

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 8 February

New report maps-out the future of hydrogen powered cars

The UKH₂Mobility project has launched an interim report commissioned to evaluate the benefits of hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEVs) and ensure the UK is well positioned for their commercial roll-out. Business Minister Michael Fallon MP attended the report launch, stating: "The transition to ultra-low emission vehicles has already begun. It has the potential to create really significant new economic opportunities for the UK, to diversify national energy supply and to decarbonise road transport. The findings released today demonstrate that hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles can make a significant contribution to this. Successful commercialisation of the technology will require government to work in true partnership with industry. Our international rivals are looking to steal a march in this area and so UKH₂Mobility recognises the importance of prompt action to ensure the potential benefits are realised by businesses and consumers in the UK". The key findings of the report are:

- **Consumer** - Up to 10 per cent of new car customers will be receptive to fuel cell vehicles when first introduced, attracted by the newness of the technology and environmental considerations.
- **Vehicles** - The roadmap shows that once mass FCEV production is established, bringing costs down, there is the potential for 1.6 million vehicles on UK roads by 2030, with annual sales of more than 300,000.
- **Infrastructure** - A co-ordinated network of hydrogen refuelling stations will need to be established, focusing at first on national trunk routes and heavily populated areas.
- **Environment** - the roadmap shows that, based on the uptake figures above, FCEVs could reduce UK annual total vehicle CO₂ emissions by three million tonnes in 2030.
- **Fuel production** - Using a range of manufacturing methods can deliver hydrogen at a cost that is competitive with diesel, with 60 per cent lower CO₂ emissions in 2020, improving to 75 per cent less in 2030.

- **Investment** - a basic initial network of Hydrogen Refuelling Stations is required to encourage early adoption of FCEVs and there will inevitably be a lag between the creation of this network and there being sufficient FCEVs on the road to make it financially self-sustaining.

The final report of Phase 1 is due to be published in March. Phase 2 of UKH₂Mobility will then use the information and roadmap produced in Phase 1 to develop a detailed business case and specific actions for participants to commit to. (Source: BIS)

<http://news.bis.gov.uk/Press-Releases/Future-of-hydrogen-powered-cars-mapped-out-68719.aspx>



Positive start for 2013 new car market with January registrations up 11.5%

Figures released by SMMT show that UK new car registrations rose 11.5% to 143,643 units in January 2013. This is the 11th successive month of growth for the market, boosted by a rise in private registrations of 15.9% during the month. SMMT has also revised its full year forecast for the new car market for 201 and 2014, after the better than expected growth in 2012. The market is expected to rise by 0.6% to 2.057 million units in 2013 and by 2.6% to 2.11 million units in 2014. (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/02/positive-start-for-2013-new-car-market-with-january-registrations-up-11-5/>

Science & Technology Committee publishes report into engineering education

The Science & Technology Committee has published a report entitled 'Educating tomorrow's engineers: the impact of Government reforms on 14-19 education'. The report backs SMMT's call for Design & Technology to remain in the National Curriculum at Key Stage 4, and for face-to-face careers advice to be made available for every young person. The report also notes the automotive industry's work in engaging young people in engineering through programmes such as See Inside Manufacturing and the Big Bang Fair, and states that government should encourage and support such initiatives. Committee chair, Andrew Miller MP, stated: "Engineering is crucial to the UK's economic growth and it is deeply concerning that there is a shortfall in the number of engineers we need. It is vital that we inspire young people to consider engineering careers and have in place an education system that encourages them to pursue those ambitions". (Source: parliament.uk) <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/science-and-technology-committee/news/engineering-skills-report-press-release/>

Commercial vehicle registrations rise 5.6% in January

Figures released by SMMT show that commercial vehicle registrations rose 5.6% in January 2013 to 18,931 units. Van registrations grew 11.9% to 16,049 units at the start of the year, but remained down for the rolling year, whilst truck registrations fell 19.6%, to 2,882 units in January, but were still 2.1% up for the rolling 12 months. SMMT forecasts that the light commercial vehicle sector will grow almost 5% over the year, with new models and greater business confidence driving the market. The bus and coach market also enjoyed a positive start to 2013, with registrations up 2.9% to 498 units in January. (Source: SMMT) <http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/02/vans-registrations-make-bright-start-in-2013-while-trucks-trail/> <http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/02/encouraging-start-to-uk-bus-and-coach-market-in-january/>

Scotland invests in electric vehicle charging infrastructure

Transport Scotland has announced proposals that will see free installation of home charging points throughout Scotland, public charging outlets within at least every 50 miles on trunk roads and an integrated network joining up electric vehicles with public transport. The £2.6million scheme, which includes £750,000 from Transport Scotland, also includes charging points at leisure facilities and local authority public car parks and funding for charge points at workplaces. The proposals aim to place Scotland at the forefront of climate action and meet its ambition of complete decarbonisation of road transport by 2050 in part through the whole scale adoption of low and ultra-low carbon vehicles. (Source: Transport Scotland)



Week ahead

Commons Chamber

Wednesday 13 February

Ten minute rule motion: Science Technology and Engineering (Careers Information in Schools) – Peter Luff, Con, Mid Worcestershire

Commons Committees

Tuesday 12 February

Business, Innovation and Skills Committee (9:30am, room 8) Lord Heseltine's report

Lords Committees

No relevant activity

Westminster Hall

Tuesday 12 February

Manufacturing in the East Midlands (9:30am-11:00am) – Mark Spencer, Con, Sherwood

Wednesday 13 February

Engineering as a career choice for young people (4:00pm-4:30pm) Nadine Dorries, Ind, Mid Bedfordshire