

Transport Committee publish road safety report

The House of Commons Transport Select Committee has published a Road Safety report, commenting on government's Strategic Plan for Road Safety which was published in May 2011, and due to be updated in September 2012. The report notes that 2011 saw the first annual increase in road fatalities in the UK since 2003, up 3% on 2010, and also that the number of people killed or seriously injured had increased by 2% on 2010, the first annual increase since 1994. However, the report does state that the number of people killed or seriously injured remains lower than any year since national records began, except for 2010. The Committee urges government to utilise the opportunity presented by a planned update for the Strategic Framework for Road Safety in September 2012 to reassess its road safety strategy and states that more attention should be given to engineering improvements in road design and technology. In addition, the Committee stated that any proposal to increase the motorway speed limit should follow approval from MPs in the House of Commons. The Committee also called upon the Department for Transport to:

1. Explain in its annual report regarding whether road safety is improving each year in line with its forecasts
2. Highlight best practice by local authorities, in particular noting innovative practices and multi agency approaches
3. Provide an update of the initial findings of the Governments Learning to Drive programme
4. Carry out an independent review of driver training to reduce the casualty rate for young drivers
5. Consider encouraging HGV's to fit sensors to improve cycle safety.
6. Look at cycling infrastructure, with the Department responding to the 8 points of The Times cycle campaign
7. Report on motor cycle training and learn from previous mistakes in implementing changes to motor cycle testing in response to European directives
8. Highlight best practice and innovative working methods in providing 20 mph zones

9. Include engineering measures in the Department's outcome measures
 10. Report on new advertising campaigns for road safety, particularly on engaging with social media
- (Source:Parliament.uk)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/transport-committee/news/road-safety-report/>

Government announces new infrastructure investment and exports plan

Government has announced a new UK Guarantees Scheme that aims to accelerate major infrastructure investment and provide support to UK exporters. Government will underwrite £40 billion of investment for infrastructure projects that have been put on hold following difficulties in raising money from private investors. To qualify, the projects must be ready to start in the 12 months following the guarantee being given, be nationally significant, financially credible, dependent on a guarantee to proceed, and be good value to the taxpayer. Government has also announced a £5 billion exports refinancing facility, which will provide long-term loans for overseas buyers of UK exports at competitive rates by guaranteeing a series of short-term bank loans. UK Export Finance will begin supporting loans by the end of 2012.

(Source: HM Treasury)

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/press_62_12.htm



UK vehicle output up 12% in first half of 2012

Figures published by the SMMT show that car manufacturing rose 14.1% in the first half of 2012 and was stable in June, dipping 0.7%. Commercial vehicle output fell 8.7% during the first half of 2012 and was down 19.7% in June. However, total vehicle production was up 12.1% on the year to date. UK engine production was up 0.5% in the first half of 2012, but fell 15.1% in June. (Source: SMMT)
<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2012/07/smmt-uk-automotive-manufacturing-june-2012/>

UK automotive gains government funding for major low-carbon R&D projects

UK automotive will receive around £19 million for five government-backed R&D projects that aim to ensure that the UK remains at the forefront of global development in hydrogen and fuel cell technologies. Funded by the UK's innovation agency, the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) and the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), the projects will demonstrate the use of fuel cell systems and hydrogen technologies in low carbon transport and energy systems. They will show how these technologies can be integrated with other energy and transport components, such as renewable energy generation, refuelling infrastructure and vehicles, to develop whole systems and show them working together. The five projects will be led by Air Products plc, BOC Ltd, ITM Power (Trading), Rutland Management Ltd and SSE plc, and involve:

- The creation of the UK's first end-to-end, integrated, green hydrogen production, distribution and retailing system. (Air Products plc).
- The delivery of solar energy generated hydrogen for Swindon's existing public access H2 refuelling station via an electrolyser, and its use in materials handling vehicles and light vans at Honda's manufacturing plant (BOC Ltd).
- The integration of an electrolyser based refueller with renewable energy, enabling zero carbon hydrogen to be produced for use as a transport fuel for a range of vehicles. (ITM Power).
- The demonstration of a viable solar-hydrogen energy system, with benefits shared by multiple end users of a business park in Surrey, through

the 24/7 provision of green electricity and heat (Rutland Management Ltd).

- The demonstration of a whole renewable hydrogen system, connecting a 1MWe electrolyser to the grid, in conjunction with an Aberdeenshire wind farm, to explore the grid impacts and energy storage potential of hydrogen generation, and to provide the green hydrogen produced to power a fleet of fuel cell buses (SSE plc).

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2012/07/uk-automotive-wins-government-funding-for-major-low-carbon-rd-projects/>



Hi-tech supply chain firm secures £3m Regional Growth Fund boost

Components manufacturer, DTR VMS Ltd, has secured more than £3 million from government's Regional Growth Fund (RGF), to develop state of the art production facilities and boost skills levels. The Chippenham-based automotive components supplier was awarded £3.1 million from the RGF which helped to unlock private funding as part of a £12.7 million investment in plant facilities, while safeguarding 187 jobs and creating a further 21 positions. (Source: BIS)

<http://news.bis.gov.uk/Press-Releases/-3million-award-boosts-growth-in-local-high-tech-company-67d55.aspx>

Week ahead

House of Commons

The House of Commons is in recess from Wednesday 18 July – Monday 3 September

House of Lords

The House of Lords is in recess from Thursday 26 July – Friday 1 September