

HYDROGEN CARS

£11 million to prepare UK for hydrogen-fuelled cars



Business Minister Matthew Hancock announced £11 million of funding from government and industry to prepare the UK for the roll-out of hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles. The money will help establish an initial network of up to 15 hydrogen refuelling stations, by upgrading the existing refuelling stations and building new stations by the end of 2015. It also includes £2 million for public sector hydrogen vehicles.

This announcement came on the same day the UK received its first delivery of series-production hydrogen powered cars – Hyundai ix35 Fuel Cell vehicles – to paying customers Air Products, ITM Power, Johnson Matthey and Transport for London.

Speaking in Japan where Matthew Hancock met executives at Honda, Nissan and Toyota, Mr Hancock said: "Hydrogen cars present us with a huge economic opportunity and can bolster our internationally renowned automotive industry. We want to make the UK one of the best places in the world to design, manufacture and sell ultra-low emission vehicles.

"Government will work in true partnership with industry so the potential benefits are realised by businesses and consumers across the UK."

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PLUG-IN VEHICLES

Over a quarter of all UK plug-ins sold in Q3 of this year

Record numbers of people have taken advantage of the government's Plug-in Car Grant, bringing the number of grant funded vehicles on UK roads to over 17,000.

The scheme offers discounts on ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) of up to £5,000 for cars and £8,000 for vans. More than 5,000 grants were issued between July and September, representing an increase of over 50 per cent on the previous three months and close to a third of all grants since the initiative began in 2010.

Transport Minister Baroness Kramer said: "It is not surprising that people want these vehicles – they are a pleasure to drive and incredibly cheap to run, as well as beneficial to the environment. The government is breaking down barriers that may have put people off in the past.

"This growing confidence helps the UK



strengthen its position as a global leader in developing green technology. Expanding this sector is also creating thousands of jobs and contributing to Britain's thriving £11 billion automotive industry, and encouraging more investment in the UK – a key part of this government's long-term economic plan."

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News in brief

Ford creates 318 jobs with low-carbon engine programme

Ford has announced a £190 million additional investment to produce its new range low-carbon diesel engines, creating 318 new jobs at its Dagenham plant.

David Cameron has welcomed the investment by Ford as a "vote of confidence" in the Government's economic plan. The extra investment, which includes £8.9 million from the Government's Regional Growth Fund, will see the plant turn out up to half a million of the two-litre engines a year. The announcement is the second phase of investment in the new engine programme and takes the total amount of funding for the project to in excess of £475 million. The first phase of investment relates to the production of state-of-the-art engines for Ford commercial vehicles around the world, while the second phase, due to start in 2017, is for passenger cars.

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EU drops charging point targets

The European Union has done a U-turn on a November 2013 European Parliament directive that issued targets to member nations for the number of electric vehicle charging points and hydrogen refuelling stations they should have by 2020. Under the directive, the UK was ordered to have 70,000 charging stations installed by 2020, while Germany was expected to have 86,000.

The EU has now done away with these targets and revised the bill so that it does not include binding contracts for member nations. Instead, governments are called upon to deliver national action plans involving the installation of an "appropriate number of electric recharging points accessible to the public" by the end of 2020.

The lobbying organisation Transport & Environment has claimed that this about-turn will prove counterproductive. The organisation's clean vehicles manager Greg Archer said: "Europe can and should do better and initiate a comprehensive strategy on e-mobility. This continent needs to join the race for clean innovation, cut its €300 billion oil import bill and reduce CO₂ emissions as soon as possible."

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ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Dundee gets grant for more EV charging

Drivers in Dundee are to benefit from a £22,000 grant from Transport for Scotland towards two new 22kw fast chargers, which will be fully available to the public.

Dundee's environment convener Craig Melville said: "This is another important step in our commitment to environmentally-friendly transport.

"These additional charging points will help us to keep up the momentum for electric cars in Dundee by making them even more accessible."

Meanwhile, East Renfrewshire looks set to receive a £78,000 grant to improve charging point coverage throughout the area. Councillor Tony Buchanan, convener for infrastructure and sustainable growth, said: "I welcome this offer of funding and I hope many residents will take advantage of the facilities that will be provided."

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INFRASTRUCTURE

New business partnership to aid fleet EV charging



Business mobility specialist Alphabet and low-carbon electricity provider EDF Energy have formed a partnership to advise fleet customers about electric vehicle charging points and supply bespoke infrastructure to meet individual needs.

It is hoped that the partnership will boost customer confidence in going electric by pooling expertise from the two companies on charging solutions including guidance on modes and speeds of charging infrastructure, as well as the types of charging cables available for selection. Customers will also receive advice on load and power requirements, alongside managing ongoing maintenance, installation and warranty protection.

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CARBON REDUCTION

EU sets carbon reduction target of 40 per cent by 2030



European leaders have agreed to a binding pact that requires all EU nations to reduce greenhouse emissions to at least 40 per cent below 1990 levels by 2030. This deal, which was struck at a summit in Brussels, aims to combat climate change and set an example for other nations in the run up to international climate talks being held next year. This makes the EU the first major world economy to establish clear targets for after 2020. However, the deal contains a clause which may allow the environmental targets to be reviewed if other world economies do not agree to similar measures.

The agreement also includes two 27 per cent targets, for increased renewable energy use and greater energy efficiency. While the latter goal is optional, it may be rise to 30 per cent pending a review in 2020.

But the Brussels summit saw many EU nations take issue with the new regulations. Poland, for example, argued that as 90 per cent of its electricity comes from coal and it would not be possible to meet the targets in the time specified. The country threatened that it would prevent the bill passing if the costs to its economy were not discounted to the tune of £12-16 billion, and

concessions were made to provide funding to modernise its coal-fired power plants.

European Council president Herman Van Rompuy said that there would be "extra support for lower-income countries, both through adequate targets and through additional funds to help them catch up in their clean-energy transition."

Environmental organisations have criticised the special allowances made for certain countries, with Julia Michalak of Climate Action Network Europe calling the Poland concessions "scandalous". Michalak said: "A continuation of free emission permits for Poland's coal-reliant energy system would be a grave mistake. Leaders who came to Brussels to agree new historic climate goals, are actually discussing whether to hand out money to Europe's dirtiest power plants."

Meanwhile Joris den Blaken of Greenpeace described it as a "very modest Package", saying that it would "mean a slowdown in clean energy development in Europe."

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LOW-CARBON TECHNOLOGY

Government commits to £11 million spend on low-carbon technology

The government has pledged £11 million in funding to help speed up research and development of emission-reducing vehicle technologies. The money is to go towards Innovate UK's competition, 'Adapting cutting-edge technologies', which invites businesses to bid for a share of the funding for research and development purposes. The money forms part of a wider £500 million government investment in the development of ultra low-emission vehicles between 2015 and 2020.

Transport Minister Baroness Kramer said: "This new £11 million for research and development shows our support to UK companies leading the way

to cleaner and greener transport technologies. They are investing in more efficient transport, and that is the best way to drive our economy forward.

"By 2040 we expect virtually all new cars and vans to be using carbon-cutting technology and we want to see as much of this as possible designed and built here, in the UK, delivering economic as well as environmental benefits. We are already a world leader in this field and we must invest more resources to maintain our edge."

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EV TECHNOLOGY

US city trials grid balancing technology

A trial of grid-balancing technology that allows utility companies to request electric vehicles to stop charging is to get underway in the city of Sacramento in California. Utility companies are to team up with the Electric Power Research Institute and leading car manufacturers including BMW and Mercedes-Benz to develop a cloud-based system that facilitates communication with electric cars in order to ask that they stop charging, and also to restart charging remotely.

The trial aims to learn whether grid overload can be prevented by giving utility companies scope to manage demand, which could be of vital importance as the number of EVs increases. Vehicle owners will plug in their cars and set a departure time, while the system works out whether a pause in charging will be disruptive to the driver. If the pause does not interfere with the driver's needs, charging will pause to save grid power. Utilities may offer

financial incentives to vehicle owners who make their cars accessible to the grid.

Dan Bowermaster of Electric Power Research Institute's Electric Transportation Program said: "This demonstration represents a major milestone that meets the needs of utilities and equipment manufacturers while simultaneously benefiting electric vehicle owners and electricity users."

Mike Tinskey, global director, Vehicle Electrification and Infrastructure at Ford said: "This first-ever test is a critical milestone as we move forward with our collective goal to advance electrification and boost the environmental benefits that come with that. Our intent is to add more capability to this technology so that it may be used broadly in the future."

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INFRASTRUCTURE

Tesla plans all-wheel drive Model S

Tesla is to issue all-wheel-drive versions of its Model S car, the vehicle manufacturer has announced. These AWD (the 'd' stands for 'dual motor') cars will be equipped with a second electric motor to power the front wheels. This will offer an additional 10 miles of range compared to the current rear-drive version, meaning that models with the longest range will now be able to travel 275 miles on a full charge.

The high performance P85D will be available from December, with 60D and 85D models coming out early next year.

In other news, Tesla has opened a new fast-charger facility at Edinburgh Airport. The charger, located in the airport's car park, will be available to owners of the

company's Model S electric sedan 24 hours a day for free, offering them the chance to complete a half charge in about 20 minutes.



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News in brief

BMW plans car hire scheme similar to 'Boris Bikes'

BMW has outlined plans to launch a grab-and-go car hire scheme in London, similar in concept to the capital's 'Boris Bikes'.

DriveNow, BMW's joint venture with rental company Sixt, will deploy cars at strategic points on the capital's streets, reports *Car* magazine. The electric i3 will be the biggest star of the London initiative, alongside Minis and BMW 1-series cars.



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Six-year high for car production

The first nine months of 2014 have been the best for car manufacturing for six years despite a slight dip in production in September. A total of 1,132,017 cars were produced in the UK in the period January to September – a 0.6 per cent rise on the same period last year, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) said. This was the best three-quarters figure since 2008 and came in spite of a 2.8 per cent dip last month compared with September last year.

Production for export fell 8.1 per cent last month, but home market production was up 17.7 per cent.

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Freight best practice scheme to go UK-wide

The government-backed Fleet Operation Recognition Scheme (FORS), a voluntary scheme that encourages sustainable best practice for road freight operators, is to be extended beyond the capital across the country, it has been announced. An external partner will be brought in to help deliver the scheme, which to date has been managed by Transport for London, all over the UK.

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FUNDING

South Yorkshire businesses to receive EV funding

A new initiative has been launched that aims to help a number of South Yorkshire businesses reduce costs by including electric vehicles in their fleet. The Inmotion Electric Vehicles Scheme, believed to be the first of its kind in the country, is a partnership between Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield Council, and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive. The partnership will work to implement the Department for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund in the region.

Private and voluntary sector businesses in South Yorkshire are invited to apply for grants of up to £10,500 for plug-in vans or £7,500 for plug-in cars, as well as a £500 grant for workplace charging points, covering roughly half the installation cost. This represents a £2,500 increase on the government's own plug-in grant scheme.

Vehicles eligible for grants include the BMW i3 and the Nissan e-NV200. All vehicles

will be fitted with a mileage tracker to allow the government to observe the benefits seen by companies (this is a compulsory requirement to secure funding).

The initial Inmotion scheme is scheduled to run until the end of March next year, or until 80 organisations have received grants, though an additional tranche of £4.8 million in DfT funding has been won which will allow the scheme to extend to a further 30 businesses over 2015/16.

Fleets will also benefit from participation in existing free training schemes – the ECO stars Fleet Recognition Scheme and ECO-Business Driving – which help companies to improve their safety and emissions records.

A spokesperson for Venson, the leasing company helping to deliver the scheme, said: "We are very supportive of electric vehicles, but they have to be right for fleets and drivers."

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LOW-CARBON ENGINES



Survey finds Britons considering alternative fuel cars

The findings of a recent survey suggest that a majority of British adults would consider using (buying or leasing) an alternative fuel car over the next two years. ContractHireAndLeasing.com polled 2025 people and found that over 65 per cent of respondents expressed an interest in vehicles running on alternative fuels such as LPG, hydrogen and electricity.

Respondents most favoured non-rechargeable hybrids (19 per cent expressed an interest).

Next were LPG-powered vehicles and plug-in hybrids, each cited by 12 per cent of those polled. Hydrogen and fully electric cars came last at 11 per cent each. There was a fluctuation in these choices according to region, with those in the North East seemingly more positive than average about fully electric cars, attracting 18 per cent of the vote in this area.

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LowCVP's Andy Eastlake Real world diesel emissions lower than lab tests

Over recent weeks there has been a lot of media coverage about locally polluting emissions from diesel vehicles exceeding levels predicted by test results

While levels of air pollution are certainly too high in some of our cities, we do need a sense of perspective; we've come a very long way since the days – not so long ago – when neither carbon nor local pollution from our vehicles was measured. Emissions from diesel vehicles are now a fraction of what they were, and there have been great strides in cutting carbon emissions from new cars too – down by a quarter in the last ten years.

Diesel is the mainstay of our commercial road transport system and will to continue to be important, possibly for decades to come. Indeed, while we fully support the introduction of electric, gas and hydrogen powered vehicles, for many fleets there is currently limited choice but to buy a 'clean' diesel, particularly in the van and truck vehicle segments. Given this reliance, no technology is getting more dedicated research and investment funding, and we must continue this and strive to deliver cleaner, greener diesel performance. The LowCVP is working actively to ensure that the drive to lower carbon does not compromise our ability to meet air quality targets.

It was early in my career as a vehicle testing engineer – around 1988 – that we actually started measuring particulates for the first time and even later (2000) imposed a separate NOx limit. Since then all our vehicles and fuels, including diesel, have made incredible leaps in both fuel economy and particularly emissions performance (down more than 90 per cent in lab tests).

I am a big supporter and instigator of actions to make sure the test conforms as closely as possible to the real world operation of a vehicle, but the complexity of creating and controlling the combination of fuel, engine and after-treatment to give us ultra-low emissions in every condition we encounter, takes time to perfect.

With still a couple of years before full implementation of the Euro 6 requirements, to see vehicles already on the road that are not just compliant with, but delivering on road to this standard, reassures me that clean diesel can continue to play an important role. Isn't it about time we (and the media) celebrated the progress and success we are seeing emerge across every technology option?

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.lowcvp.org.uk and follow LowCVP on Twitter: @theLowCVP and @aeastlake