

Forth Bridges Special Projects  
**Trunk Road and Bus Operations**

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CÒMHDHAIL  
ALBA



Your ref:

Our ref:

Date:  
12 December 2012

**Ms Marisa Di Filippo-Ferrier**  
**North Queensferry Community Council**  
**North Queensferry Community Centre**  
**Brock Street**  
**North Queensferry**  
**KY11 1JD**

Dear Ms Di Filippo-Ferrier

**Forth Road Bridge Bill**

Further to previous correspondence, I am writing to inform you that the Forth Road Bridge Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 11 December.

The Bill paves the way for the Scottish Government to contract a single bridge operating company to carry out the management and maintenance of the Forth Road Bridge (FRB), the new Forth Crossing and the connecting roads from the M90 Junction 3 Halbeath in the north through to the M9 Junction 1a in the south.

In order to contract out the functions of managing and maintaining the FRB, the Scottish Government must take those functions from the Forth Estuary Transport Authority (FETA) which is the statutory body presently tasked with managing and maintaining the FRB. Accordingly, the Bill –

- makes the road over the FRB a trunk road (which means it comes under the Scottish Government's management),
- transfers all of FETA's property and liabilities to the Scottish Government,
- dissolves FETA, and
- transfers all of FETA's employees into the employment of the bridge operating company and ensures that the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 apply to the transfer.

The dissolution of FETA and the transfer of employees will take place at the same time as the bridge operating company contract commences. This is anticipated to take place in summer 2015.

The Bill and its Accompanying Documents are published on the Scottish Parliament's website at [www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/576.aspx](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/576.aspx).



The Scottish Parliament's scrutiny of the Bill will be led by the Infrastructure and Capital Investment (ICI) Committee. The ICI Committee's timetable for its scrutiny will also be published on the Parliament website in due course.

Transport Scotland's Forth Bridges Special Project Team held Stakeholder Reference Group meetings north and south of the river in early October. The Team are grateful to the attendees for participating and for providing valuable views on the Bill and the procurement of a bridge operating company. Annex A to this letter addresses seeks to address the issues raised at these meetings.

If you have any further questions in relation to the content of the Bill then please do not hesitate in contacting Transport Scotland at [forthbridges@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:forthbridges@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk).

Best Regards

David

*David Thomson*  
**Transport Scotland**





## Annex A

### **Q1 How do we participate in the Bill process?**

A1 The Scottish Parliament's scrutiny of the Forth Road Bridge Bill will be led by the Infrastructure and Capital Investment (ICI) Committee. Details of the Committee's approach to the scrutiny of the Bill and its timetable for doing so will be published on the Parliament website.

### **Q2 Will tolls be reintroduced to the Forth?**

A2 No, this Scottish Government is against road user charging. The new Forth Crossing will be fully financed by the Scottish Government.

### **Q3 FETA has a positive relationship with local community groups. How will the bridge operating company maintain these relationships?**

A4 Following the dissolution of FETA, the Forth Bridges Forum and the appointed bridge operating company will play central roles in ensuring that the local community are kept informed of issues relating to the management and maintenance of the FRB and the new Forth Crossing.

Transport Scotland will specify within the tender documents the minimum requirements on the bridge operating company in relation to community engagement. These requirements will be developed in consultation with FETA and other stakeholders. The bridge operating company will be required to demonstrate how it plans to engage with the local communities and to produce a management plan that contains details of the processes and procedures connected with this activity.

One of the functions of the Forth Bridges Forum is to ensure effective engagement with local communities on issues that affect, impact or may be of interest to them. The bridge operating company will be asked to report its community engagement activity and future plans to the Forum.

### **Q4 What is the role of the Performance Audit Group (PAG) in relation to the bridge operating company's community engagement?**

A4 PAG's role will be to audit the performance of the bridge operating company against a number of key performance indicators and to report this back to Transport Scotland. PAG's auditing may involve speaking directly to local community representatives. If the bridge operating company fails to fulfil any of their obligations then Transport Scotland will take appropriate action.

### **Q5 Following recent issues over rail franchise, what will be the contract duration?**

A5 Transport Scotland is carefully considering the contract duration options and a decision will be taken on this over the coming months. It is important that the contract duration provides value for money but also includes sufficient flexibility in order that the contract can be retendered at appropriate stages, particularly if Transport Scotland is not content with the performance of the operating company.

### **Q6 Are there examples of other bridges being managed together in one contract?**

A6 There is a similar situation at the River Severn where a new road crossing was built along side the existing suspension bridge. Both bridges are managed and maintained by one bridge operating company. Transport Scotland met with the operators to learn lessons from their experience.



**Q7 What will happen with cyclists, buses and pedestrians crossing the Forth Road Bridge during high winds?**

A7 Like FETA, the bridge operating company will have a high winds strategy to deal with these incidents. If restrictions are in place, then the bridge operating company will endeavour to transport cyclists, pedestrians and bus passengers across the bridge.

**Q8 Will the BOC be required to interface with local roads authorities over winter resilience among other things? Will there be any situation where the operating company refuses to deal with a situation not on their road?**

A8 The boundaries between the new trunk road unit and the local authority roads will be clearly defined. It is important that Transport Scotland's operating companies work with the local roads authorities, particularly during periods of inclement weather, to deliver safe and efficient road networks.

**Q9 How will traffic management around the new South Queensferry Junction be addressed once the new Forth Crossing is opened to traffic?**

A9 The appointed bridge operating company will be responsible for devising, implementing and communicating appropriate traffic management measures.

**Q10 How can the Community Councils be sure that the Forth Bridges Forum will listen to their views? Will the Community Councils be offered membership post FRC construction?**

A10 Transport Scotland and its Forth Bridges Forum partners are considering possible mechanisms for ensuring that the views of Community Councils and local residents, on matters surrounding the management and maintenance of the Forth bridges, are taken into account. This could involve setting up a sub-group of the Forth Bridges Forum. Options such as this will be presented to Community Groups and residents over the coming months to ensure that effective mechanisms are developed before the new bridge opens and the bridge operating company is appointed.

**Q11 The Contact and Education Centre (CEC) was labelled a Visitor Centre during the Forth Crossing Bill. What happened to change this?**

A11 The building adjacent to the FETA office in South Queensferry was always designed to be a temporary contact and education centre for use during the construction of the new Forth Crossing. When the CEC opens in January 2013, it will include an exhibition covering several topics including the construction of the new Forth Crossing and information on the FRB and Forth Bridge. Educational visits for all age groups will also be available from January.

The building will have a dual-use as the permanent home for the National Traffic Scotland Control Centre.

**Q12 Are there plans to develop a permanent Forth Bridges Visitor Centre?**

A12 In 2013, the Forth Bridges Forum will be taking forward an assessment of the options for a permanent Forth Bridges Visitor Centre and/or visitor attraction. The views of the public will be sought on a shortlist of feasible options.