

SMMT – Registration figures

New car registrations

Figures released by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) show that UK new car registrations for 2015 beat 2.6 million units for the first time, sealing four years of consecutive growth. The market has posted increases in all but one of the past 46 months and the biggest ever December – up 8.4% – saw 180,077 new cars registered. Overall, the market rose 6.3% in 2015 to 2,633,503 units – exceeding forecast and outperforming the last record year in 2003 when 2,579,050 new cars left the UK's showrooms. This is only the fourth time that the market has surpassed 2.5 million vehicles in a full year. Growth was enjoyed across all sectors, with UK fleets boosting demand by 11.8% to reach an all time high of 1.3 million units. Appetite in the private sector, meanwhile, was also robust, up 2.5%. Gains were reported across all fuel types, with petrol and diesel registrations up 8.4% and 3% respectively with equal market shares. Alternatively fuelled vehicle (AFV) demand, meanwhile, grew 40.3%, securing the biggest ever market share of 2.8% for a year. Plug-in hybrids also experienced strong growth, with volumes more than doubling, while pure electric vehicles saw an uplift of around 50%.

Bus and coach market

The bus and coach market closed 2015 with a 22.8% rise to 9,025 units – the best performance in seven years. Registrations in December saw an impressive 31.6% increase, making it the eighth consecutive month of growth. Bigger buses continue to drive sector growth in 2014, as heavier single-decks and double-decks rise by 26.7% and 35.5% respectively.

Commercial vehicle market

Commercial vehicle (CV) demand reached an all time high in 2015. A steep curve in growth since 2012 has seen the CV market overtake pre-recession levels with a total of 423,894 vehicles registered in 2015. Growth was fuelled by the van sector, where demand, buoyed by the ongoing online shopping boom and attractive finance deals, hit record levels – up 15.6% to 371,830 registrations in 2015. Trucks also showed robust growth in a return to form for the sector, with

registrations up 25.5% to 52,064 units, following a slower year in 2014 after regulatory upheaval resulted in a distortion of fleet renewal patterns.

(Source: [SMMT](#))

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee: Oral evidence session

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee will hold its second evidence session on Air quality on Wednesday 13 January at 2.30pm.

The Committee continues its scrutiny of air quality issues with a focus on the contribution transport emissions make to air pollution. Vehicle industry representatives will be questioned on solutions for cleaning up road transport including using new technologies, such as electric or hybrid cars, as well as problems with EU vehicle emissions testing.

The Committee will take evidence from:

- Paul Willis, Managing Director, Volkswagen Group UK
- Mike Hawes, Chief Executive Officer, Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders
- Andy Eastlake, Managing Director, Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership

The session will be held in Committee Room 8, Palace of Westminster.

(Source: [EFRA Select Committee](#))

Reshuffle of Shadow Cabinet

Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn has made changes to the shadow cabinet this week.

- Shadow defence secretary – Emily Thornberry has replaced Maria Eagle.
- Shadow culture, media and sport secretary: Maria Eagle has replaced Michael Dugher.
- Shadow Europe minister: Pat Glass has replaced Pat McFadden.
- Shadow devolution and local government minister: Emma Lewell-Buck has been appointed.

- Jonathan Reynolds resigned as shadow rail minister.
- Stephen Doughty resigned as shadow foreign office minister.
- Kevan Jones resigned as shadow armed forces minister.

(Source: [Labour Party](#))

Automotive Investment Organisation progress

Government's partnership with the automotive industry, the Automotive Investment Organisation (AIO), has created or protected 15,000 jobs in the auto sector 3 months ahead of its March 2016 target. Since the AIO was established in June 2013, the AIO has attracted over £1 billion of foreign investment into the UK auto sector and supported over 250 projects. The AIO has created a network of leading industry professionals and government expertise to identify specific growth opportunities in the UK automotive supply chain. As a result, the amount of British-made components being used by car manufacturers in the UK has increased to 41% in 2015, from 36% in 2011. Britain's car makers delivered a strong performance in November as manufacturing output rose 9.3%, according to figures released today by the SMMT. 150,084 cars were built in the month, with growth fuelled by demand from overseas as export production increased 10.8%. The latest figures put year-to-date volumes 3.8% ahead of the same period in 2014. (Source: [BIS](#))

Cleaner buses for England's towns and city centres

Nearly 450 buses in England will be fitted with green technology to cut emissions by up to 90%, after the successful bids for around £7 million of Department for Transport funding were announced this week. The [Clean Bus Technology Fund 2015 is being awarded to 18 local authorities across England to retrofit 439 buses](#). To win awards, local authorities had to show evidence that the technology would reduce nitrogen oxide emissions by at least 50%. The buses will be fitted with exhaust gas treatment systems called selective catalytic reduction (SCR). As part of the award, councils must continue to monitor the schemes and provide evidence of their effectiveness. This new fund adds to the £20 million invested by government in retrofit schemes and is in addition to significant match funding by local

authorities and support from bus operators to improve air quality since 2011. Upgrading existing transport is in addition to the government's £600 million investment in low-emission technology over the next five years, which aims to help make almost every car and van zero emission by 2050. (Source: [DfT](#))

Week ahead

Commons Committees

Monday 11 January

- Transport Committee (4.10pm, Grimond Room) – Vehicle type approval

Tuesday 12 January

- Business, Innovation and Skills Committee (p:30am, room 6) – the digital economy
- Energy and Climate Change Committee (9:30am, Thatcher room) – Low carbon network infrastructure
- Environmental Audit Committee (9:45am, Grimond Room) – Assessment of EU/UK environmental policy

Wednesday 13 January

- Environmental Audit Committee (2:15pm, Thatcher Room) – Assessment of EU/UK environmental policy
- Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee (2:30pm, room 8) – Air Quality

Lords Committees

Tuesday 12 January

- European Union Committee (3:30pm, room tbc) – Visions of EU reform

Wednesday 13 January

- Constitution Committee (10:15am, room 1)
- European Union Committee (11:30am, room tbc) – Visions of EU reform

