

UK new car registrations

New Car registrations

February saw new car registration figures reach three consecutive years of growth. In February, traditionally one of the quietest months of the year ahead of a number plate change in March, the market grew 12.0% year-on-year with 76,958 new cars registered, achieving a year-to-date rise of 8.3%. Fleet buyers drove this increase with registrations up 19.9% in February, while the private market saw an increase of 3.4%.

Commercial Vehicle registrations

Commercial vehicle registration figures grew 19.5% in February with 40,491 vehicles registered so far this year. Increases were seen in both the van and truck sector with growth figures of 19.5% and 31.7% respectively. February marked the tenth consecutive month of increases in the van market, a reflection of improving confidence among SMEs.

Bus and Coach registrations

Bus and coach registrations grew 14.9% in February reaching 409 units. Year-to-date values also saw a rise, up 34.3% compared with the same period in 2014. Demand for converted buses and purpose-built coaches fuelled this growth, increasing 22.9% and 40% respectively.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2015/03/new-car-registrations-february-2015/>



Transport Committee Report: Motoring of the Future

The House of Commons Transport Committee has published a report following its inquiry on motoring of the future. The Committee calls on the Department for Transport (DfT) to develop a comprehensive strategy to maximise the benefits of new motoring technology, such as telematics and driverless cars. The Transport Committee calls on DfT to:

- Clarify how the introduction of self-driving cars will affect the liabilities of drivers, manufacturers and insurers.
- Positively engage in setting European and international standards that will help UK manufacturers develop products suitable for export.
- Ask the Information Commissioner to update guidelines on the collection, access and use of vehicle data.
- Use data on driver behaviour held by the insurance industry and others to inform policy making and improve road safety.

(Source: Transport Select Committee)

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmtran/429/429.pdf>

Government rejects diesel tax increase

Government has rejected calls to rebalance taxes on diesel vehicles to reduce air pollution, but will consider whether a national network of low emission zones could be included as part of its Air Quality plans due to be submitted to the European Commission at the end of this year. In its response the Government agreed with the thrust of many of the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee's recommendations including the need for a 2017 introduction of the new EU engine test regime, financial support for a range of vehicle fuel technologies and the need to tackle bus fleet pollution by getting air pollution warnings widely disseminated.

(Source: Parliament UK - online)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/environmental-audit-committee/news/response-air-quality/>

CBI calls for focus on 'UK Mittlestand' ahead of budget

The Director General of the CBI, John Cridland, is calling on the Chancellor to use his final Budget before the General Election to prioritise measures which will create more growth opportunities for medium-sized firms – 'The UK Mittlestand', the backbone of the UK economy – while staying on the course on the current fiscal reduction plans. With the economic recovery well-established, the UK's business organisation will urge the Chancellor to take action that will help support business investment and exports, providing long-term stability, certainty and simplifying the tax system – all to support ambitious UK firms. The CBI's proposals for its Budget Submission include:

- Making the Annual Investment Allowance permanent from 2016 at £250,000 – to provide stability that will in turn promote investment
- Boosting the availability of long-term growth capital, by promoting a market for privately placed debt
- Encourage the full spectrum of Research and Development (R&D) activity to take place in the UK, by enhancing the R&D tax credit to include the final manufacturing of prototypes
- If funds are available free childcare (currently 15 hours) should be extended to 1 and 2 year-olds.

(Source: CBI)

<http://news.cbi.org.uk/news/budget-2015-must-get-uk-mittelstand-on-front-foot/>

Scottish Government: £2.5 million to reduce vehicle emissions

Emissions from Scotland's public sector fleets will be further reduced with funding commitments of £2.5 million announced by the Scottish Minister for Transport. The 'Switched on Fleets' initiative provides a major funding boost and is aimed at driving forward public sector fleets' green credentials by increasing the number of electric vehicles on the road. With 200 electric vehicles already within the fleets of Scottish Local Authorities, the latest funding arrangement is intended to continue the momentum which Scotland

has in trying to reach its climate change target of seeing all petrol and diesel vehicles phased out by 2050. The Roadmap; 'Switched-on Scotland', has seen over £17 million of investment since its launch in 2013 - including the installation of over 600 publicly available charge points across Scotland and a further 200 in non-public locations such as council depots, workplaces and people's homes.

(Source: Scottish Government Press Centre)

<http://scottishgovernment.presscentre.com/News/-/2-5-million-investment-to-reduce-vehicle-omissions-167c.aspx>

Week ahead

Commons Chamber

Thursday 5 March

- Transport questions (9:30am)

Commons Committee

Monday 2 March

- Third Delegated Legislation Committee (4:30pm, room 11) – Draft Renewable Transport Fuel Obligations (Amendment) Order 2015

Grand Committee

Monday 2 March

- Draft National Minimum Wage Regulations 2015: Consideration (3:30pm)

Lords Chamber

Wednesday 4 March

- Modern Slavery Bill: Third Reading

