

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 21 October

UK vehicle manufacturing up 7.4% in September

Figures published by SMMT show vehicle manufacturing in the UK rose by 7.4% in September 2011, to 148,097 units, compared to September last year. Vehicle manufacturing figures for the first nine months also showed positive growth up 4.2% to 1,072,273 units. Commercial vehicle output rose 6.2% in September, but is still down 2.7% over the year-to-date, whilst car manufacturing was up 7.5% in September, and 4.8% in 2011. UK engine production also remained strong, up 6.6% in September to 244,270 units, and up 5% on the year-to-date to 1,889,376 units. (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2011/10/smmt-uk-automotive-manufacturing-september-2011/>



184% increase of UK in-car digital radio

The UK new car market has seen a 184% increase in the standard fitment of digital radio in the first nine months of 2011, compared to the same period in 2010. The figures were announced at the "Drive to Digital" conference, attended by over 200 delegates from across the automotive and broadcast industries with Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture and Communications, as the keynote speaker. In conjunction with the conference, the BBC announced that it would build coverage of its national services to 97%, including a focus on improving coverage on

motorways and major roads. The UK car industry is committed to fitting all new cars with digital radios by 2013. In the last 12 months at least 14 car brands have announced plans to fit digital radio as standard, however industry are also determined to ensure that plans are in place to support the 25 million cars on the road that will need safe, reliable upgrades undertaken by accredited technicians. (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2011/10/industry-drives-184-increase-of-in-car-digital-radio/>

Justine Greening appears in front of Transport Select Committee

Rt Hon Justine Greening MP has appeared in front of the Transport Select Committee for the first time, in her new role as Secretary of State for Transport. Ms Greening moved into the role vacated by Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP, who is now Secretary of State for Defence, following the resignation of Rt Hon Liam Fox MP. Ms Greening was asked for her initial views on a wide range of subjects, including the proposed High Speed 2 project, possible expansion of the UK's airport capacity and sustainability. With regards recent proposals for raising the 70mph speed limit, Ms Greening stated that it was "quite right" to look into the option, given advances in road management and safety. (Source: DODS)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/transport-committee/news/work-of-the-department---ev-session/>

UK manufacturing output down 0.3% in August

Figures published by the Office of National Statistics show that UK manufacturing output fell by 0.3% in August compared with July. However manufacturing output for August 2011 rose by 1.5% compared to August 2010. The Markit/CIPS UK Manufacturing PMI rose to 51.1 in September 2011, the first posting above the neutral 50.0 mark since July. This rise was

attributed in large part to the fast depletion of backlogs of work. (Source: Parliament)

<http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN05206>

BIS report declares UK research base most productive in the world

The 'International Comparative Performance of the UK Research Base 2011' report compiled by Elsevier and published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, shows that UK research attracts more citations per pound spent in overall research and development than any other country. The report also declares that the UK research base is highly mobile, internationally competitive and diverse. (Source: BIS)

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2011/Oct/UK-research-base-most-productive-in-the-world>

Department for Transport publish annual bus statistics

The Department for Transport have published their annual bus statistics report for 2010/2011. There were 4.6 billion bus passenger journeys in England in 2010/11, a 0.1% increase from the 2009/10 level. Bus journeys in London increased by 4.1%, and now account for nearly half (49%) of all bus journeys in England. Net public funding support for local bus services in England decreased in real terms between 2009/10 and 2010/11, down 6.1%. In 2010/11 there were 84,500 Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) in use by PSV operators in Great Britain, of which 46,300 (55%) were buses and the remainder minibuses and coaches. This represents a decrease of around 1,300 PSVs and 600 buses compared with the equivalent figures for 2009/10. (Source: DfT)

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/annual-bus-statistics-201011>



Week ahead

Commons Chamber

Thursday 27 October

Business, innovation and skills questions – 11:15am

Westminster Hall

No relevant activity

Commons Committees

Monday 24 October

Science & Technology Committee

4:15pm, Thatcher room

Pre-appointment hearing with the chair-elect of the Technology Strategy Board.

Lords Chamber

No relevant activity

Lords Committees

No relevant activity