

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 1 July



Industry chiefs lead UK debate at SMMT International Automotive Summit

Leading figures from across the automotive sector gathered in Westminster this week, to discuss and debate the key issues impacting the global automotive industry, at the SMMT International Automotive Summit. Speaking ahead of the Summit, Mark Prisk MP, Minister of State for Business and Enterprise, who delivered the event's closing speech said, "A strong manufacturing base is an essential part of ensuring growth of the UK's economy, with the automotive industry leading the way as our number one manufactured export. Last year, the UK exported over £27 billion-worth of vehicles and parts. Working in partnership with the industry, the government's ambition is to make the UK the leader in the research, development, demonstration, manufacture and use of low carbon vehicles. By taking this important work forward together, we can help ensure the UK remains at the forefront of automotive innovation and in doing so encourage more young people to choose manufacturing and engineering as their career." Stephen Odell, Ford Group Vice President and Chairman and CEO of Ford of Europe delivered the industry keynote address, discussing the breadth of Ford activities in the UK, the country's significance in the wider automotive industry, and illustrated to attendees the reasons why the UK is a prime location for global automotive investment. (Source: SMMT) <http://www.smmt.co.uk/2011/06/industry-chiefs-geared-up-to-lead-uk-debate-at-smmt-international-automotive-summit/>

Automotive progress highlighted in climate change report

A report published by the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) concludes that more needs to be done to meet the 2025 greenhouse gas emissions target, but has praised the efforts of UK automotive in tackling climate change. The report outlines the need for the UK's total emission levels to fall by 3% each year to meet targets, and also highlights the "good progress" being made within the UK's automotive industry, which has seen new car CO₂ emissions fall over 20% since 2000 to 144.2g/km CO₂ in 2010. "Industry is committed to improving its environmental performance and while there is still more to do, today's report demonstrates the good progress made by the automotive industry," said Paul Everitt, SMMT Chief Executive. "Investment in low and ultra-low carbon vehicle technologies has delivered impressive reductions in CO₂ emissions, but sustained action, to support research and development, new infrastructure and consumer incentives will be essential if we are to sustain and improve the rate of progress". SMMT's New Car CO₂ report, published earlier this year, demonstrates the automotive industry's transition to low and ultra-low carbon vehicles. Last year almost 40% of new cars registered emitted less than 130g/km CO₂, which is the European fleet emissions target for 2015. (Source: SMMT)

http://hmccc.s3.amazonaws.com/Progress%202011/CC%20Progress%20Report_Interactive_2.pdf

First stage of See Inside Manufacturing initiative launched

The first stage of 'See Inside Manufacturing', a government initiative supported by the Automotive Council, to encourage young people to consider careers in engineering, and to learn more about modern high-value manufacturing, was launched on 29 June. 19 automotive companies across the UK

opened their doors to teachers and careers advisors, offering a “behind the scenes” insight into the apprenticeship and careers opportunities within the automotive sector that are available to young people. Business Secretary, Vince Cable, Minister for Business and Enterprise, Mark Prisk, and Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, Chris Huhne, visited a number of companies staging activities as part of the initiative. Business Secretary Vince Cable said: “The UK has one of the most diverse auto sectors in the world. It is vital for us to enthuse the next generation about the opportunities these industries have for them”. The automotive sector is trailblazing See Inside Manufacturing this year and it is expected that the initiative will be rolled out to the wider manufacturing sector next year. More than 35 companies and organisations from the automotive sector including some of the most well known names in the Britain's car industry are supporting See Inside Manufacturing. (Source: BIS)

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2011/Jun/manufacturers-open-doors-to-next-generation-of-engineers>

Government publishes “Plug-in Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy”

This week government published its “Plug-In Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy” which demonstrates the range of measures being taken to support ultra-low carbon vehicles in the UK. The report sets out government’s plans to make the process easier to install new charge points in public and domestic locations, encouraging new potential investors into the plug-in vehicle infrastructure market. The report set out two major challenges to the electric vehicle industry, specifying how back-office recharging functions will operate, and developing recommendations on the most cost-effective way to ensure off-peak recharging. Philip Hammond, Secretary of State for Transport said, “This strategy will help maintain the UK as a global leader in the design, production and use of electric and ultra-low emission cars and at the forefront of efforts to decarbonise motoring.” Business Minister Mark Prisk said, “The UK wants to be a world-leader in ultra-low carbon technology and today’s strategy is the next step in our achievement of that aim. I hope today’s report will accelerate the growth of the ultra-low carbon vehicle market by giving clarity about the government’s plans”. (Source: DfT)

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/plug-in-vehicle-infrastructure-strategy>



Week ahead

House of Commons

Thursday 7 July

Energy and climate change questions – 11:15am

Topical questions

Westminster Hall

No relevant activity

Commons Committees

Wednesday 6 July

Environmental Audit Committee (2:40pm, Room 16)

Subject: Air quality

Lords Chamber

Tuesday 5 July

Oral questions, to ask the government: 2.30pm

What is their forecast for the growth of manufacturing investment in the current year (Lord Sheldon, Lab);