Improving every journey

**Delivery plan
Operational and quality management plan**

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Caledonian MacBrayne
Clyde & Hebridean Ferries

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Executive summary

CalMac Ferries Ltd (CFL) is entrusted with delivering lifeline ferry services to communities across Scotland's west coast. These services are not just transport links—they are vital enablers of social cohesion, economic activity, and community wellbeing.

This plan outlines the Quality Framework which governs organisation wide activity—from vessel maintenance and customer service to environmental compliance and risk management. It is designed to meet the requirements of ISO 14001:2015, ISO 9001:2015 and the CHFS3 contract, and is embedded within our Company Management System (CMS).

1. Quality management system overview

CFL's Quality Management System (QMS) is an integrated management system, referred to as the Company Management System (CMS), that governs the delivery of ferry services across the CHFS3 network in line with quality, safety, environmental and operational requirements. It is designed to ensure that quality is not only maintained but continuously improved, in line with the expectations of our customers, stakeholders, and regulatory bodies.

We are committed to achieving the highest quality management standards by implementing the following key principles, as outlined in our Quality Policy:

– Safety first: Providing a safe working environment.

– Customer satisfaction and stakeholder engagement: Consistently deliver high-quality services that fulfil our customers' requirements and exceed their expectations. Achieve enhanced stakeholder engagement, which aims to improve every customer journey.

– Regulatory compliance: Complying with all relevant compliance obligations applicable to the organisation. Including, but not limited to, the requirements of the Company's contracts with the Scottish Government.

– Quality and environmental standards: Operating approved quality and environmental management systems which comply with the requirements of ISO9001 and ISO14001.

– Continuous improvement: Identifying and implementing continuous improvements by encouraging the active participation, initiative, and ideas of all staff. Regularly reviewing all aspects of its operation to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

– Cultivating talent: Continuously developing the knowledge and skills of staff through the provision of training and development. Utilising talent and succession planning to ensure the right people are in place to meet current and future needs.

– Risk management: Implement proactive risk management strategies to identify risks and opportunities.

Our Company Management System (CMS), consolidates policies, procedures and manuals into a single, accessible framework. In line with ISO 9001: 2015, we plan, establish, implement, maintain, and continually improve the Company Management System and adhere to the requirements of the Standard. It is structured to meet the requirements of:

– ISO 9001:2015 – Quality Management Systems

– ISO 14001:2015 – Environmental Management Systems

– ISM Code – International Safety Management Code

– DSM Code – Domestic Safety Management Code

– ISPS Code – International Ship and Port Facility Security

– Ports and Marine Facilities Safety Code (PMSC)

– And all relevant regulatory requirements.

Changes to legislation and regulation are monitored through the Company Safety and Environmental Legal Register Process and incorporated into the CMS as necessary.
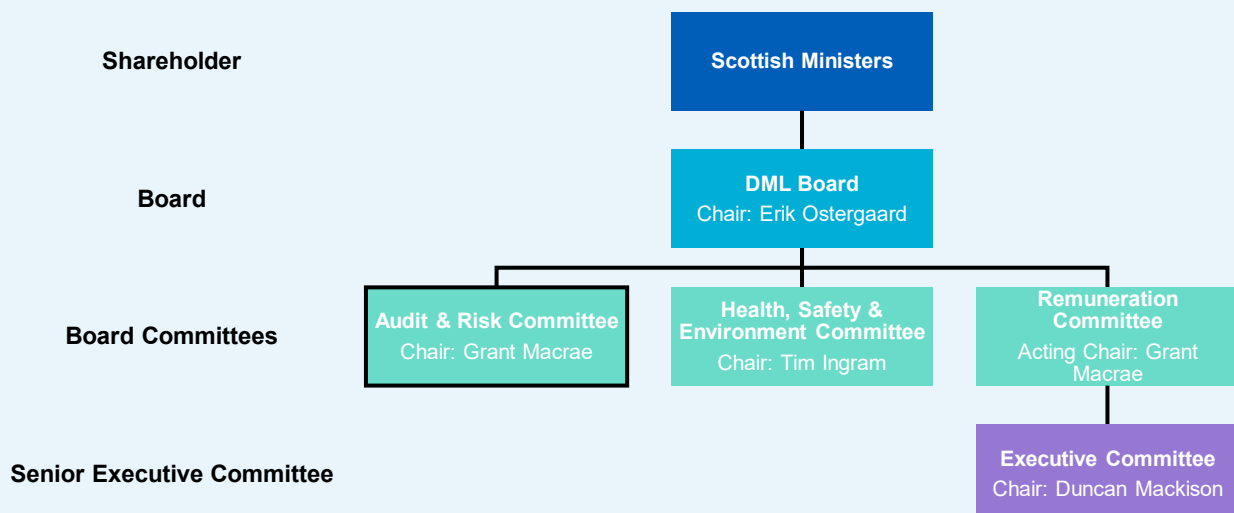
Our approach to quality is built on the principle of 'right first time', supported by a culture of accountability, transparency, and continuous learning. Quality is not confined to a single department—it is a shared responsibility across the organisation, with clear leadership and governance to ensure alignment with strategic objectives and community expectations.

2. Governance and organisational arrangements

Delivering a reliable, reliable and resilient ferry service to Scotland's west coast communities requires more than operational competence—it demands strong leadership, clear accountability, and a governance framework that embeds quality at every level of the organisation. Our governance arrangements are designed to ensure that quality is not only maintained but continuously improved, in line with our quality policy and contractual obligations.

While all employees share a collective responsibility to uphold and enhance quality, certain key roles within the company hold specific accountability for embedding quality as a core element of our operations. These roles are supported by formal governance structures that provide oversight, assurance, and strategic direction (Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Governance Structures

Shareholder	**Scottish Ministers**
Board	**DML Board** — Chair: Erik Ostergaard
Board Committees	**Audit & Risk Committee** — Chair: Grant Macrae / **Health, Safety & Environment Committee** — Chair: Tim Ingram / **Remuneration Committee** — Acting Chair: Grant Macrae
Senior Executive Committee	**Executive Committee** — Chair: Duncan Mackison

Chief Executive Officer and Executive Committee

The Chief Executive Officer and Executive Committee demonstrate leadership and commitment by setting the tone from the top. They ensure that quality is integrated into strategic decision-making, aligned with business objectives, and supported by adequate resources. Their role is pivotal in promoting a culture of continual improvement and customer focus throughout the company, in line with the principles of ISO 9001:2015. This leadership ensures that quality is a strategic priority that informs every aspect of service delivery rather than an isolated function.

Director of Standards and Performance

The Director of Standards and Performance is the designated owner of the Quality Management Plan and holds defined authority for the establishment, maintenance, and continual improvement of the Company Management System (CMS). This role is responsible for ensuring that the CMS remains compliant with all applicable standards and contractual requirements,

Audit and Risk committee

The Audit and Risk committee, comprising of Non-Executive Directors of the DML Board, provides independent oversight of the Group's financial reporting and internal control systems. The Committee is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of:

– Internal control and risk management

– Compliance, whistleblowing, and fraud prevention

– Internal and external audit functions

– Insurance arrangements

– Corporate governance frameworks.

Through its scrutiny and assurance functions, the Committee ensures that risks are identified, managed, and escalated appropriately.

Health, Safety, Environment and Quality (HSEQ) committee

The HSEQ committee, also comprising Non-Executive Directors of the DML Board, is responsible for monitoring the application and adherence to formal policies and procedures relating to health, safety, environment and quality. It provides assurance to the Board on performance and policy effectiveness and plays a critical role in reviewing the systems and processes that underpin our Company Management System.

The Committee scrutinises the completeness and effectiveness of these systems and processes. Where necessary, the Committee escalates issues to the Board, ensuring that quality remains a strategic priority and that any risks to service reliability are addressed promptly.

This governance structure ensures that quality is embedded not only in our operational practices but in our strategic leadership and oversight. It enables CFL to deliver services that are consistent, resilient, and responsive to the needs of the communities we serve—reinforcing public confidence and fulfilling our role as a trusted lifeline operator.

# 3. Structure and content of quality control procedures

Our Company Management System, aligns with ISO 9001:2015 and complies with all relevant regulatory requirements. They govern every stage of our work, from routine operations to the implementation of strategic initiatives, providing a framework that supports continual improvement, risk management, and regulatory compliance.

By integrating internationally recognised standards and best practice methodologies, we nurture an environment where quality is not just maintained, but actively enhanced. For a full list of associated procedures, please refer to Appendix A.

Hierarchy of the Company Management System

The Company Management System is structured in a clear hierarchy to ensure alignment, control, and consistency across the organisation (Figure 2). At the top tier is the governing Group Management Manual and corporate Policies, which set strategic direction and expectations. These are supported by processes, manuals, and procedures that define how requirements are implemented and integrated. At the detailed lower level, forms, checklists and bulletins provide task verification and operational updates to ensure safety procedures, maintenance routines, and regulatory requirements are consistently followed.

Figure 2 – Company Management System Hierarchy

Policies and Group Management Manual

Processes

Procedures and Operating Manuals

Forms, Checklists, Bulletins, Work Instructions
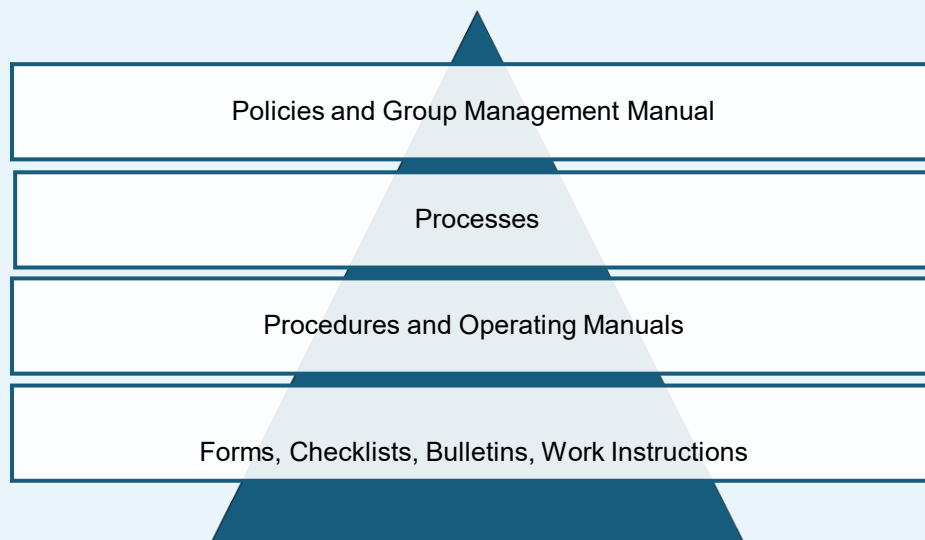
Key procedures

A comprehensive suite of procedures supports the implementation and continual improvement of our company management system including the following:

– Group management manual

– Standard operating manuals

– Emergency preparedness

– Emergency response

- Operational planning & control

- Risk management

- Resource management

- Monitoring and measurement

- Supplier requirements

- Training, competence and staff development

- Stakeholder requirements

- Document control

Group management manual

The group management manual defines the structure and function of our Company Management System (CMS), which underpins the delivery of consistent, high-quality services across the organisation. Rooted in ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015, and the ISM Code:2018, it sets out the essential procedures, committee responsibilities, and governance frameworks that support continual improvement.

By detailing clear terms of reference for our key committees, establishing robust risk management, and articulating comprehensive processes for document control, internal audits, and non-conformity management, the group management manual ensures our operations remain accountable, compliant, and resilient. Through this aligned approach, we uphold our commitment to quality, safety, and performance—driving value for our customers and stakeholders every day.

Standard operating manuals

Our standard operating manuals form the backbone of our operational framework, providing structured guidance for Vessels, Ports & Harbours, Customer and Retail Operations, and all major departments—including Standards and Performance, Fleet Management, and Human Resources. Developed to align with industry regulations and company objectives, these manuals are embedded in our Company Management System (CMS), ensuring that best practice is delivered consistently across every function.

By standardising procedures, clarifying roles, and codifying responsibilities, our manuals enable the team to maintain regulatory compliance, drive continuous improvement, and achieve operational excellence. They support onboarding and training, underpin robust internal and external audits, and serve as evidence of our commitment to quality and compliance in everyday activities.

Emergency preparedness and response

Our emergency response framework is a core component of our integrated operational approach, embedded within our management system to ensure safety, environmental protection, and business continuity. It provides robust, well-defined procedures for managing a wide range of incidents—such as fire, injury, fatality, collision/allision, oil spills, and security threats—across both vessel and shore-based operations.

Aligned with regulatory requirements and industry best practice, these procedures enable rapid, coordinated responses that safeguard people, assets, and the environment, while maintaining operational resilience and readiness across the organisation.

Four dedicated teams provide the expertise and leadership necessary to deliver a coordinated emergency response:

– Crisis Management Team (CMT): Responsible for high-impact events affecting assets, people, or reputation, the CMT leads our strategic response and ensures business continuity is preserved at the highest level.

– Emergency Response Support Team (ERST): Delivers specialised technical guidance and impact assessment, empowering local managers to act swiftly and with confidence, supported by escalation protocols where required.

– Communications Hub Team (CHT): Manages the flow of timely, accurate information, both internally and externally, sustaining clarity and trust throughout any incident.

– Security Incident Response Team (SIRT): Oversees data and cyber security incidents, from containment and investigation to the restoration of secure operations.

A 24/7 on-call system across all response teams guarantees that expertise is always available, enabling immediate, coordinated action whenever incidents arise.

Regular vessel, port, and company-wide exercises are embedded within our annual schedule, developed in consultation with the Executive Committee. These exercises—ranging from full-scale drills to desktop simulations—are designed not only to satisfy regulatory requirements, but to embed best practice, strengthen inter-agency collaboration, and foster a culture of resilience.

Key considerations include:

– Alignment with current risk profiles and regulatory imperatives (ISPS Code, OPRC Regulations, Business Continuity Framework).

– Active involvement of external agencies such as emergency services, harbour authorities, and regulators.

– Scenario planning led by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) for realism and relevance.

Learning is a cornerstone of our approach. After every incident or exercise, we capture actionable insights and integrate them into our procedures, ensuring our response capabilities are always evolving in line with emerging risks and operational expectations.

Through this commitment to structured preparedness, rigorous testing, and ongoing improvement, we underpin the safety, security, and operational continuity that our communities and stakeholders rely on—every day, without exception.

Operational planning & control

Our operational planning framework is embedded within our Company Management System (CMS), providing robust governance for all aspects of our operations—from vessel overhaul and maintenance to scheduling, service continuity, and infrastructure projects. By integrating structured planning and clear process control, we maintain a resilient, responsive operational environment that adapts to evolving risks and supports sustained excellence across our business.

Risk management

Our risk management approach is an integral part of our Company Management System (CMS), guiding every aspect of service delivery—from day-to-day operations and incident response to strategic oversight and continuous improvement. Built on the Management of Risk® approach, our framework is designed to proactively identify, assess, and manage risks, ensuring that our procedures meet the requirements of both the CHFS3 contract and recognised industry best practice.

We maintain a dynamic risk register, continuously updated to reflect the evolving landscape and reviewed monthly by senior management with quarterly reports submitted to the Executive Team, and the Audit & Risk Committee. Where necessary, we escalate key risks to Scottish Ministers, supporting transparent governance and ensuring our services remain resilient and dependable.

By embedding a rigorous, structured approach to risk management within our CMS, we reaffirm our commitment to operational excellence, regulatory compliance, and stakeholder trust—enabling us to respond effectively to emerging challenges and deliver reliable service to our communities every day.

Resource management

Our processes for resource management, ensure that the appropriate personnel, equipment, and materials are strategically allocated across our operations. By embedding robust assessment and allocation processes, we maintain continuity and uphold the highest standards of quality throughout our activities. Regular evaluation of resource needs allows us to support consistent delivery and operational resilience, underpinning our commitment to excellence and uninterrupted service.

Performance monitoring and measurement

This approach details our integrated framework for performance monitoring and measurement, which underpins all areas of our operations—from safety and environmental stewardship to operational reliability and customer satisfaction. Rooted in our strategic governance and informed by Scottish Government expectations for Non-Departmental Public Bodies, our methodology is designed to ensure that decision-making is consistently informed by robust data, real-time insights, and industry best practice.

Through a unified suite of key performance indicators and assurance mechanisms, we maintain a clear and consistent view of organisational performance at every level—from operational delivery to executive oversight and board review. Our Planning and Performance Framework translates national policy into clear corporate, annual, and delivery plans, setting objectives, goals and key performance indicators that drive continual improvement and accountability.

By embedding these processes within our Company Management System, we ensure that performance management is aligned with both regulatory requirements and the expectations of our stakeholders. This enables us to monitor progress, escalate issues through transparent governance structures, and deliver on our commitments to communities—ensuring our services remain resilient, responsive, and worthy of public trust, day in and day out.

Supplier requirements

Supplier requirements are a core element of our commitment to operational reliability, regulatory compliance, and continuous improvement. Our supplier management team monitors contract

performance and conducts regular quality audits, while also developing specifications aligned with supply chain standards.

Proactive renewal and enhancement of contracts ensure readiness for future operational needs, including new vessels and technologies. By integrating supplier management into our broader operational strategy, we maintain quality and continuity, uphold the standards expected by our communities, and position the business to deliver resilient, high-quality services—today and into the future.

Training, competence and staff development

Our commitment to staff training and development underpins the delivery of consistently safe, high-quality services across our operations. We maintain a robust performance appraisal scheme and comprehensive training matrices for port staff and crew, encompassing safety, customer focus, and ongoing professional development. By embedding these initiatives into our Company Management System, we ensure that our workforce remains skilled, adaptable, and ready to exceed passenger expectations. This approach supports our vision for operational excellence and continual improvement, equipping our teams to respond to evolving challenges and uphold the standards our communities rely on.

You can find out more about our approach to training and staff development in our delivery plan – Human Resources Strategy.

Stakeholder requirements

As part of our stakeholder engagement processes, we have established a dedicated Engagement Directorate and our Area Managers, who are a key component of our structure – are responsible for ensuring stakeholder engagement is always a core component of our operational strategy. This approach proactively identifies and addresses the expectations of local communities and port users, helping us anticipate risks and opportunities. By prioritising openness and collaboration, we strengthen transparency, build lasting trust, and ensure our services reflect the needs of those we serve.

Customer feedback

Our customer feedback processes allow us to collect and review customer feedback through a range of channels—including QR code surveys, SMS and web-based responses, as well as direct interactions with our customer relations and frontline teams. This approach enables us to systematically capture the voice of our customers, ensuring that every insight informs the ongoing refinement of the Company Management System (CMS). By embedding customer feedback into our continuous improvement cycle, we strengthen our ability to adapt, enhance service delivery, and uphold the standards that our communities expect and deserve.

Document control

Our document control processes are an essential part of our Company Management System (CMS), ensuring that essential records and operational documents are accessible whenever and wherever they are needed. This approach not only supports regulatory compliance and operational integrity but also provides the assurance of robust traceability across our activities. Guided by our Document Control Procedure, we maintain and retain documentation in line with statutory and contractual standards—strengthening transparency, supporting evidence-based decision-making, and underpinning our commitment to ongoing excellence.

4 Monitoring of the Company Management System

We adopt a structured approach to monitoring the effectiveness of the Company Management System (CMS), ensuring that our processes remain robust, adaptive, and fully aligned with both regulatory obligations and organisational objectives. Through regular evaluation and systematic review, we uphold a culture of continuous improvement—identifying gaps, addressing risks, and reinforcing stakeholder confidence at every level of our operation.

The effectiveness of the Company Management System is measured in the following ways:

– Integrated audit and assurance programme

– Analysis of non-conformities, accidents and hazardous occurrences

– Management review

– Masters' review

– CMS maturity assessment

– External surveillance and certification audits

– CMS feedback

– Customer feedback

– Document control

Integrated audit and assurance programme

We conduct a diverse and extensive annual audit and assurance programme reviewing processes and compliance across a variety of areas including port/harbour and vessel operations, food safety and support services functions this ensures our processes remain effective and compliant with regulatory, contractual and ISO 9001:2015 and ISM Code:2018 audit requirements as well as to identify opportunities to improve processes and customer experiences.

Our Internal Audit partner who conforms to the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIAs) International Professional Practices framework (IPPF) conducts key risk and assurance-based audits with results and status of audit actions reported to our Audit and Risk Committee for review and appropriate action.

Analysis of non-conformities, accidents and hazardous occurrences

We use analysis of non-conformities, accidents, and hazardous occurrences to provide valuable insight into system weaknesses, supporting continuous improvement and helping ensure the Company Management System remains effective, compliant, and aligned with objectives.

Our trained personnel investigate all incidents promptly, with escalations when necessary for more complex investigation to specialist personnel within the Standards and Performance team. Incident and audit non-conformity data is reported quarterly to the HSEQ Committee and forms a key component of the Management Review process. This structured review includes trend analysis to identify opportunities for improvement, informing potential changes to procedures, resources, and risk controls

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Management review

In line with ISO 9001:2015 and the ISM Code: 2018, we conduct regular management reviews to ensure the continued suitability, adequacy, effectiveness, and alignment of our Company Management System with strategic objectives and regulatory requirements. The review process enables the Executive Committee to assess performance trends, identify opportunities for improvement, ensure the availability of resources, and confirm that safety, quality, and customer satisfaction goals are being met. It also ensures that risks and non-conformities are addressed appropriately and that continual improvement remains a core focus.

Masters' review

Our approach ensures that vessel Masters play a pivotal role in upholding the integrity of our Company Management System (CMS). In alignment with the ISM Code: 2018, Masters regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the CMS on board, proactively identifying any gaps or deficiencies. These findings are formally reported to shore-based management, enabling a responsive and collaborative review process. Through this systematic feedback loop, we not only maintain compliance with international standards but also foster a culture of continuous improvement and operational reliability across our fleet.

CMS maturity assessment

We use comprehensive maturity assessments developed using an industry-benchmarked maturity model to enable each department and the company to determine their current maturity level in key company management system areas such as organisational structure, policy framework, audit processes (both internal and external), corrective action status, departmental performance reporting, and meeting effectiveness. Additionally, strong emphasis is placed on robust document and record management, knowledge retention through lessons learnt, risk management, business continuity planning, and a commitment to continuous improvement. When the assessment results are finalised, each department agrees a set of actions to improve maturity levels.

External surveillance and certification audits

ISO 9001 and 14001 surveillance and recertification audits form a critical part of our commitment to quality and continual improvement. Delivered by an ISO certification provider accredited by UKAS, the United Kingdom Accreditation Service—these audits ensure our systems remain robust, compliant, and aligned with global best practices.

Our approach further encompasses the Document of Compliance, Safety Management Certification, and ISPS audits, all conducted by the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA). Through these rigorous assessments, we demonstrate our dedication to safe, secure, and consistent operations at every level.

Additionally, Port Facility Security Inspections, carried out by the Department for Transport (DfT), reinforce our security standards and resilience, ensuring our facilities meet evolving regulatory requirements.

By integrating these surveillance and certification activities within our wider Company Management System, we proactively safeguard operational integrity, respond to emerging risks, and provide services communities can trust—today and into the future.

CMS feedback

This process establishes our commitment to a dynamic and responsive Company Management System (CMS), where every team member plays a vital role in driving continual improvement. Through the CMS feedback loop, staff are empowered to share insights and suggestions, ensuring that every contribution is reviewed by the designated process or document owner. In doing so, we reinforce a culture of accountability and innovation and position our organisation to adapt proactively to operational challenges and evolving standards.

Customer feedback

This section details our comprehensive approach to customer feedback within the Company Management System. By leveraging a variety of channels—including QR code surveys, SMS and web-based surveys, and direct engagement through our customer relations and frontline teams—we ensure that the voice of the customer is integral to our operational framework.

The feedback received is systematically reviewed by the appropriate teams, forming a key component of our commitment to continuous improvement. Through this structured and responsive process, we can assess and implement enhancements to our procedures, thereby ensuring our management system evolves in line with stakeholder expectations and industry best practices. This approach not only supports compliance but drives us toward operational excellence and service reliability for the communities we serve.

Document review

Our document revision schedules underpin the integrity of our management system, ensuring that all documentation remains current and fit for purpose. Each document's next review date is determined by its risk category, established at the point of creation or modification. When a document undergoes revision, its subsequent review is recalibrated in accordance with the latest update and its associated risk profile. This structured approach guarantees that our document control processes are proactive, resilient, and aligned with robust risk management principles—maintaining the reliability and responsiveness essential to our operational excellence.

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Appendix A – quality control procedures

Quality control procedures	Company Management System review
Group Management Manual (GMM)	Group Management Sec 02.00 Company Management System *Includes Management Review Procedure*
Major Ro-Ro and Passenger Vessels Operating Manual (MVOM)	Integrated Audit & Assurance Programme
Small Ro-Ro and Passenger Vessels Operating Manual (SVOM)	Integrated Internal Audit Process
Passenger Only Vessels Operating Manual (PVOM)	Group Management Sec 10.00 Audit and Nonconformity
Workboat Vessel Operations Manual (WVOM)	Fleet Bulletin: Masters Review of the Company Management System
Health, Safety and Environmental Manual (HSEM)	Customer Feedback Procedures
Standards and Performance Manual	Nonconformity Root Cause Analysis and Corrective Action Management Procedure
Fleet Management Manual	Group Management Sec 05.00 Document Control Procedure
Customer Operations Manual	Contract Review Process
Retail Operations Manual	
Supplier Evaluation Procedure	
Corporate Risk Register	
Pure Incident Management, Reporting, Investigation Procedure	

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Quality control procedures	Company Management System review
Pure Audit Management and Corrective Actions Procedure	
Integrated Internal Audit Process	
Customer Feedback Procedures	
Nonconformity Root Cause Analysis and Corrective Action Management Procedure	
Emergency Management Response Procedures and Plans	
Master Decision Support Systems	
SOPEP and Oil Spill Contingency Plans	
Project Management Handbook	
Management of Change Procedures	
Business Intelligence KPI Procedures	
Performance Management Procedures (Personnel)	