

## Successful bids from round 2 of AMSCI fund announced

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg has announced £213 million of joint government and industry investment to strengthen UK advanced manufacturing supply chains – creating over 11,000 new jobs and safeguarding another 5,000. Over £73 million has been awarded from Round 2 of the Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain Initiative (AMSCI) to 12 national supply chain projects and a further £140 million will be invested by the private sector. Designed to support projects that deliver economic growth and promote closer collaboration within the supply chain, AMSCI accepts applications from established advanced or high value manufacturing sectors, such as automotive, aerospace and chemical industries. It also welcomes applications from new growth areas where the UK is well placed to take a global lead, such as renewable energy and other low carbon sectors. The automotive sector was a major beneficiary from Round 2 of the fund and full details of successful projects can be found [here](#). Commenting on the announcement Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg stated: “Boosting jobs and growth is my number one priority to build a stronger economy. This investment will secure Britain’s future as a world leader in industries like cars, where we have traditionally taken the lead, and new technologies such as wind turbine gears and semiconductor chips”. The Chancellor announced additional funding of £120 million for two further AMSCI rounds in the 2012 Autumn Statement. The Competition Brief for these new rounds (AMSCI Rounds 3 and 4) is now available on the [Technology Strategy Board \(TSB\) website](#). The initiative is part funded by government’s Regional Growth Fund and is delivered in partnership with TSB, Birmingham City Council, and Finance Birmingham on behalf of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. (Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/advanced-manufacturing-supply-chain-fund-to-create-thousands-of-new-jobs>



## HGV Road User Levy Act becomes law

The HGV Road User Levy Act has become law, with the new charge due to be introduced in April 2014. The levy will be a time-based charge of up to £1,000 a year or £10 a day and will apply to lorries weighing more than 12 tonnes using UK roads. By law, the scheme cannot discriminate between UK-registered vehicles and vehicles from elsewhere in the EU so this charge will apply to all lorries but, for the vast majority of UK hauliers, this will not mean an increase in costs as they will be compensated through a reduction in vehicle excise duty. UK hauliers will pay an annual or a six monthly charge for each lorry at the same time and in the same transaction as they pay its Vehicle Excise Duty. Foreign hauliers can pay daily, weekly, monthly or annual charges. Non-payment of the charge will be a criminal offence, which could result in a fine of up to £5,000. Commenting on the announcement, Roads Minister Stephen Hammond stated: “Every year there are around 1.5 million trips to the UK by foreign registered lorries but none of them pays to use our roads, leaving UK businesses and taxpayers to foot the bill. In contrast, when UK hauliers travel abroad then in most cases they have to pay to use the roads. This new act will help the UK logistics industry remain competitive by making sure that operators from abroad are paying towards the cost of building and maintaining the UK’s roads as well as creating a level playing field for domestic operators.” (Source: DfT)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fairer-deal-for-uk-hauliers-in-hgv-road-user-levy-act>



## £21m for new Centres for Innovative Manufacturing

Government has announced funding for four new research centres that will develop new ways of manufacturing in the fields of electronics, laser use in production processes, medical devices and food production. The centres have been awarded a total of £21 million of Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) grant funding, part of a £45 million package of investments in manufacturing research announced by David Willetts, Minister for Universities and Science.

(Source: EPSRC)

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

## Government's Manufacturing Summit held at the Heritage Motor Centre

Government's third annual Manufacturing Summit has been held at the Heritage Motor Centre in Warwickshire. The Summit brought together more than 200 manufacturing business leaders to discuss with Ministers latest progress on the Industrial Strategy, upcoming challenges and next steps for the sector. An exhibition of local manufacturing ran alongside the event, including an interactive schools learning platform newly developed by Siemens, Aston Martin demonstrating the quality of their apprentices, and exhibits from Jaguar Land Rover, McLaren, and Queen's Award winners Delcam. Over 20 companies from the West Midlands took part from across the range of manufacturing sectors.

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/manufacturing-summit-2013>

## Liberal Democrats retain seat in Eastleigh by-election

The Liberal Democrats (Mike Thornton MP) have won the Eastleigh by-election, holding on to the seat with 13,342 votes and a reduced majority of 1,771. A late surge from UKIP led the party to second place with 11,571 votes and their best ever parliamentary election result. This pushed the Conservatives to third place with 10,559 votes, and the Labour party came fourth with 4,088.

## Government confirms way forward on renewable heat scheme improvements

Government has set out a long term plan to ensure the renewable heat scheme for commercial, industrial and community organisations stays within budget. The Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) is a world first and is designed to change the way homes and businesses across the nation are heated, cut carbon emissions and help the UK meet its renewables targets. The scheme was launched for the non-domestic sector in November 2011 and over 1300 applications have been received to date, with around £24million worth of RHI payments expected to be paid out in this financial year. Key updates to the RHI scheme include changes to budget management, upcoming tariff reviews, and the introduction of air quality and metering requirements. Further details can be found on the below link.

(Source: DECC)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-confirms-way-forward-on-renewable-heat-scheme-improvements>

## Week ahead

### Commons Chamber

No relevant activity

### Commons Committees

Tuesday 5 March

Energy and Climate Change Committee (3:00pm, Wilson room) – Green deal watching brief

### House of Lords

No relevant activity