

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 11 November

Manufacturing sector calls for tax reform to boost R&D investment in the UK

Reforms to R&D tax credits could drive an increase in R&D investment in the UK and boost job creation according to a report published by PwC. On the back of the report, EEF and SMMT are calling on government to create a truly internationally competitive R&D tax credit regime, by strengthening the link between the credit and R&D investment decisions, removing the link with corporation tax in favour of an 'above the line' credit. The report, commissioned by SMMT and EEF and prepared by PwC, involved discussions with over 30 key UK R&D investors across a range of business sectors and is being presented tomorrow at a briefing with MPs and government officials. Diarmuid MacDougall, R&D and Patent Box Partner at PwC said: "An incentive which reduces the cost of R&D, directly affecting the budgets of individuals involved in R&D investment decisions, will be much more effective". (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2011/11/manufacturing-sector-calls-for-tax-reform-to-boost-rd-investment-and-jobs-in-the-uk/>

Prime Minister announces measures to promote growth and exports

Prime Minister David Cameron has announced a number of measures to support SME business growth at the 'Exporting for Growth' conference organised by UK Trade & Investment. Included within the announcement was a £95 million scheme funded through the Regional Growth Fund that aims to help SMEs access finance that companies are unable to secure through traditional commercial routes. RBS, Natwest and HSBC will be charged with distributing the finance for SMEs seeking to purchase assets and create employment. Other measures include streamlined business registration processes with Companies House and a series of initiatives called the

National Export Challenge that aims to provide sector knowledge and support for SMEs getting into new markets. Meanwhile, Jaguar Land Rover has announced it will expand its workforce, with plans unveiled to recruit more than 1,000 staff at its advanced manufacturing plant in Solihull. The posts are being created following significant investment announcements and are in support of JLR's aim to deliver a range of new models and model upgrades in the coming years. (Source: BIS)

http://nds.coi.gov.uk/content/Detail.aspx?ReleaseID=421992&NewsAreaID=2&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+bis-news+%28BIS+News%29



Government announces National Chargepoint Registry

Transport Minister Norman Baker MP and Business Minister Mark Prisk MP have announced the creation of a National Chargepoint Registry, mapping the location of electric and plug-in vehicle infrastructure. The Registry is to be developed by POD Point, a UK-based chargepoint manufacturer, which has been awarded a £89,000 government contract. The Register will be publically accessible on the data.gov.uk website, have functionality to create 'real-time' updates for mobile devices and go live early in 2012. A Central Whitelist will also be created to make it easier for drivers to access different infrastructure schemes across the country. Mark Prisk MP said: "The National Chargepoint Registry delivers our commitment to make it easier for motorists considering ultra low carbon cars to access charge

points and so encourage their take-up. This is a real opportunity for companies to use the data in innovative ways while meeting consumer demand for information which will help them get to their destinations. The Registry will allow businesses to innovate and provide products, such as satnav and mobile apps, for plug-in vehicle owners to access. Motorists will then know where and how they can charge along their journey, so addressing concerns about the range of vehicles and the new 'Central Whitelist' will increase people's charging options - enabling members of a particular charging scheme (e.g. the Source East) to easily access chargepoints in other areas of the country (e.g. the Midlands).” (Source: Department for Transport)

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/news/press-releases/dft-press-20111111>

London Assembly calls for urgent action on air quality

The London Assembly has issued a call for urgent action in tackling air pollution in London. A motion passed by Assembly Members said that the amount of nitrogen dioxide in the capital's air is higher than any other European capital city and recently published government plans show levels may not be reduced to legal limits until 2025. The Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to take further action in improving air quality. The motion stated: “In the absence of sufficient urgent action at national level, the Assembly calls on the Mayor to update his air quality strategy to include faster and stronger action in London to ensure that the capital's air meets legal standards for nitrogen dioxide by 2015, at the latest.” The motion was agreed by 12 votes to 7. (Source: London Assembly)

http://www.london.gov.uk/media/press_releases_london_assembly/urgent-action-needed-mayor-improve-london's-air-quality-says-assembly

Business Secretary appears before Select Committee

Business Secretary Vince Cable has appeared before the House of Commons Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee MP. The Committee hearing was focused on the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) Annual Report and Accounts for 2010-11 and the work of the Department. During the session, Dr Cable said that the financial situation in Europe had impeded lending to small

businesses. Questions were also raised by Committee members regarding departmental spending cuts and the impact on staff. BIS Permanent Secretary Martin Donnelly, who also gave evidence, said that efficiencies had been achieved through streamlining services duplicated across government. Committee member Brian Binley MP asked about government's 'one-in-one-out' policy on new regulations, where he saw a slowing of cuts to regulations and a large number being exempt. The Business Secretary said that the slower pace was due to proposed regulatory changes having to undergo intense scrutiny. Dr Cable said that the best way of supporting small businesses was for banks to increase their lending ratios. (Source: Parliament/Dods)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/business-innovation-and-skills/news/oral-ev-bis-sos/>



Week ahead

Commons Chamber

Tuesday 15 November

Backbench Business Committee business - [motion relating to fuel prices](#) (Robert Halfon, Con, Harlow)

Westminster Hall

No relevant activity

Commons Committees

No relevant activity

Lords Chamber

No relevant activity

Lords Committees

No relevant activity