of these activities. The next forums are scheduled to be held in August. We recognise that engaging with the communities affected by the FRC scheme and maintaining that engagement is key to the success of the project.

The other Liaison groups required by the Code of Construction Practice have all continued to meet regularly through the past months to discuss future works activities and address issues relating to Marine works, Noise and Vibration, Environmental impacts and Traffic Management. Agendas and Minutes of all these meetings are published on the project website.

Since the opening of the temporary Contact and Education Centre, we are receiving, on average, forty five enquiries a month and only a small number of complaints. These have all been resolved in a timely manner and to the satisfaction of the complainants.

The FRC project team and the contractor's Community Liaison Officers are committed to providing up to date information on the project and will continue to engage regularly with our stakeholders over the duration of the project. The most recent project update leaflet which is widely distributed to stakeholders and the public is now available on the FRC website:

<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/road/projects/forth-replacement-crossing/news-and-events/newsletter>

FRC PUBLIC TRANSPORT STRATEGY

A refreshed strategy has recently been completed by the Public Transport Working Group whose members include the relevant Local Authorities, the Regional Transport Partnership, the main Bus Operators, the Confederation of Passenger Transport and Transport Scotland. The strategy will be published shortly.

The Public Transport Working Group will continue to meet with the objective of monitoring progress on the various interventions stated in the Strategy.

In addition to the public transport interventions included in the various FRC projects, one of the other complementary schemes for the Public Transport Strategy is the Halbeath Park and Choose Project. These works are being designed and supervised by the Fife Council.

The tender documents were returned on 27 April 2012. The tenders are currently being assessed and an award of the contract is expected by mid June.

On this basis, a start on site in late July or early August is likely. This start date will allow the works to be completed by the summer of 2013, which will be in advance of the anticipated disruption around the Ferrytoll area.

A regular written update will continue to be provided to the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee.

Yours sincerely



David Climie CEng FICE
FRC Project Director

Forth Replacement Crossing, Progress Update

Photograph 1
Arrival of the caissons



Photograph 2
St Margaret's Hope



Photograph 3
Planting at Castlandhill Road



Photograph 4
Resurfacing works on the M90



Photograph 5
Gantry installation on the M9 spur



Photograph 6
Contact and Education Centre

