

PRESS RELEASE

Embargo: 0700, 23 June 2009

£25M FUNDING CREATES ELECTRIC CAR TEST BEDS ACROSS THE UK

Today the Technology Strategy Board – the government body that exists to promote business innovation in technology - announces the consortium winners of its Ultra Low Carbon Vehicle Demonstrator competition hailing an important step forward for the future of transport in the UK.

The successful programme bids, which bring together car manufacturers, power companies, RDAs, councils and academic institutions, will operate demonstrator programmes in eight locations across the UK to accelerate the availability of innovative low carbon cars to consumers. The winning projects receive a total of £25 million from the Government as part of an ongoing commitment to invest jointly with the industry to speed up the introduction of low carbon vehicles. This will support the investment already made by the consortia themselves and is the most significant step to date in the UK of a co-ordinated move towards low carbon transport.

It is planned that approximately 340 vehicles* will begin trials on UK roads within the next six to eighteen months, the biggest project of its kind. The majority of the vehicles are electric, with a small number being plug-in petrol/electric hybrids. Some of the vehicles and technologies are unveiled today at a national event at Guildhall Yard, London and four other demonstrator locations around the UK – the West Midlands, Glasgow, the North East, and Oxford. The information gained from this project will be an important contribution to the future plans of manufacturers and their partners, to develop low carbon vehicles for the mass market.

The Technology Strategy Board created the Low Carbon Vehicle Demonstrator competition to act as a catalyst for industry, the public sector and academia to come together to create low emission vehicles and provide solutions to powering them. The winning consortia showcase new and emerging low carbon vehicle technologies in real world situations - many of the electric cars will be recharged via plug-ins around cities across the UK, as well as at home.

Making the announcement, Secretary of State for Transport, Lord Adonis, said: “This announcement demonstrates how the government is delivering on placing low carbon transport at the centre of its vision for the UK economy. The Technology Strategy Board via its Low Carbon Vehicles Innovation Platform has invested jointly with the Department for Transport, industry and other funders to promote UK-based low carbon vehicle technologies. The project will help to accelerate the development of these cars so that they become a practical reality.”

Lord Drayson, Minister for Science and Innovation, said: “Government and consumer demand for more environmentally friendly vehicles is creating new business

opportunities for both the established industry and innovative new entrants. This competition has connected an array of organisations to deliver a holistic approach to making electric cars a reality on UK roads in the coming months and years. This is a hugely important step in moving us away from relying on petrol and diesel based engines and meeting the governments target of an 80% cut in carbon emissions by 2050.”

Motoring journalist Quentin Wilson supporting the launch, said: “For me this announcement signals the start of an exciting journey that will see a radical change in the type of cars that we see on the UK’s roads in the next half century. The fact that there will be a move towards making these cars as appealing and as powerful as petrol consuming vehicles makes the next few decades a very interesting time for the environmentally conscious UK car driver.”

The programme is led by the Technology Strategy Board, as part of the Low Carbon Vehicles Innovation Platform, and co-funded by Department for Transport (£10 million), Advantage West Midlands, ONE North East and the South East Development Agency. Many of the top car manufacturers are involved in the programme, including, Ford, BMW, Jaguar Land Rover, Mercedes, Toyota and Nissan, alongside the wider car industry supply base, four energy suppliers, five universities, and three regional development agencies. Demonstrator programmes will take place in Glasgow, the North East, the West Midlands, Oxford, three projects in London (central London, West London, Westminster) and countryside.

For further information on the Technology Strategy Board visit <http://www.innovateuk.org>.

Ends

*this figure does not include any hybrid cars currently on the road.

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Notes to editor

Additional Quote

Iain Gray, Chief Executive of the Technology Strategy Board said: “The journey towards low carbon transport will not be easy, but the demonstrator programme, which we are launching is a major step in the right direction. With over 340 cars being trialled in several regions across the UK, and with the involvement of large and small manufacturers, local authorities and infrastructure companies, it is the biggest project of its kind to date.”

About the Technology Strategy Board

The Technology Strategy Board is a business-led executive non departmental public body, established by the Government. Its mission is to promote and support research into, and development and exploitation of, technology and innovation for the benefit of UK business, in order to increase economic growth and improve quality of life. It is sponsored by the UK’s Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). www.innovateuk.org

Ultra Low Carbon Vehicle Demonstrator Competition

As part of the Low Carbon Vehicles Innovation Platform, £25 million has been allocated to highly innovative, industry-led collaborative research projects in the field of ultra low carbon vehicle development and demonstration. The competition focused on encouraging the development of industry-led consortia that can deliver in bringing significant numbers of vehicles onto roads quickly. The competition winners will deliver over 340 new innovative cars on the road in eight locations around the UK in the next six to eighteen months.