

Minister for Transport and Veterans
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In 2014 Scotland Welcomes the World



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Dear Maureen

I write to provide the Committee with an update on progress with the procurement of the main consultancy commissions we are putting in place to design, procure and supervise the construction of the A9 Dualling programme.

The A9 Dualling is an ambitious £3 billion programme which is vital to sustainable growth of the Scottish Economy through improving the safety and journey time reliability between our key cities of Perth and Inverness. The Scottish Government has committed to completing the 80 miles of dual carriageway by 2025.

In order to deliver a programme of such scale in the timeframe, we are in the process of appointing 3 separate engineering consultants to work on individual geographical sections. Each commission is estimated to be of the order of £40-60 million in fee value.

Eight of the largest civil engineering consultancies operating in Scotland prequalified for the tender competition. Following the first round of competition, the first commission for the central section of the route was awarded to a Joint Venture of CH2MHill and Fairhurst in May this year. Fairhurst is one of the few remaining Scottish owned consulting firms and the joint venture company also comprises a number of Scottish SMEs.

Today, we will announce that the second commission is to be awarded to Jacobs Engineering, who has also been involved in the design and delivery of the Queensferry Crossing.

The final commission for the northern section is expected to be awarded, following a further competition, by the end of the year.

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The commissions provide for an Education Liaison Officer as a dedicated resource for developing materials to link the A9 Programme into Schools and Universities and to provide materials to support the Curriculum for Excellence. Transport Scotland is currently working with Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Schools Education Research Centre (SSERC) to map out how that education programme can work across all ages and levels of with a view to the ultimate legacy of encouraging engineering careers and apprenticeships in Scotland.

Both winning consultants have committed to providing apprenticeships as part of their submissions and it is a contractual requirement that summer placements are made available in their respective design offices or on site, as the programme proceeds.

These commissions mark another important step in our commitment to complete the A9 Dualling by 2025.

Kind regards



KEITH BROWN