**29th June 2017**

**Stena Line signs deal with China’s largest travel agent**

***Stena Line has just signed an agreement with Ctrip, China’s largest travel agent to sell its passenger ferry tickets. The deal will enable Stena Line to access the vast Chinese market and open up a range of possibilities for self-drive tours using its extensive route network to the island of Ireland.***

“We are very excited about the cooperation with Ctrip and see this agreement as strategically important for Stena Line which will enable us to access a rapidly expanding market. It is our projection that we will reach 50,000 Chinese passengers across our routes on the Irish Sea by 2018, where we already have quite a few Chinese passengers travelling with us”, says Stena Line’s CEO Niclas Mårtensson.

China is an exciting market for Stena Line for a number of reasons. This Autumn, the construction of four new flexible and fuel-efficient RoPax ferries will start at the Chinese shipyard AVIC on behalf of Stena Line. The vessels will be delivered during 2019 and 2020 and the plan is to locate the new vessels on Stena Line’s Irish Sea routes.

“Looking ahead, we intend to continue our ambitious development plan for our business in the region and the new vessels are a part of this strategic plan”, said Stena Line’s CEO Niclas Mårtensson.

Niall Gibbons, CEO of Tourism Ireland, said: “Stena Line has taken part in several of Tourism Ireland’s sales missions to China in recent years – so it’s really great to see the results of that hard work, including this new co-operation with Ctrip. Travel agents like Ctrip continue to play an important role in China, with travellers preferring to use a travel agent for a number of reasons, including convenience, language barriers, visa preparation and knowledge gaps.

“Tourism Ireland has a strong network in China, with offices in Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou and Chengdu. Our team in China is working hard to establish and build relationships with influential intermediaries, including key travel trade contacts like Ctrip – highlighting our natural attractions, cities, castles and proximity to GB.”

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**About Stena Line**

*Stena Line is one of Europe's leading ferry companies with 36 vessels and 20 routes in Northern Europe. Stena Line is an important part of the European logistics network and develops new intermodal freight solutions by combining transport by rail, road and sea. Stena Line also plays an important role for tourism in Europe with its extensive passenger operations. The company is family-owned, was founded in 1962 and is headquartered in Gothenburg. Stena Line is part of the Stena AB Group, which has about 15 000 employees and an annual turnover of around 36,5 billion SEK.*