

£10m funding for three low carbon vehicle R&D projects

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) is providing £10 million for three projects to address fundamental research questions in developing low carbon vehicles, Business Minister Mark Prisk has announced. These projects have been developed by EPSRC with the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) through the Low Carbon Vehicle Innovation Platform Integrated Delivery Programme. They will cover scientific and engineering issues related to hybrid electric vehicles subsystems, the use of recycled and recyclable materials for manufacturing vehicles and optimising the performance of electric motors and power electronics. Mark Prisk made the announcement at the opening of a new exhibition at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to showcase UK manufactured low carbon vehicles. Business Minister Mark Prisk said: "The Coalition Government is absolutely committed to low carbon growth, tackling climate change and making our energy supply more secure. This exhibition highlights UK success as advanced manufacturers of low carbon vehicles and the £10m research grant will help ensure that the UK remains a world leader." (Source: BIS)

nds.coi.gov.uk/content/detail.aspx?NewsAreaId=2&ReleaseId=418592&SubjectId=2



Source: BIS

New report demonstrates decade of CO₂ emissions progress - SMMT

SMMT has launched its 10th annual New Car CO₂ Report that shows ongoing reductions in average emissions of new cars. 2010 figures dropped by 3.5% on the previous year to 144.2g/km CO₂, down by over 20% since 2000. The report shows that in 2010, almost 40% of cars had emissions below 130g/km CO₂ – the European fleet emissions target for 2015. Additionally, nearly 40,000 vehicles were exempt from Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) with emissions under 100g/km (equivalent to about 70mpg). Reductions in average emissions were made across all model segments vs 2009 levels, contributing to the significant drop over the past decade. Luxury saloons and MPVs made the biggest reduction over the past year, falling 6.4% and 6.0% respectively on 2009 figures. Each of the four lowest emitting VED bands (ranging from 0 to 130g/km CO₂) increased in popularity representing almost 38.2% of the new car market, compared to less than 0.9% in 2000. This marks a positive move for industry as all manufacturers must reach a Europe-wide average for their vehicle fleets of 130g/km CO₂ by 2015. Paul Everitt, SMMT Chief Executive said: "New technology has delivered impressive reductions in CO₂ emissions but coordinated action, to support research and development, new infrastructure and consumer incentives, is critical to securing significant future advances. The economic and political challenges of high fuel prices, energy security and climate change are shared issues that must be addressed at an international level." (Source: SMMT)

www.smmt.co.uk/2011/03/co2report/

Government announces first Technology Innovation Centre

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and Business Secretary Vince Cable have announced the first Technology Innovation Centre (TIC) that will be established. The first TIC will focus on High Value Manufacturing. It will be formed from a group of

research and technology facilities from across the country. The new TIC will provide an integrated capability and embrace all forms of manufacture using metals and composites, in addition to process manufacturing technologies and bio-processing. It will draw on university research to accelerate the commercialisation of new and emerging manufacturing technologies. The seven centres are: Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (Rotherham); Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (Rotherham); Manufacturing Technology Centre (Coventry); Advanced Forming Research Centre (University of Strathclyde); National Composite Centre (University of Bristol); Centre for Process Innovation (Wilton & Sedgfield); and WMG (University of Warwick). Vince Cable said: "Manufacturing is vital to the country's economic stability and our potential to achieve growth. It generates £140 billion a year, accounting for 55 per cent of total UK exports – but it has considerably greater potential. That's why I am throwing my weight behind this package - to help Britain reach its potential. The investment in the new centre will further bridge the gap between universities and businesses, helping to commercialise the outputs of Britain's world-class research base." (Source: BIS)

www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2011/Mar/technology-and-innovation-centres

Government outlines new business support package

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has outlined a new business support package. The 'Solutions for Business' portfolio was established during the recession to highlight to businesses the various support measures available to them. Government has streamlined this package from 32 measures to 16. Business Minister Mark Prisk said: "The new Solutions for Business portfolio has been designed to give businesses the help they need to expand and grow. We are moving away from centralised advice and focusing on targeted programmes. This streamlining is firmly based on developing those services which work, and which private providers do not offer. Securing economic growth is our central task and this step is part of our broad programme to free enterprise and help small firms prosper." Government also announced an extra £7 million of funding for the Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS), to specifically focus on supply chain development, in addition to the £50m announced for the delivery of MAS over the next three years. The

reformed MAS will be available from 1 January 2012. (Source: BIS)

www.bis.gov.uk/policies/enterprise-and-business-support/solutions-for-business-simplified-business-support

UK automotive manufacturing statistics for February 2011 published

SMMT has published UK automotive manufacturing statistics for February 2011. Car output rose by 15.1% in February 2011 and was up 12.0% over the year-to-date. Commercial vehicle output fell by 3.0% in February, but remains up 2.6% over the first two months of 2011. UK engine production increased by 10.2% in February and by 11.1% over the year-to-date. Paul Everitt, SMMT Chief Executive said: "UK vehicle and engine production continue to lead a manufacturing recovery. A 27% increase in export demand highlights the strength and competitiveness of UK products. Next week's Budget will be crucial in creating the conditions for further investment in skills, R&D and capital equipment, all essential for growth and maintaining global competitiveness." (Source: SMMT)

www.smmt.co.uk/2011/03/uk-automotive-manufacturing-february-2011/

UK business confidence hits a new high - KPMG

A preview from a Global Business Outlook survey by KPMG identifies a rise in private sector growth expectations in Spring 2011, with manufacturing providers reporting stronger forecasts for business activity during the next twelve months. The data used for the report, compiled by Markit Economics on behalf of KPMG, reveals that expectations for output growth in the UK manufacturing sector is the highest since their records began in 2002. Manufacturers also plan to recruit additional workers (+19.8 percent) although the forecast rate of job creation has slipped slightly to the lowest since October 2009. A net balance of +67.8% of manufacturers predict a rise in their input costs, the highest in the survey history. Companies plan to pass on part of the increase in their costs to customers in the form of higher output charges. Manufacturers forecast the sharpest rate of factory gate price inflation since the start of the survey in January 2002. (Source: KPMG)

Week ahead

House of Commons

Tuesday 22 March

Transport Committee, 10.15am, room 8. Subject: Bus services after the spending review.

Business, Innovation and Skills Committee, 11.00am, room 15. Subject: The future of higher education.

Witness: Lord Browne of Madingley.

Wednesday 23 March

12:30 – Budget Statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer

House of Lords

No relevant activity