**Issued on behalf of Stena Line**

**Date: 27th October 2016**

**Stena Line confirms £7m fleet refit contract with Harland & Wolff**

Stena Line has confirmed that Harland & Wolff’s Belfast shipyard will be carrying out the bulk of its Irish Sea annual ferry fleet refit and maintenance programme in a £7m contract.

Each year Stena Line carries out a series of passenger facility upgrade works as well as a number of scheduled maintenance and engine works to ensure its fleet of 11 ferries on the Irish Sea are running to optimum efficiency. The Harland & Wolff refit schedule for 9 of the Irish Sea fleet will start at the end of December and will run through until early May 2017 to ensure that Stena Line’s sailing schedules are not unduly impacted.

Paul Grant, Stena Line’s Route Manager (Irish Sea North) commented: “The marine refit sector is a highly competitive market and I’m delighted to confirm that Stena Line has appointed Harland & Wolff to carry out this important operational project. Stena Line is committed to supporting the local communicates in which it operates and with our expanding operations hub at Belfast Port, having a world class refit expertise close by is a real benefit. 2016 has been a record year for Stena Line across our car, passenger and freight markets on our Belfast to Cairnryan, Liverpool and Heysham routes and once completed, the refit programme will help us to maintain our market leading position into 2017.”

Stuart Wilson, General Manager of Harland & Wolff’s Ship Repair Division said: “By docking their Irish Sea fleet with us on an annual basis, Stena Line’s business has become an integral part of our ship repair activities, providing valuable support not just to our company but also to the local supply chain, who provide specialist and ancillary services as part of the vessel dockings”.

Stena Line is the largest ferry operator on the Irish Sea, offering the biggest fleet and the widest choice of routes between Britain to Ireland including Belfast to Liverpool and Heysham, Belfast to Cairnryan, Dublin to Holyhead and Rosslare to Fishguard routes, a total of 224 weekly sailing options between Britain and Ireland.

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