

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 15 July

All-Party Parliamentary Motor Group publishes auto report

A cross-party group of MPs and Peers this week published a report calling on government to support UK automotive to ensure industry achieves its potential as a significant driver of growth. The report, "Driving growth: Future challenges and opportunities for UK automotive", is based on the discussions of the All-Party Parliamentary Motor Group (APMG) with parliamentarians, ministers, officials, industry representatives and trade unions over the last year. The report looks at the challenges and opportunities facing the UK automotive industry including investment, low-carbon technology, skills and growth. Paul Everitt, Chief Executive of SMMT, who provide secretariat to the group, stated: "SMMT welcomes the group's report and the focus it brings to the contribution made by the automotive industry to growth in the UK economy. Parliamentarians from both houses recognise the importance of the sector and the challenges it faces and are committed to working with industry to help realise the global opportunities that increased investment in R&D, skills and capital equipment offers". (Source: SMMT) <http://motorappg.com/apmg-report-2011/>

New system launched to help retain highly skilled employees

Minister for Business, Mark Prisk MP, this week launched the Talent Retention Solution (TRS), a new national web based system that will help match skilled employees facing redundancy to UK companies in growing sectors of advanced manufacturing and engineering who are recruiting. The system comes as a result of work undertaken by the Skills and Jobs Retention Group (SJRG) and Semta (the Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies) to support defence engineers who may be struggling to find work in today's difficult economic climate, as figures released this week show the

unemployment rate has fallen to 7.7%. Following a short implementation phase, TRS will become fully operational by January 2012, when it is expected that over 1500 employers across the UK will have signed up to the system, ranging from large organisations in each sector to the smallest SMEs. The system will provide live data broken down by skills and geography. Manufacturing and engineering companies which have already signed up to the system and who are recruiting over the coming year include Rolls Royce (1000), Siemens (500), Nissan (200) and Airbus (600). Supply chain companies will also be able to use the system for redeployment and recruitment. Minister for Business, Mark Prisk MP, stated: "This easily accessible web based system will play a vital role in ensuring that these skills are not lost by redeploying highly skilled workers into growing sectors of advanced manufacturing such as automotive, energy, infrastructure and aerospace". (Source: BIS)

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2011/Jul/talent-retention-solution>



European Ministers meet in London to discuss driving economic growth

European Ministers who have expressed support for the EU growth agenda and its focus on the single market, trade, innovation and reducing regulatory burdens, met in London this week to discuss driving economic growth in the EU. The aim of the meeting at

Lancaster House was to build on recent European Council agreements regarding the creation of a fully-functioning digital single market, reducing the regulatory burden and maximising the potential of EU services. The creation of a digital single market was high on the agenda, with currently only 12 per cent of EU online trade being conducted cross-border.

(Source: BIS)

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2011/Jul/european-ministers-meet-to-talk-growth>

Unions call for Strategic Investment Bank for manufacturers

Manufacturing and engineering unions have this week called on the government to create a Strategic Investment Bank to provide funding to companies for advanced and innovative manufacturing. Tony Burke, Unite assistant general secretary raised his concerns over the level of government support currently available for the sector, and the problems caused by the slow implementation of policies such as the Green Investment Bank, stating: "We in the union movement, will make it a priority to campaign industrially and politically to secure a manufacturing sector which will deliver the economic and social sustenance to restore the UK's position as a manufacturing powerhouse".

(Source: Unite)

http://www.unitetheunion.org/news_events/latest_news/unions_call_for_strategic_inve.aspx

Business, Innovation and Skills Committee publishes report on trade and investment

The Commons Business Innovation and Skills Committee this week published its report on trade and investment, which highlights concerns over the Government's ability to deliver on its strategy to support UK exports: a key part of the Government's strategy to support the UK's recovery from recession. The committee's report welcomed the direction of the new government strategy, which it says has gone some way to address business concerns. However, concerns remain with the pace of the Department's policy formation, in particular the delay in publishing the UK Trade and Investment's (UKTI) strategy for

business support and the time taken to appoint both a Trade Minister and Chief Executive of UKTI. The reduction in funding available to the Department and its delivery organisations was also highlighted as a key concern regarding the government's ability to deliver on the strategy. (Source: Parliament.uk)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/business-innovation-and-skills/news/rebalancing-the-economy-chairmans-comments/>



Week ahead

Commons Chamber

Tuesday 19 July

House rises for summer recess, returning on Monday 5 September

Commons Committees

No relevant activity

Westminster Hall

No relevant activity

Lords Chamber

Wednesday 20 July

House rises for summer recess, returning on Monday 5 September