



Mrs Cherie Blair Names World's Largest Cruise ferry

30th November 2001

Hull, November 30 2001 – Today Mrs Cherie Blair will officially name P&O North Sea Ferries' new luxury cruise ferry Pride of Hull. The UK flagged Pride of Hull will enter service on the route between Hull and Rotterdam on 2 December. Together with her sister ship, Pride of Rotterdam, which successfully entered service earlier this year, they are the world's largest cruiseferries.

The naming of the new cruise ferry is the first ever to take place inside a ship. The ceremony, attended by 700 official guests, will be held on one of the immense car decks of Pride of Hull. At 59,925 gross tons Pride of Hull measures 215 metres in length with a width of 31 metres and can carry 1,360 passengers. The accommodation and facilities on the vessel are equal to those of most modern cruise ships.

P&O chairman Lord Sterling commented: "These two great ships will unquestionably enhance the quality of service for both tourists and freight operators on this route, thereby supporting the tourist industry and economy of the North of England and Scotland."

On Pride of Hull passengers have a choice of cabin accommodation all with private facilities and including luxury suites. On board facilities include an à la carte restaurant, a casino, a wine bar, a two-tiered show lounge, a sky lounge with panoramic views and a cyber zone with permanent Internet connection. The ship has a fine art collection specially created by British and Dutch artists.

Pride of Hull has a dedicated car deck for 250 vehicles. The car deck and the three freight decks have a total capacity of 4.5 running kilometres, larger than on any existing ferry. In total Pride of Hull can carry 400 freight units.

Pride of Hull has a maximum speed of 22 knots, which will enable her to reduce the journey time by 2.5 hours. The vessel will sail daily at 21.00 hours. Replacing Norsesea and Norbay which currently operate on the route, the newly introduced Pride of Hull will generate significant cost efficiencies.

These sisterships were built at the same Marghera Yard of shipbuilder Fincantieri in Venice.

Notes for Editors.

1. Since 1996 P&O North Sea Ferries has been a subsidiary of The Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company and part of its ferry division P&O Ferries.

P&O North Sea Ferries operates 15 ships with passenger routes from Hull to Rotterdam (Europoort) and Hull to Zeebrugge and freight routes from Hull, Felixstowe and Teesport to Rotterdam (Europoort) and Zeebrugge.

In 2000 the company carried approximately 1,000,000 passengers, 225,000 cars and 650,000 freight units.

2. Pride of Hull will replace the multipurpose ferry Norsesea and freighter Norbay on the Hull – Rotterdam route. Norsesea will be transferred to the Hull – Zeebrugge route. Norbay will move to the Dublin – Liverpool route operated by P&O Irish Sea.
3. The contract price of Pride of Hull is GBP 90 million. The ship is financed through a UK operating lease, organised by Lombard, a subsidiary of Royal Bank of Scotland.

4. A photo of the naming of the Pride of Hull will be available from PR Newswire after 14.00 hours UK time. If you do not have access to PR Newswire please contact John Deehan Photography on +44 (0)20 7490 8866
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