

Vince Cable meets automotive apprentices at SMMT

Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable MP, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, has visited SMMT as part of the 2013 Apprenticeship Week. He met with automotive industry apprentices at an SMMT event jointly organised with Semta, the sector skills council for the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering sectors. Jack Stearn, a 20-year-old engineering apprentice at Vauxhall joined a panel of speakers including Dr Susan Pember OBE, Director, Further Education and Skills Investment at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Andy Dunn, Engineering Manager at Nifco, and Lynn Tomkins, UK Operations Director at Semta, to discuss his experiences and ambitions as an apprentice. Dr Cable said: "Companies in the automotive sector have long recognised the value of offering apprenticeships and have a proud record of putting young people on exciting and rewarding career paths. Since 2010 we have had over a million people start an apprenticeship in the UK". As part of an Opposition Day Debate in the House of Commons on Apprenticeships, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Motor Group, Richard Burden MP, who attended the SMMT event, said: "I met Carolyn Lee and James Doughty, two new apprentices working for Jaguar Land Rover. If anybody ever doubted the value of apprenticeships and what they can do to raise aspirations among young people, they just need to listen to the kind of things they were saying to me." (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/03/driving-home-the-importance-of-apprenticeships-in-uk-automotive/>



SMMT launches its New Car CO₂ Report 2013

SMMT has published its 12th annual New Car CO₂ Report. The report showed that UK average new car CO₂ emissions improved 3.6% in 2012, compared to 2011 and have reduced 26.5% since 2000. The report also noted that the number of VED-free, sub 100g/km CO₂ cars doubled their market share in 2012 to 8.2%. This trend towards low emissions and maximum fuel efficiency was reflected by the number of cars registered with less than 130g/km of CO₂ emissions. This emission level is the target average limit set by Europe for manufacturers to achieve by 2015 and last year more than half the market – 55.4% – met the level or improved on it. Matthew Croucher, author of SMMT's Report, said, "Industry can be proud of the progress it has made in reducing CO₂ emissions and improving fuel efficiency by more than 25% since 2000. The UK motor industry recognises its responsibilities and the industrial opportunities from the transition to ultra-low carbon vehicles. Future environmental and economic success will be determined by sustained investment in new technology, R&D, infrastructure and consumer incentives. We are seeing improvement in conventional technologies and the emergence of a range of alternative technologies, creating one of the most innovative periods for the global automotive industry." (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/co2report>

Government response to Richard Review of Apprenticeships published

Government has published its response to the Richard Review of Apprenticeships, alongside a consultation that welcomes views on the recommendations. Entrepreneur Doug Richard carried out his review into Apprenticeships last year, which called for the quality of Apprenticeships to be improved. Government has set out within its response a plan to redefine Apprenticeships, with the aim of building on their success and make them world-class. Government also emphasises the role of employers

who will be able to design Apprenticeships that include recognised and meaningful industry standards. The plans also highlight the need for a focus on the outcome of Apprenticeships, skilled jobs that involve substantial new learning and the importance of functional skills in English and maths. Prime Minister David Cameron visited Mercedes-Benz in Milton Keynes to deliver a speech on Apprenticeships, outlining government's vision, and answer questions. (Source: BIS/Number 10)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/employers-to-design-their-own-apprenticeships>

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/david-cameron-apprenticeships-central-to-rebuilding-the-economy/>

PACTS to set up Transport Safety Commission

The Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) has announced that it is to set up an independent Transport Safety Commission to inquire into road, rail and air safety. Initially the Commission will focus on road safety, and will include cross-party members. A 'navigational meeting' will establish the terms and reference of the Commission in due course. Barry Sheerman MP, Chairman of PACTS said: "I am delighted to announce that PACTS will be launching a Transport Safety Commission. This will be a high level body with MPs, Peers and independent experts. The commission model has worked very successfully in other areas of public policy and I am confident that it will be equally successful for transport safety."

(Source: PACTS)

<http://www.pacts.org.uk/docs/pdf-bank/2013-03-11%20Transport%20Safety%20Commission%20announced1.pdf>

2013 Spending Review date announced – 26 June

Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne has announced that the next Comprehensive Spending Review will be published on Wednesday 26 June. The announcement comes a week after the date for the 2013 Queen's Speech was confirmed, which will take place on Wednesday 8 May. (Source: HM Treasury)

<http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk>



Week ahead

Commons Chamber

Wednesday 20 March

12:30pm: Budget 2013 Statement

Thursday 21 March

9.30am: Business, innovation and skills questions (topical questions at 10.15am)

Commons Committees

No relevant business

Westminster Hall debates

Tuesday 19 March

9.30am - 11.00am: Role and effectiveness of UKTI working with the FCO to develop trade and investment (Nick de Bois, Con, Enfield North)

Wednesday 20 March

11.00am - 11:30am: Design and technology curriculum to key stage three (Peter Luff, Con, Mid Worcestershire)

House of Lords

No relevant business