

### Successful bids for third round of the Regional Growth Fund announced

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has announced the successful bids for the £1 billion third round of the Regional Growth Fund. 130 bidders have been selected from an initial 414 applications, and will now be agreeing terms of a conditional offer and completing due diligence checks within the six month timeframe for contracting. The combined total of private sector investment is expected to be £6 billion, with the selected projects and programmes expected to create and safeguard over 240,000 jobs over the long-term. This is in addition to the 300,000 jobs that are being created or safeguarded from rounds 1 and 2 of the fund - the majority of which are being added over the next 5 years. £697 million of the £1.05 billion pot (which includes £55 million recycled from rounds one and two) will go to the private sector including 101 companies. A further £358 million will go to 29 intermediaries such as local authorities and local enterprise partnerships with the aim of ensuring that funding goes to local growth priorities in parts of the country that need it most. A large number of automotive companies had bids accepted, including: Perkins Engines Company, Ford, Caterpillar (Peterlee), Komatsu UK Ltd, Nifco, TRW Systems Ltd, Erison Precision Components, Ricardo, Cab Automotive, BorgWarner, Joyo Bearings, Bentley, General Motors, Jaguar Land Rover, Ricardo and Aston Martin. Commenting on the announcement, Secretary of State for Business, Vince Cable MP, stated: "The Regional Growth Fund is creating the long-term growth and jobs that this country needs. The projects support important local priorities and there is a good alignment with key sectors in our Industrial Strategy including automotive, aerospace and life sciences". (Source: BIS)

<http://news.bis.gov.uk/Press-Releases/Deputy-Prime-Minister-New-1-Billion-boost-for-Regional-Growth-681d6.aspx>

### UK vehicle manufacturing falls in September but remains up in 2012

Figures published by SMMT show that in September, UK car output fell 5.8% to 128,192 units, but remains up 10.2% over the year-to-date, reaching 1,083,276 units. Commercial vehicle output also fell in September, down 20.2% to 9,607 units, and down 7.5% on the year-to-date at 82,315 units. Total vehicles are therefore still up on 2011 at 1,165,591 units, or 8.7%. UK engine production also declined in September, down 12.8% to 213,052 units, and down on the year-to-date by just 0.4% at 1,882,303 units. Commenting on the announcement, SMMT Chief Executive, Paul Everitt, stated: "Declining demand for cars and vans across the major European markets impacted UK vehicle and engine production in September. The strong demand for UK products outside Europe and the investment committed by major vehicle manufacturers will secure future growth, although the coming months will be challenging for companies at all levels in the supply chain. European governments must focus on securing financial stability and economic growth or they risk long-term damage to key industries". (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2012/10/smmt-uk-automotive-manufacturing-september-2012/>

### BIS announce measures to change narrative reporting

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has announced measures that aim to improve the quality of narrative reporting by Britain's largest companies. The draft regulations aim to help increase corporate transparency and make it easier for shareholders to hold companies to account. Following recommendations from Lord Davies' review of Women on Boards, quoted companies will also in future be required to report on the number of women and men within the organisation, both overall and in senior executive positions. This aims to allow investors to identify gender imbalances and help companies address talent blockages. In addition, a concise, stand-alone report focussed on strategy and the

organisation's business model is intended to replace the existing business review. This aims to ensure that shareholders can find out about a company's strategy, the risks it faces, how it is performing and the direction in which it is heading more easily. In addition, BIS has received news that plans by the UK Government to set up the world's first Green Investment Bank (UK GIB) have been approved by the European Commission. The Bank is now set to begin operations in the next few weeks. State aid approval gives UK GIB the remit to make investments on commercial terms across a wide range of green economy sectors. (Source: BIS)

<http://news.bis.gov.uk/Press-Releases/Simpler-company-reporting-to-focus-on-transparency-and-gender-balance-681d5.aspx>

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## DVLA announce plans to remove insurance check when taxing a vehicle

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority has announced a consultation on cutting red tape by removing the requirement of an insurance check when taxing a vehicle. The proposal has been made possible by new checks of existing databases for insurance under Continuous Insurance Enforcement rules. The DVLA's records are compared regularly with the Motor Insurance Database (MID) to identify registered keepers of vehicles that appear to have no insurance. The DVLA state that the red tape cutting plans mean that around an extra 600,000 motorists a year will be able to tax their car online and that millions of motorists will no longer have to search for their insurance certificate if they tax their car at the Post Office. Commenting on the announcement, Road Minister Stephen Hammond stated: "These proposals will make the whole process quicker, easier and cheaper". (Source: DVLA)

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/dvla/consultations.aspx>

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## BIS launch 'Employee owner' consultation

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has launched a consultation setting out plans for a new employment status called an 'employee owner'. Under the new employment status, employee owners will have a different set of employment rights and they will be given shares in the company of between £2,000 and £50,000. Any increase in value of these shares will not be subject to capital gains tax. The consultation follows the Chancellor's announcement

at the Conservative Party Conference on providing companies with a new option to increase the flexibility of how they hire people and help their companies grow. Employees taken on in the new 'status' will have all of the rights associated with other employees except for:

- Unfair dismissal rights (apart from automatically unfair reasons and where dismissal is based on discriminatory grounds).
- Rights to redundancy pay.
- Certain statutory rights to request training.
- The statutory right to request flexible working.
- Employee owners will have to give more notice to if they want to return from maternity or adoption leave early.

It will be voluntary for the employer to offer the new status – and for an individual to choose to accept it. An employer will be able to choose the new status and still choose to offer more rights to their staff (e.g. the right to request flexible working or higher levels of contractual redundancy pay). Companies of any size will be able to use this new kind of contract, but it is intended for fast growing small and medium sized companies that would benefit most from a flexible workforce. (Source: BIS)

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2012/Oct/employee-owner-plans-to-boost-growth>

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## Week ahead

### Commons Chamber

Tuesday October 23

Ten minute rule motion: Careers Advice in Schools for 12-16 Year Olds Bill (Gordon Birtwhistle, LD, Burnley)

Tuesday October 23

HGV Road User Levy Bill: Motion to approve ways and means

### Commons Committees

Wednesday 24 October:

Science & Technology Committee (10:15am, room 5)  
Engineering Skills

### Westminster Hall

No relevant activity

### Lords Committee

No relevant activity