

UK car manufacturing tops one million units for 2013

Figures published by SMMT show that UK car manufacturing grew 9.9% in September with 140,888 cars built in the month, boosted by strong domestic demand. This has driven 2013 UK car production to 1,125,433 units, up 3.9% on 2012. In addition, the rolling 12-month output has reached 1.5 million, the first time this has happened since October 2008. UK engine production is also up, growing 8.3% in September to 230,743 engines with the year-to-date figures up 1.2%, with nearly two million units built in 2013. Commercial vehicle production has fared less well however, with output continuing the downward trend for the year, dropping 27.5% in September to 6,963 units. Overall, 67,609 commercial vehicles have been produced in the year-to-date, down 17.9% from 2012 with weak Eurozone demand and earlier domestic restructuring contributing to the decline.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/10/car-manufacturing-tops-one-million-units-2013/>

Transport Minister speaks at CV Forum event

Robert Goodwill MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport addressed leaders of the commercial vehicle industry at the Commercial Vehicle Forum 2013, organised by SMMT, the Road Haulage Association and the Institute of Road Transport Engineers. In Mr Goodwill's first public address as Transport Minister he emphasised to delegates how the UK freight and logistics industry, worth £75 billion and employing more than two million across 190,000 companies, was vital to economic growth. Mr Goodwill also reaffirmed government's investment of more than £24 billion to deliver 52 new national road projects, and outlined plans to triple annual investment in road enhancements to more than £3 billion by 2021. The Transport Minister also noted the issue of the length of time taken to book appointments for inspections, and said that VOSA will be working closely with trade bodies, especially SMMT, to identify and address concerns with delays.

The CV Forum debates featured a variety of speakers from all corners of the industry, who addressed key issues that affected efficiency and offered solutions to help operators improve their effectiveness. Areas discussed included increasing the use of telematics in order to save money, out-of-hours deliveries, autonomous vehicles and the roadworthiness and maintenance of vans.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/10/new-transport-minister-kicks-lively-debate-cv-forum/>



Details of UK Rapid Charge Network announced

Further details have been announced for the European Commission-backed consortium led by Nissan and including Renault, BMW, Volkswagen and Electricity Supply Board that aims to establish a rapid charging network for electric vehicles (EVs) to run the length and breadth of the UK. The Rapid Charge Network (RCN) project will see 74 multi-standard rapid chargers installed across 700 miles of the country's major road network. This aims to ensure that every EV owner in the UK will be able to undertake long-distance journeys with the ability to recharge their car in under 30 minutes. When complete, RCN will provide EV-friendly links to five seaports and five international airports, as well as a number of major cities, including Stranraer, Liverpool, Holyhead, Birmingham, Felixstowe, Leeds and Kingston upon Hull. Co-financed by the European Union through the Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T) programme, the project also draws on the experience of Zero Carbon Futures and Newcastle University.

The RCN project is one of 30 priority transport projects across Europe identified by TEN-T. The projects were chosen according to the added value they offer to the European community and their contribution to the sustainable development of transport systems. They include rail, mixed rail-road, road and inland waterway projects, as well as a 'motorways of the sea' scheme.

(Source: Rapid Charging Network)

<http://www.rapidchargenetwork.com/>

Government announces measures to cut the cost of driving

Government has announced a raft of measures intended to help motorists cut the cost of running a car, these include:

- the statutory maximum price of the MOT test for a car will be frozen at £54.85 until 2015.
- fees charged for the driving test will be reviewed, including the current £31 for the theory test, £62 for the practical test and £50 fee for the provisional licence.
- whiplash claims will be targeted by new independent medical panels which will aim to ensure only evidence from accredited professionals can be considered.
- action will be taken on high motorway fuel prices. New comparison road signs will be trialled which will show prices at different service stations along a route, making it easier for drivers to get the cheapest deal and encouraging competition on prices.

Commenting on the announcement, Transport Minister Robert Goodwill stated: "The costs of owning and running a car are felt by millions of households and businesses across the nation. The government is determined to help keep those costs down. That is why we are freezing the price for an MOT test and looking again at the costs associated with getting a driving licence."

(Source: DfT)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-measures-to-help-hard-working-families-with-the-cost-of-driving>

Baroness Kramer speaks at launch of EV car club

Newly appointed Minister of State for Transport Baroness Kramer made a keynote speech at the launch of E-Car, the first electric vehicle car club in

the UK. She said: "We have an unwavering, long term commitment to decarbonising road transport. Not just to tackle climate change. But also to make the UK a global leader in green vehicle technologies and engineering. In the 2013 Spending Round, the Chancellor announced that £500 million would be made available to develop the ULEV market between 2015 and 2020. This is a world leading commitment that gives certainty to the market. But we need the industry to help us deploy it in the most beneficial way. So we will shortly be launching a call for evidence to draw in a wide range of ideas to help us design the next phase of our ULEV programme."

(Source: DfT)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/e-car-club-event>

Further calls for evidence on the review of the balance of competences announced

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has launched three calls for evidence asking business groups, stakeholders and others to submit their views to the Single Market: Free Movement of Services Review, Competition and Consumer Policy Review and the Cohesion Review, about how policy in these areas impacts the UK. The Department of Energy and Climate Change also announced a call for evidence on energy. These calls for evidence are part of a two year government review of the balance of competences between the UK and EU which was announced by the Foreign Secretary in July 2012. The call for evidence period will run from 21 October 2013 to 13 January 2014.

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/third-set-of-calls-for-evidence-on-the-governments-review-of-the-balance-of-competences-between-the-united-kingdom-and-the-european-union>

Week ahead

Commons Chamber

Friday 1 November

9:30 am: Second reading of private members' bills: Apprenticeships and Skills (Public Procurement Contracts) Bill

Commons Committees

Monday 28 October

Transport Committee (4:05pm, room tbc) – Winter resilience in transport

Wednesday 30 October
Science & Technology Committee (9:15am, room tbc)
Women in STEM careers

Westminster Hall

Wednesday 30 October
2:30-4:00pm: Electronic (sic) vehicles and vulnerable
road users (Mary Glendon, Lab, North Tyneside)

House of Lords

Thursday 31 October
External Affairs (EU Sub-Committee C) (10:00am,
room 1): Transatlantic trade and investment
partnership