

### Government announces DSA and VOSA merger

Roads Minister Stephen Hammond MP has announced that the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) and the Vehicle Operator Services Agency (VOSA) are to merge into a single agency which will bring together their testing and standards services. The DSA and VOSA are already undertaking work to make testing more flexible and convenient for customers and this merger is aimed to allow them to explore opportunities to extend this in the future. These services will be delivered by the single agency in 2014. A transitional board, under the leadership of VOSA Chief Executive Alastair Peoples, who will head the agency, will start work next month to determine the structure of the organisation. This announcement follows the consultation on the motoring services strategy which ran from 13 December 2012 to 7 March 2013. The strategy proposed rationalising the roles and numbers of agencies to provide an improved and more efficient delivery of motoring services to customers. Decisions on the other proposals detailed in the motoring services strategy will be announced in due course. Commenting on the announcement, Stephen Hammond MP stated: "These changes will put customers at the heart of the services they rely on and allow for a more coherent approach to service delivery. By bringing testing and standards services into a single organisation we will make life easier for customers and potentially reduce the fees we charge."

(Source: DfT)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/improving-services-for-motorists>



### UK car manufacturing falls 8.4% in May

Figures published by SMMT show that UK car manufacturing fell 8.4% in May to 129,355 units, but is still outperforming pre-recession levels. Output has remained flat during the first five months of 2013, falling just 0.6% to 632,804 units. Commenting on the figures, Mike Baunton, SMMT Interim Chief Executive, stated: "Production levels are holding firm for the year so far, testament to the appeal of UK-built products around the world and significant growth in volumes built for the home market. While economic challenges abroad will impact on car output in the short-term, high-value investment by global automotive companies sets UK industry on course for prosperity in the long-term." Commercial vehicle output also suffered a poor May, down 20% to 7,560 units as output for the home market showed further growth, but could not offset export losses. Export volumes were down almost a third in the month and 31.5% for the first five months of 2013. Year-to-date figures were also down, -16.1% on 2012. Nigel Base, SMMT Commercial Vehicle Manager, stated: "2013 is going to be a hard year for the UK's CV manufacturers but there are pockets of positivity with some areas of the industry experiencing growth as operators take advantage of the wide range of CVs built in the UK." UK engine production also fell in May, down 8.2% to 223,025 units, with output during the year-to-date dropping 3.4% to 1,133,091 units.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/06/europe-dents-may-car-output-against-bumper-2012/>

### Lord Green steps down as Minister of State for Trade and Investment

Lord Green, Minister of State for Trade and Investment has announced his retirement from the government as of December 2013. The Prime Minister has confirmed that Ian Livingstone, currently Chief Executive of BT, will take on the role as a Minister of

State jointly at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Mr Livingston will also succeed Lord Green as the government's spokesman for trade and investment in the House of Lords. Commenting on the announcement the Prime Minister stated: "Stephen Green has made a huge contribution to promoting trade and investment. He has led the reform and rejuvenation of UK Trade & Investment, which now assists a significantly greater number of SMEs to export around the globe. I'm delighted that Ian Livingston has agreed to succeed Stephen. I know that he will make an invaluable contribution to this agenda as the government continues to open new trade links and grow our exports and I very much look forward to working with him."

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ministerial-changes-announced-minister-of-state-for-trade-and-investment>

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## New £20m green technologies fund for West Midlands businesses

A new £20m funding programme to help SME supply chain companies based in the West Midlands develop, grow and diversify their businesses within the green sector has launched. Funded through government's Regional Growth Fund and managed by Birmingham City Council, the Green Bridge Supply Chain Programme is aimed at companies that operate in the green sector or are seeking to diversify. The grant is looking for applications from companies across a range of sectors including automotive and transport, renewable energy, building technologies, manufacturing and logistics. Grant support of between £20,000 and £100,000 is available to develop new markets, new products, new processes, skills development and purchase of capital equipment and premises refurbishment. Applications for funding of over £100,000 may be considered where applicants can demonstrate significant economic benefits. The Green Bridge Supply Chain Programme is available to businesses in the local enterprise partnership areas of Greater Birmingham and Solihull, Black Country, Coventry and Warwickshire, the Marches, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent and Worcestershire. The first round of funding is now open and deadline for applications is 9 August 2013.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmmt.co.uk/2013/06/new-20m-green-technologies-fund-launches-for-west-midlands-businesses/>

## Information Economy Strategy published

Government has published its Information Economy Strategy, developed in partnership with industry. The Information Economy Strategy follows the recent launch of strategies for the Oil and Gas, Aerospace and Nuclear industries and is the next step in the government's overall industrial strategy. The strategy sets out a range of key actions, including: digitally transforming 25 of the top 50 public services over the next 300 days, including plans to give businesses a single, online view of their tax records; launching a new programme to help 1.6 million SMEs scale up their business online over the next five years; publishing a data capability strategy in October 2013, developed in partnership with government, industry and academia; getting ahead in the global race by establishing the world's first facility for testing state of the art 5G mobile technology, working with industry and the University of Surrey. The strategy will also bring together academia and business to develop a digital skills strategy in a sector which employs over 1.5 million people in the UK. This will include the promotion of innovative teaching tools in schools, encouraging more young people (especially girls) to pursue jobs in the information economy, and creating a programme of Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) for computing and data science.

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/information-economy-strategy-will-boost-growth-opportunities-for-digital-industries>

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## Week ahead

**The chancellor will deliver his statement on the spending review on Wednesday 26 June, 12:30pm.**

### Commons Chamber

Monday 24 June

Backbench business debate: Careers advice in schools for 12 to 16 year olds

### Commons Committees

Wednesday 26 June

Environmental Audit Committee (2:20pm, Thatcher room) – Green finance

### Westminster Hall

Wednesday 19 June

4:30pm – 5:00pm: UKTI support to enable British small and medium-sized enterprises to export to the Middle East and North Africa (Daniel Kawczynski, Con, Shrewsbury and Atcham)