**Issued on behalf of Stena Line**

**Date: 25th June 2018**

**Stena Line’s New Belfast-Bound Ship Taking Shape in China**

**One of the two new E-Flexer RoPax ferries bound for the Belfast – Liverpool route in 2020 has recently marked an important production milestone by celebrating its official keel-laying at the AVIC shipyard in Weihai, China. The new vessels will have capacity for 1 000 passengers, 120 cars as well as 3 100 freight lane meters**.

The new RoPax ferries will be among the most energy efficient in the world with significantly lower CO2 emissions per freight unit against comparable RoPax tonnage. Paul Grant, Stena Line’s Trade Director (Irish Sea North) commented: “Everyone on the route is looking forward to welcoming the new generation of ferries to Belfast. We are delighted that two of the new fleet of E-Flexer ships will be entering service on our expanding Belfast – Liverpool route. It’s a real vote of confidence in the future development of our operations in the region.”

Paul Grant added: “The two new ships will be the biggest ships ever to operate on the Belfast – Liverpool service and will increase capacity for freight and travel customers as well as raising the service standards. Our onboard cabin concept will be enhanced to offer comfortable and relaxing day and overnight crossing options. The ships will be ‘drive-through’ making the loading and disembarkation processes faster and smoother for vehicles.”

Stena Line is currently the largest ferry operator on the Irish Sea, offering the biggest fleet and the widest choice of routes between Ireland to Britain including Belfast to Liverpool and Heysham, Belfast to Cairnryan, Dublin to Holyhead and Rosslare to Fishguard routes, a total of 232 weekly sailing options between Ireland and Britain.

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**NOTE TO EDITOR: For further information please contact Lawrence Duffy of Duffy Rafferty Communications on Belfast (028) 9073 0880.**