

PM hosts automotive leaders at Downing Street

Prime Minister Theresa May outlined the government's commitment to the UK's automotive sector and called for the UK to stay at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of electric vehicles at a roundtable held at Downing Street today (Monday 15 July).

Speaking at the meeting attended by chief executives, senior leaders and experts in the car and energy industries, she emphasised that this can only be done through a strong partnership between the industry and government.

The meeting is part of wider action from government to support the automotive industry, and the Prime Minister confirmed today that Jaguar Land Rover will receive a £500 million loan guarantee from government export credit agency UK Export Finance. This will support the company's design and manufacture of the next generation of electric vehicles and its export activities.

The representatives discussed with the Prime Minister that as well as having long term consistent incentives and the right charging infrastructure in place to drive up demand for electric vehicles, the UK should build on its strengths in the development of next generation battery technology.

The UK has already made a major commitment to becoming a world leader in the industry through its £274 million investment in the Faraday Institute and earlier investments through the Automotive Propulsion Centre. Attendees spoke about how best to build on this and work more closely together to develop the next generation of battery technology, including by supporting small businesses in the electrified supply chain and the building of a Gigafactory – a large-scale battery technology factory for electric vehicles.

Attendees also agreed to establish a Green Mobility Transition Board which for the first time will formally bring together government, industry and environmental groups to coordinate efforts to speed up the adoption of ultra low emission vehicles while making progress on our ambitions to tackle climate change and further improve air quality. The Prime Minister's Industrial, Manufacturing and Infrastructure Business Council will work closely with representatives across the relevant sectors to scope out the exact terms of reference and members over the coming weeks.

The Prime Minister also set out a number of new commitments aimed at making electric vehicles more convenient than ever before to own, which were welcomed by attendees including:

- making England the first place in the world where every new-build home will be fitted with an electric car chargepoint, under a consultation launched today
- bringing forward plans to regulate chargepoints so that they use 'smart' technology which will send signals to electric vehicles to charge them

at different times of the day, encouraging off-peak charging to keep costs down for consumers and helping prepare the energy system for mass uptake of electric vehicles

- all new rapid and higher powered chargepoints to provide 'pay as you go' debit or credit card payment options by spring 2020 – ending the current wide variety of payment systems which is a source of frustration for drivers

The Prime Minister reaffirmed the government's ambition for better access to rapid chargepoints by 2030, following her recent announcement that the Office of Low Emission Vehicles will undertake a review to develop a vision for a core network of rapid chargepoints along England's key roadways. This would allow drivers to access them in a range of locations across the road network, including through and around cities.

Today's meeting builds on sessions attended by government and industry in recent weeks which saw representatives discuss how to increase demand and infrastructure for electric vehicles and capitalise on the UK's strengths in the development of battery, motor and power electronics technology.

Notes to editors

Alongside the Prime Minister Theresa May, Business Secretary Greg Clark and Transport Secretary Chris Grayling, attendees at today's roundtable included representatives from:

- AGM
- Advanced Propulsion Centre
- Aston Martin
- Bentley
- BMW
- BP
- BYD
- Ecotricity
- Ford
- Innovate UK
- Jaguar Land Rover
- McLaren
- National Grid
- Nissan
- Podpoint
- Shell
- SMMT
- Tesla
- Toyota
- UK Power Networks
- Vauxhall

A "Gigafactory" is a major manufacturing facility, producing 'cells' which are the basic building blocks of a battery. Carmakers will source cells from suppliers and assemble into battery packs. As an example, a car factory

making 200,000 electric vehicles, each with a 75kWh battery pack, would have a cell requirement of 15GWh.

Removal of the active substance Fenbendazole for use in pigeons from Schedule 6 (Exemption for small pet animals).

The VMD wishes to make companies aware that fenbendazole is no longer permitted for use in pigeons under Schedule 6 (Exemptions for small pet animals) of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations (VMR) 2013.

With effect from 15 July 2019

- Fenbendazole products which have pigeons as the only target species: Manufacture must cease
- Fenbendazole products which have pigeons as a target species, plus additional target species: Pigeons must no longer be included as a target species in the product literature

The VMD has become aware of peer-reviewed published literature indicating that fenbendazole has a low margin of safety in pigeons. Overdose is likely to result in a low white blood cell count (leukopaenia, heteropaenia and bone marrow hypoplasia), damage to the rapidly dividing cells of the crop and small intestinal epithelium and, ultimately, death.

Because of the narrow margin of safety and severe consequences associated with overdose, the VMD has concluded that fenbendazole must only be used in pigeons under the direction of a veterinary surgeon and should therefore no longer be exempt from the provisions of the VMR under Schedule 6.

The VMD refers to paragraph 4 of Schedule 6 of the VMR, which states 'The Secretary of State may suspend or revoke the approval (or limit it to a smaller number of species) if it is demonstrated that the substance requires veterinary control'.

If you have concerns regarding your pigeon health then please contact your vet for advice.

Sixth Meeting of the U.S.-UK Trade and Investment Working Group

On July 8, Secretary of State for International Trade Dr. Liam Fox MP and United States Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer met in Washington, DC and discussed the ongoing work of the U.S.-UK Trade and Investment Working Group.

On July 10-11, the UK and United States held the sixth meeting of the U.S.-UK Trade and Investment Working Group in London, which focused on strengthening our trade and investment relationship; laying the groundwork for a potential future trade agreement once the UK leaves the EU; and cooperating on global issues.

Since the Working Group last met in November 2018, USTR published its [negotiating objectives](#) for a trade agreement with the UK. At the Working Group, the UK restated its commitment to publishing its own negotiating objectives, scoping assessment and response to the public consultation before negotiations begin.

The Working Group discussed the progress made in recent months to ensure continuity of trade between our two countries as the UK leaves the EU, notably the signature of Agreements on Mutual Recognition, Marine Equipment, Wine and Distilled Spirits. In addition, both sides signed a bilateral agreement regarding insurance and reinsurance in December 2018.

The Working Group's discussions covered a range of trade topics including services; financial services; procurement; agriculture; sustainability/labor, environment; trade remedies; industrial subsidies; intellectual property; anti-corruption and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME).

In addition to the Working Group, the UK and the United States held the fourth meeting of the U.S.-UK SME Dialogue in Bristol on July 9. The discussion focused on opportunities presented by emerging technologies for services and digital trade; the obstacles SMEs currently face in trading between the UK and U.S.; and how these obstacles can be reduced, including through a potential future trade agreement. With more than 80 stakeholders in attendance, SMEs participated in a best practice exchange on doing business in the U.S. and the UK in the areas of artificial intelligence, virtual reality and mobile applications. This meeting followed the first sectoral-focused dialogue for marine technology SMEs in Southampton, UK in April 2019 and the participation of the UK in the May 11 Americas Competitiveness Exchange (ACE).

Both sides agreed to hold the fifth SME Dialogue in the United States in early 2020. The U.S. and UK also agreed to explore a second SME best practices exchange in marine technology towards the end of 2019. Lastly, an invitation was extended to the UK for the 13th ACE forum for 2020.

Background

The Working Group was established in July 2017 by UK Secretary of State for International Trade Dr Liam Fox MP and United States Trade Representative (USTR) Robert Lighthizer. Since its inception, the Working Group has been laying the groundwork for an ambitious and wide-ranging potential future free trade agreement once the UK has left the EU, as well as ensuring commercial continuity for UK and US businesses, workers, and consumers. The Working Group delegations were led by officials from the UK Department for International Trade (DIT) and USTR. It also included representatives from a wide range of UK and U.S. Government departments and agencies. Total trade between the two countries is already worth about £190 billion a year. We are each other's largest source of foreign direct investment and, according to U.S. statistics, the UK and U.S. have around \$1 trillion invested in each other's economies. Every day around one million Americans go to work for UK firms, while around one million Britons go to work for American firms.

[Vacancies: Inspectors of Air Accidents \(Engineering\)](#)

Can you be instrumental in determining causes of civil aircraft accidents and serious incidents worldwide? If so, this Inspector of Air Accidents (Engineering) role is for you, and we'd like to hear from you.

The purpose of this role is to investigate the engineering aspects of aircraft accidents and serious incidents involving civil aircraft operating in the UK and to UK registered or manufactured aircraft overseas.

A full job description and role profile is on the [Civil Service Jobs website](#).

Read about [a week in the life of an Engineering Inspector](#).

The deadline for applications 16 August.

[Construction begins on F35 infrastructure at RAF Lakenheath](#)

The start of construction was marked with a ceremony attended by senior representatives from the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), USAF's 48th Fighter Wing and contractors Kier and VolkerFitzpatrick.

Ground was broken on the site which will include the construction of a flight simulator facility, a maintenance unit, new hangars and storage facilities.

DIO awarded a contract worth £160 million to the Kier VolkerFitzpatrick joint venture in November to deliver infrastructure at the Suffolk airbase.

Building work has begun so that the base will be ready to welcome the first of the new aircraft in late 2021.

The contract award is the first in a wider programme of work to support US Air Force operations in the UK, with more than US \$1 billion expected to be invested in the UK over the next 7 to 10 years.

At the height of construction, it is expected that there will be up to 700 people on site supporting the programme. The investment will also provide wider benefits both to the project and to the local economy.

Construction materials from the demolished buildings have been reused on site for subbase for carparks, roads and other hard standing areas. There will also be a concrete plant on site reducing carbon miles and traffic in the community.

DIO is also working closely with Forest Heath District Council and Kier VolkerFitzpatrick to ensure that the opportunities to create employment and training are maximised and that they last beyond the end of construction. In the first 6 months of the project 6 apprentices were taken on and 22 new jobs were created. A 'meet the buyers' event was held recently for local companies to understand what work opportunities are available in the project.

RAF Lakenheath will be the first permanent international site for US Air Force F-35s in Europe.

USAF 48th Fighter Wing Commander, Colonel Will Marshall, said:

This ceremony is an exciting milestone for the Liberty Wing as we prepare this installation to welcome two squadrons of F-35A Lightning II aircraft and supporting personnel. Breaking ground on this project takes us one step closer to becoming a more lethal and ready force as U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa's premier combat wing.

DIO USVF Programme Director, Keith Maddison, said:

DIO is proud to be working with the US Air Force and Kier VolkerFitzpatrick to deliver this exciting project.

The infrastructure being delivered will benefit the local economy by providing a range of training and employment opportunities as well as demonstrating our long and proud history of supporting US Air Force capability in the UK.

Managing Director of Aviation and Defence at Kier, James Hindes, said:

We are very pleased to be delivering this prestigious project with VolkerFitzpatrick on behalf of the DIO. Throughout the project we will be working closely with the local supply chain to deliver this crucial infrastructure, allowing RAF Lakenheath to become the first permanent home in Europe for the US Air Force F-35 Fighter Jet.

Managing Director of VolkerFitzpatrick's Civils division, Chris Evans, said:

VolkerFitzpatrick is proud to continue their long standing track record working in collaboration with Kier, DIO and the USAF Lakenheath team on this significant project, which allows us to build on our substantial experience within the civil airports and defence sector. It is great to see works getting underway and I look forward to seeing the programme progress over the coming months.

Further Information

DIO website: www.gov.uk/dio

Twitter: [@mod_dio](https://twitter.com/mod_dio)

Read [DIO's blog](#).