

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 24 October

SMMT provides evidence to Transport Select Committee

SMMT Chief Executive, Mike Hawes, provided oral evidence to the Transport Select Committee inquiry into 'Motoring of the Future' on Monday 20 October. Also on the panel were Gerry Kearney, Chief Executive, BVRLA and Neil Grieg, Director of Policy and Research, Institute of Advanced Motorists. The discussion focussed on the issue of connectivity and autonomous vehicles as well as the increase in car clubs and car sharing. Panellists stated that cross-departmental engagement was needed on this issue and also noted concerns over the issue of big data and ensuring the integrity and safety of increasingly connected and autonomous vehicles.

(Source: Transport Select Committee)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/transport-committee/news/motoring-of-the-future-session1/>

Round two of the supply chain skills fund announced

Business Secretary, Vince Cable MP, announced the launch of round two of the Supply chain skills fund at the CBI Industrial Strategy conference on Monday 20 October. The second round of the fund will be worth £10 million and will run from 3 November to 6 February. The first round of the fund saw £2.7 million of government investment awarded to five automotive companies to help them win and keep work with automotive manufacturers. These companies were: Benteler in Corby; Brose in Coventry; Getrag in Halewood; Gestamp in Sedgefield; Nifco in Stockton-on-Tees; and Unipres in Sunderland. Commenting on the announcement, SMMT Chief Executive, Mike Hawes, said, "Strengthening the UK supply chain is essential for the future prosperity of the whole automotive industry. We have to secure skilled jobs for long-term growth so this funding will ensure that UK suppliers are well placed to take advantage of the potential £3 billion of new business opportunities available to them."

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cable-industrial-strategy-driving-the-recovery>

September UK automotive manufacturing figures announced

Car manufacturing

UK car manufacturing output fell slightly in September to 137,068 units, down 2.8% due to planned re-tooling for model changes. However, 2014 has seen the best year-to-date performance since 2008, producing 1,132,017 units – up 0.6%.

Commercial vehicle manufacturing

UK commercial vehicle manufacturing fell 31.1% in September despite the production of certain new models beginning to ramp. Output for the year-to-date was also down by 25.2% with the fall attributed to plant restructuring over the past year. However, in September exports increased for the first time in six months as the European commercial vehicle market gradually recovers.

Engine manufacturing

UK engine production was down 13.6% in September as facilities undergo re-tooling efforts for new products. The output has also fallen 5.0% over the year-to-date, but the percentage exported has increased. There is still a positive outlook for the sector, however, as significant investment is being made into low-emissions engine manufacturing in the UK (such as the new Ford investment in Dagenham detailed below).

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/category/manufacturing/>



Ford creates 318 news jobs with low-carbon investment

Ford will create 318 new jobs at its Dagenham plant following an additional investment of £190 million to produce its new range of advanced technology diesel engines. This announcement is the second phase of investment in Ford's new engine programme, following an initial £287 million announced in September. The two-phase £475 million investment is marked for the production of new low-carbon 2.0 litre engines for commercial vehicles (phase one) and passenger cars (phase two). It includes £28.9 million funding from the Government's Regional Growth Fund. The new engines will produce lower NO_x emissions, surpassing Euro-6 air quality requirements. This latest diesel engine programme at Ford Dagenham is part of a £1.5 billion investment by Ford in low-carbon and environmentally friendly engine and vehicle technology over five years. Commenting on the announcement, Prime Minister David Cameron said, "I welcome Ford's commitment to Dagenham and the UK, which is a vote of confidence in our long-term economic plan to back business, create more jobs and secure a brighter future for Britain. We are backing our automotive sector so that it continues to thrive and this investment, supported by £8.9 million from Government's Regional Growth Fund, will create more jobs that mean financial security and economic piece of mind for more hardworking families."

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2014/10/ford-creates-318-news-jobs-low-carbon-investment/>

Businesses to receive funding for low-carbon propulsion technology

The Advanced Propulsion Centre has launched the new Technology Developer Accelerator Programme (TDAP) to support companies developing innovative low-carbon propulsion technologies that can be applied to the automotive industry. Successful applicants will receive match funding for their project, as well as expert advice from specialists in the field to help develop their technology. The TDAP is also open to businesses that are already using a low-carbon propulsion technology in a different sector such as marine or aerospace, and need guidance to transfer this technology to the automotive industry. The Advanced Propulsion Centre is looking for

technologies at an early stage of development. The TDAP will be particularly helpful to businesses that need guidance in areas such as business planning, validating the product, testing or understanding the viability of the technology. The deadline for applications is midday on Friday 31 October. For more information and to apply visit the [Advance Propulsion Centre website](#).

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2014/10/businesses-receive-funding-low-carbon-propulsion-technology/>

TSI and consumer affairs minister launch new legal guidance website

Consumer Affairs Minister Jo Swinson and Trading Standards Institute (TSI) CEO Leon Livermore have launched Business Companion, a free online resource that allows business owners to quickly and effectively find and understand the trading standards laws and consumer protection regulations. The new website can be found [here](#).

(Source: TSI)

<http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/extra/news-item.cfm/newsid/1666>

Week ahead

Commons Chamber

Monday 27 October

Presentation of Bill: International Trade Agreements (Scrutiny) Bill (Geraint Davies, Lab Co-op, Swansea West)

Commons Committee

Tuesday 28 October

Treasury Committee – Proposals for further fiscal and economic devolution to Scotland (10:00am, room 15)

Wednesday 29 October

- BIS Committee – Business-University Colloaboration (10:00am, room 6)
- European Scrutiny Committee – UK's Commissioner-designate (2:30pm, room 8)

House of Lords

The Committee stage of the Consumer Rights bill will continue in the Lords Grand Committee on Monday 27 and Wednesday 29 October.