

## WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 11 January

### 2012 new car market tops two million units

Figures published by SMMT show that UK new car registrations rose 5.3% in 2012 to 2,044,609 units, the highest annual volume since 2008 and the largest recorded percentage increase since 2001. The strong growth in 2012 followed a 12.9% rise in private demand. In addition, the average new car CO2 emissions in 2012, fell to a new low of 133.1g/km, 22.7% down on a decade ago. The UK bus and coach market also enjoyed a positive 2012, up 34.2% to 8,102 units. Significant growth was posted across the sector, with registrations of purpose-built buses and coaches climbing 12.4% to 3,811 units. In addition, converted bus registrations rose 62.2% to 4,291 units. The fourth round of the Green Bus Fund will also come into effect in May 2013, which is expected to provide stimulus to retain market strength. The UK commercial vehicle market fared less well in 2012, falling 5.9% to 285,343 units.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/01/2012-new-car-market-tops-two-million-units-hitting-four-year-high/>

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/01/2012-is-a-bumper-year-for-uk-bus-and-coach-market/>

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/01/tough-year-for-commercial-vehicles-sees-market-fall-5-9/>

### Coalition publishes Mid-Term Review

The Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government has published its Mid-Term Review, providing an update on the progress that has been made in implementing its 'Programme for Government'. The Review does not contain any new relevant measures for the automotive sector, but does reaffirm government's intention to publish sector specific industrial strategies during 2013. In the press conference for the review, Prime Minister David Cameron also stated that government will set out further reforms before the budget, including consulting on how to get private investment into motorways and trunk roads. Commenting on the launch of the report, Mr Cameron and Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, stated: "We are dealing with the deficit, rebuilding the

economy, reforming welfare and education and supporting hard working families through tough times. And on all of these key aims, our parties, after 32 months of coalition, remain steadfast and united. Of course there have been some issues on which we have not seen eye to eye, and no doubt there will be more. That is the nature of coalition. But on the things that matter most – the big structural reforms needed to secure our country's long term future – our resolve and sense of shared purpose have, if anything, grown over time." (Source: Number 10)

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/coalition-mid-term-review/>



### Department for Education sets out plans for new Traineeships programme

The Department for Education has set out plans for a new programme to equip young people with the skills they need to compete for Apprenticeships and other jobs. The 'Traineeships' programme aims to provide young people aged 16 to 24 with a tailor-made package of support that will give them the confidence, skills and experience to compete in the labour market with more experienced adults. Government hopes that a Traineeship could be seen as a crucial stepping stone to an Apprenticeship – a job with training to industry standards – or other jobs, for those young people who currently lack the necessary skills. Government has published a discussion paper outlining their proposals and vision for Traineeships which would include:

- Focused work preparation training – e.g. CV writing, interview preparation, job searching, inter-personal skills.
- High-quality work experience – giving young people real-life work placement to enhance their skills and confidence.
- English and maths – for young people who have not achieved a GCSE grade C or equivalent or better.

Government is hoping that the scheme could be in place by September 2013, with an ambition for Traineeships to be open to a wide range of young people including those not in education, employment or training (NEET), those interested in a course with an education or training provider or those looking for a job. Government has stated that the length of a Traineeship would reflect the specific needs of participants, but they are expected to last around six months. Commenting on the announcement, Skills Minister Matthew Hancock MP, stated: “We want to support everyone in our country to reach their personal best. To do that, we are introducing Traineeships to help young people with the skills they need to get a job, and hold down a job.”

(Source: DfE)

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/qandlearning/apprenticeships/a00219911/bold-new-programme-to-get-young-people-ready-for-work>

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## Ministerial, Labour and Permanent Secretary changes announced

Government has announced that Lord Strathclyde has resigned from his cabinet role as Leader of the House of Lords, and will be replaced by Lord Hill of Oareford. Lord Marland has also stood down as Business Minister, and has been replaced by Viscount Younger of Leckie. Labour has also announced changes to their Shadow Front-Bench with John Woodcock MP, Shadow Transport Minister, standing down due to ill-health, being replaced by Yvonne Fovargue MP, and Chi Onwurah moving from the BIS team to join the Cabinet Office team. In addition, the Department of Energy and Climate Change has appointed Stephen Lovegrove as Permanent Secretary. Mr. Lovegrove's previous role was as chief executive of the Shareholder Executive, a body overseen by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

(Source: Number 10)

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/news-type/press-notices/>



## Week ahead

### Commons Chamber

No relevant activity

### Commons Committees

No relevant activity

### Lords Committees

Monday 14 January

Small and Medium Sized Enterprises Committee  
(3:00pm, room 2a)

### Westminster Hall

Tuesday 15 January

'Promoting manufacturing in the West Midlands'  
(Gavin Williamson, Con, South Staffordshire) –  
9:30am-11:00am