

## WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 14 October

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### Young people get insight into UK automotive manufacturing

The second stage of See Inside Manufacturing, a BIS and Automotive Council led initiative aimed at improving the profile and image of manufacturing, will be held from October 10 – 21. Over 20 manufacturers across the UK are opening their doors to students and welcoming groups to take part in master-classes, go on factory tours, listen to presentations from guest speakers, and engage in various “hands-on” activities, all targeted at showcasing the breadth of career opportunities available in the UK automotive industry. The initiative, which was launched in March by Business Secretary, Vince Cable, aims to challenge perceptions that the UK has an outdated manufacturing sector and encourage more young people to take up Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects, in order to boost the UK’s skills base. (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2011/10/uk-automotive-vanguard-of-government%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%98see-inside-manufacturing%E2%80%99-initiative/>

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### Government announce £170 million boost to manufacturing

Government has announced £170 million of funding to UK manufacturing, in an attempt to boost future growth. £140 million will be invested in a High Value Manufacturing technology and innovation centre, formed of seven research and technology facilities from across the country. The Technology Strategy Board (TSB) and the Office for Low Emission Vehicles will also be running a £15 million competition for investment into the research and development of low carbon vehicles, as well as a TSB competition “Technology Inspired Innovation”, to fund products inspired by new discoveries and breakthroughs, such as advanced materials, biosciences and nanoscale technologies. (Source: BIS)

<http://www.innovateuk.org/content/news/first-national-technology-innovation-centre-in-hiq.ashx>

### Environmental Audit Committee publishes carbon budget report

The Environmental Audit Committee has published its Carbon Budget report that welcomes government's decision to set the fourth carbon budget – required under the Climate Change Act - at the level recommended by the independent Committee on Climate Change. However the report questions government's decision to announce a review of this budget in 2014 in response to fears that it could be bad for business, as the prospect of a review could weaken investor confidence in low-carbon industries through creating uncertainty about the future trajectory of emissions reductions. Joan Walley MP, Chair of the Environmental Audit Committee, stated: "While the Prime Minister is to be commended for not faltering when setting the fourth long-term carbon budget, he risks throwing the UK's climate targets off-course by instigating a review in just three years time that could overturn the commitment. Green investment should be seen as a 'win-win' solution to our economic problems; helping to stimulate growth and rebalance the economy, at the same time as reducing pollution". (Source: Parliament)

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



## Government announces trial for longer trucks

Some hauliers will be allowed to use longer trailers under plans to boost growth published by Roads Minister, Mike Penning MP. Following consultation on proposals to allow a two metre increase in the length of articulated trucks, the Department for Transport is allowing a 10-year trial of up to 900 trailers at an increased length of 2.05 metres, and 900 at an increase of one metre. The longer trucks will operate within the existing weight limit of 44 tonnes. The trial is expected to provide a £33m boost to the haulage industry as the longer vehicles provide up to 13% more loading space, allowing fewer journeys to transport the same amount of goods. Commenting on the announcement, Mike Penning stated: "The road haulage industry is vital to the growth of our economy. By allowing companies to use one truck where they may have previously needed to send two, we can help the sector improve efficiency and save money – which should in turn benefit consumers". The consultation responses indicated that haulage operators would like the option to choose between different trailer lengths depending on the type of operation they are carrying out. The changes would make the total permitted length for articulated trucks 18.55 metres; the current maximum length for trucks with a drawbar trailer is 18.75 metres. Government has ruled out any further increase in length. (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2011/10/government-announces-trial-for-longer-trucks/>



## BIS announce Manufacturing Advisory Service restructure

Business Minister, Mark Prisk MP has announced a new nationally operated Manufacturing Advisory Service, to be delivered by the Manufacturing Advisory Consortium (MAC), which will focus on helping small and medium sized manufacturers to

grow. The new service hopes to help create an estimated £1.5bn in economic growth, 23,000 jobs and safeguard 50,000 jobs. The Manufacturing Advisory Service will continue to deliver a national service to all manufacturing businesses in England but the new consortium now means that there will be a specific focus on driving business growth through strategic and technical support for SMEs developing advanced manufacturing capabilities and creating high value jobs, enabling business improvement with manufacturers operating in global supply chains, and linking SMEs with the apprenticeship programme aiming to deliver a minimum of 1,250 engineering and manufacturing apprenticeships annually. (Source: BIS)

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/news>

## UK unemployment rate increases to 8.1%

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) has released figures that show that UK unemployment rose by 114,000 between June and August to 2.56 million, whilst the unemployment rate increased to 8.1%. The jobless total for 16 to 24-year-olds hit a record high of 991,000 in the quarter, a jobless rate of 21.3%. (Source: DWP)

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/newsroom/press-releases/2011/oct-2011/dwp117-11.shtml>

## Week ahead

### Commons Chamber

Thursday 20 October

Energy & climate change questions – 10:30am

### Westminster Hall

No relevant activity

### Commons Committees

Wednesday 19 October

Transport Committee (3:30pm, Committee Room 8 - Work of the Department for Transport

### Lords Chamber

No relevant activity

### Lords Committees

No relevant activity