

8 September 2008 - Zeebrugge Ferry

Commenting on today's announcement, Jim Tolson MSP for Dunfermline West said,

"Obviously, I share the Minister's disappointment that there will be no ferry service through the autumn and winter months, however I am very excited and pleased that all stakeholders have been successful in their efforts to get a new operator for the route."

He continued "This offers great opportunities for Scotland. Now we have an operator who has made a significant commitment to this route and by the Spring we should have three sailings per week and by the end of next year we will have our daily (six per week) service again.

We need to ensure this service is successful in meeting the demands for freight transport, selling Scotland as a tourist destination and encouraging Scots of the benefits of using this service as opposed to flying. I congratulate the Minister and others in their efforts; realistically this was the best outcome we could have expected, given the tight timescale we were left to work with. The Scottish Government has 'cut it fine' but they have responded to the pressure from the people including local councillors, Willie Rennie MP and myself. "