

## NEWS BRIEFING



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### **Maritime lands NorthLink Ferries consultancy project**

Shipboard hotel and entertainment specialist the Maritime Leisure Group has won a major consultancy contract from NorthLink Ferries, the Caledonian MacBrayne/Royal Bank of Scotland joint venture which is to take over services between the Scottish mainland, Orkney and Shetland from October 2002.

The consultancy brief covers all aspects of hotel operations on three purpose-designed, cruise standard passenger/ro-ro ferries being built by Aker Finnyards of Finland at a total cost of £100 million. Maritime has established a project base at its headquarters in Salzburg, Austria, and has retained former P&O Cruises and Airtours Marine Director Jim Evans as project manager.

Product development work will include concept, specification of catering and bar services and proposals for cruise-style entertainment. Maritime will also devise cost control management systems, purchasing and point-of-sale systems as well as departmental manning levels and training manuals.

The NorthLink operation will follow 30 years of service by P&O Scottish Ferries. The newcomer was appointed by the Scottish Executive, which provides an essential service subsidy, after highlighting the quality of onboard amenities in a three-way competitive tender.

The Maritime Leisure Group, which opened a London office in the Lloyd's Building earlier this year, was formed in 1989 and is a leading provider of hotel, entertainment, software and training services for the cruise and ferry industry. UK managing director John Bywater said: "This is a prestige project and a great opportunity to confirm the commercial benefits of applying cruise ship criteria to ferry operations."

Member of the Maritime Leisure Group

The Lloyd's Building, One Lime Street, London EC3M 7HA • Tel: +44 (0) 20 7929 5533 • Fax: +44 (0) 20 7929 5534  
Email: [contact@maritimeleisure.com](mailto:contact@maritimeleisure.com) • Website: [www.maritimeleisure.com](http://www.maritimeleisure.com)