

# FERRY FOCUS REPORT

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## P&O STENA LINE

P&O group's post-tax profits from its 60% share in P&O Stena Line for 2000 were £22.5 million, down from £40.4 million in 1999. Whilst the short sea market grew by 12%, P&O Stena Line's overall market share decreased. The remaining 40% share is owned by Stena Line (UK) which has services based at Fishguard, Holyhead, Stranraer and Harwich.

P&O Stena Line *Picardy* was sold at the end of March for £4.9 million to Slovenija-based TransEuropa Shipping Lines (TSL) after a twelve month lay up at Dunkerque. Following an extensive refit and installation of an internal loading ramp, the renamed *Oleander* (now registered in Limassol, Cyprus) will replace *Primrose* on TSL's Ramsgate/Oostende service at the end of June. The former P&O *Picardy* is ideal for day trippers on the Oostende service due to its impressive service speed of 23 knots. It will complete three round trips in every 24 hour cycle instead of the present two.

P&O Stena Line began accepting passengers once again on its Dover-Zeebrugge freight-only service from 1st May, with five daily return sailings. The *European Highway*, *European Pathway* and *European Seaway* have taken purely freight since replacing the *Pride of Walmer* and *Pride of Sandwich* a decade ago. The four hour crossing is seen as a low cost alternative to the premier Dover-Calais service, with savings of up to 50% on fares.

[www.postl.com](http://www.postl.com)

## SEAFRANCE

Seafrance's new 32,000 ton ferry, due to be delivered by Aker Finnyards Oy, Finland, will be named *Seafrance Rodin*, continuing the Seafrance tradition of naming its ships after famous artists.

Seafrance is also celebrating its fifth anniversary this year. To celebrate this milestone there were two 'Dance to France' disco cruises with Neptune Radio in March and April and on board savings of up to 50% on UK high street prices were introduced in

Seafrance Shopping, with promotional offers and discounts in bars and restaurants and a special cocktail introduced as part of the celebrations.

For information on Seafrance call 08705 711 711 or visit [www.Seafrance.com](http://www.Seafrance.com) where you can make an interactive tour of *Seafrance Cezanne*.

## NORFOLKLINE

Norfolkline's Dover-Dunkerque West service celebrated its first anniversary in April and has exceeded all expectations with the 22,000 ton *Northern Merchant* and *Midnight Merchant* regularly sailing to full capacity. The main bar, self-service restaurant and lounge have been renamed for the 2001 season, with the theme of horse racing. The service has, no doubt, benefited from the hassle-free check-in, embarkation and disembarkation at both Dover and Dunkerque, as well as excellent road communications on both sides of the Channel. This summer there are up to six daily return sailings. [www.norfolkline.com](http://www.norfolkline.com)

## HOVER SPEED

The two former hovercraft are still languishing at Lee-on-Solent, Hampshire and are on the market for 7 million dollars. Some interest has been expressed and one proposal is to convert them to static restaurants. If they are not sold, Sea Containers will donate both craft to the Hovercraft Museum, where they are at present.

On the Dover-Calais short sea service, *Superseacat One* and *Superseacat Two* were joined on 6 April by *Superseacat Three*. At Oostende foot passengers have had to disembark through the vehicle deck, due to a lack of a suitable berth capable of accommodating the superseacats, which are twenty metres longer than the craft they replaced. This summer there are up to ten daily return sailings to Calais and three to Oostende. *Seacat Denmark*, somewhat elderly compared to the new craft, remains on the Calais run to support the service.

[www.hoverspeed.com](http://www.hoverspeed.com)