Welcome to Issue 7 of the Public Affairs Monitoring Report. The Report is published on a regular monthly basis but supplementary versions may also be produced if the volume of activity is high or there is a subject of topical importance.

The Report is specifically designed to connect the reader with primary sources via the internet.

The content is defined by theme and also as a list of highlights.

Comments and suggestions are welcomed by the Public Affairs Team. Contact details

Despite the various summer recesses political activity has been high.

CONTENT BY THEME INCLUDES -

Business and Industry: Investment in space technology.
Culture and Sport: Gaelic funding - Faclair na Gàidhlig (dictionary), National Sound Archive for Scotland & FilmG 2014.
Economy and Finance: UK Policy - Creating stronger and safer banks.
Education: Fulbright-Scotland Summer Institute; Millport marine station; amendments to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010; Evaluation of the Scottish Government’s Participation in the Saltire Foundation Fellowship Programme; International recruitment plan to overcome Aberdeenshire teacher shortages; 2013 Canada-UK Collaboration Development Award Programme.
Environment and Energy: Planning Scotland’s Seas - marine consultation launch; Bee disease - American Foulbrood detected (Scotland); Protection of Shellfish Growing Waters Consultation (Scotland); Marine Litter Strategy Consultation (Scotland); Consultation on strategy to prevent litter & flytipping (Scotland); Connectivity of benthic priority marine species within the Scottish MPA network; Environmental Audit Committee Report “Protecting the Arctic: The Government’s response”; report “Energy & Climate Change - UK oil refining”.
Equalities: Consultation re Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill.
EU and International Affairs: Malawi - £3m for education, health & economic development projects; Visit of President Guebuza of Mozambique; Lords inquiry into future EU plans for justice and home affairs; European Parliament’s calendar & Forthcoming Business; Eu Parliament July Plenary Overview.
Health: Flu vaccination for all children by 2015 (Scotland); Standardised tobacco packaging in Scotland; Donation & Transplantation Plan for Scotland; Consultation on future provision of specialist intensive chronic pain management services (Scotland); NHS Working Longer Review (Scotland); Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill.
Housing and Planning: Operation of the homeless persons legislation in Scotland 2012-13; Future of Right to Buy in Scotland;
Rural Affairs: Action plan for prawn and white fisheries (Scotland); UK Consultation on comprehensive land reform in Scotland; UK Agricultural Technologies Strategy.
Transport: National Travel Survey 2012.

The University Public Affairs Team has adopted the above theme headings from the Scottish Parliament Information Centre; these are fully described here.
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**Aberdeen City Council**

**Visit of President Guebuza of Mozambique:** The President of Mozambique attended an infrastructure development conference in Aberdeen at the end of July. The conference, on the development of the emerging oil and gas industry in Mozambique, involved several of President Guebuza’s ministers, senior figures in the oil and gas industry, and representatives of Aberdeen City Council and the UK Government. President Guebuza will undertook a number of visits including to the Town House to meet with the Lord Provost and Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure director Gordon McIntosh; the Maritime Museum; Aberdeen Harbour; Robert Gordon University; ASET International Oil & Gas Training Academy; and the University of Aberdeen. Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Mark Simmonds, was one of the UK officials who attended the University segment of the visit on 25 July.

[Access University of Aberdeen Media Release here](#)

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Aberdeen City Council committee agendas are typically available in the week prior to meeting and can be accessed via the table above

**Aberdeenshire Council**

**International recruitment plan to overcome teacher shortages:** On 24 July Aberdeenshire Council announced that it was seeking to remedy teacher shortages through an overseas recruitment campaign and, over a period of three days in July, intended to interview over 30 Irish and Canadian probationer teachers in their own countries for posts in Aberdeenshire. The approach has been designed to attract teachers to the area on a temporary basis, in addition to more traditional methods of encouraging teachers to choose a long-term career in Aberdeenshire. Ireland and Canada both have high levels of surplus probationer and first year teachers. As part of a package, successful applicants will receive a full induction and conversion to Scottish education standards, a temporary work visa, accommodation and travel costs. At a cost of between £4-5,000 per teacher recruited, it is anticipated this will provide a short-term solution to Aberdeenshire’s recruitment difficulties. [More information can be accessed here ◄](#)

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Aberdeenshire Council committee agendas are typically available in the week prior to meeting and can be accessed via the table above
Scottish Parliament News

- **Recess**: The Scottish Parliament will be in recess until Sunday 1 September.

- **Consultation re Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill**: Bill sets out proposals to ensure that Scotland’s health and social care systems work together effectively to improve the provision of care in communities. The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill was introduced by the Scottish Government on 28 May and sets out a number of proposals which will enable local authorities and health boards deliver joined up care. Stakeholders are being asked to contribute their views in the call for evidence issued by the Health and Sport Committee, which has a deadline of Friday 2 August. [Access more information here](#)

- **Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill**: The purpose of the Bill is to take forward essential reforms of the criminal justice system “to enhance efficiency and bring the appropriate balance to the justice system so that rights are protected whilst ensuring effective access to justice for victims of crime”. The Bill takes forward the recommendations made by Lord Carloway and Sheriff Principal Bowen in their separate independent reviews of the criminal justice system. The Bill also includes additional provisions to take forward a range of justice priorities of the Scottish Government. The Justice Committee issued a call for written evidence on Wednesday 26 June 2013. The deadline for submissions is 5 pm Friday 30 August 2013. [Access more information here](#)

- **Festival of Politics 2013 (23 – 25 August)**: This year’s Festival of Politics will examine ‘Scotland’s Place in the World’. The three day festival, which takes place in the setting of the Scottish Parliament, will explore what has shaped Scotland’s past and debate the big issues that will shape its future. With sessions on defence, immigration, the power of small nations and Scotland’s identity, this year’s event brings together the best commentators and academics to debate the issues that define the nation. In a first for the Festival of Politics, this year will also include a Festival Café. This new space will allow festival-goers and participants to come together to continue the debate in an informal and relaxed way. [Access the full programme of the Festival of Politics here](#)

Scottish Government News

- **Malawi** - **Further £3 million for education, health and economic development projects**: In March 2013, the First Minister announced funding of £4,919,927 (2013-2016) for 15 projects in Malawi, run by Scottish-based organisations with their partners in Malawi. A further nine projects announced on 22 July have a total value of £3,190,865 over three years (2013–2016), taking the total spend to £8,110,792 for all 24 projects. The projects areas include education, health and Sustainable Economic Development.

  **HE Sector involvement** - The School of Education at Strathclyde University will receive £399,663 to encourage more trained teachers to teach in primary schools (the current system siphons the most ambitious, energetic and academically-able teachers away from working in primary schools). Scottish and Malawian academics will work together on this project to create knowledge of the course-design features that will work and make a difference in Malawi.

  **Research Institute involvement**: The James Hutton Institute will receive £397,341 to run Climate Smart Agriculture to help combat short-term food insecurity by producing the maximum yield possible with little reliance on external inputs such as fertilizer or pesticide. It is appropriate for Malawi, offering food diversity, fuel, soil health and climate adaptation.

  [Details of these 24 projects and the Scottish Government’s International Development work can be accessed here](#)
Scottish Government News continued

● **Flu vaccination - all children to be offered immunisation by 2015:** Announced on 26 July, a new immunisation programme to protect children against flu will be phased in from this autumn. Under the scheme, all children aged two and three will be offered immunisation against flu from this year, while a selection of primary schools in every health board area will take part in a pilot programme. It will be rolled out over the next two years, with children at all primary schools and selected secondary schools being offered immunisation from 2014, and all children aged two to 17 being offered the flu vaccine from the end of 2015. The changes follow advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation.

● **Gaelic Funding:** A project to develop a comprehensive dictionary of Scottish Gaelic received a £2 million boost as part of a package of funding announced by the First Minister to help secure the future of the language. First Minister Alex Salmond revealed the financial commitment, to come from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), on a visit to Sabhal Mòr Ostaig on Skye – a partner college within the University of the Highlands & Islands and the first in Scotland to teach solely in Gaelic. The compilation of the dictionary – *Faclair na Gàidhlig* – is managed by the college in partnership with the Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Strathclyde and aims to produce a historical dictionary of Gaelic comparable in value and status to those available for Scots (Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue) and English (Oxford English Dictionary). The FM also announced further funding from the Scottish Government, of £100,000 and £25,000 respectively, to support a National Sound Archive for Scotland and for the FilmG 2014, Scotland’s national Gaelic film competition, which aims to develop new talent for Gaelic channel BBC ALBA and produce significant new Gaelic content online.

● **Action plan for prawn and white fisheries:** Fishermen will be offered help to deal with the current pressures facing the industry through an action plan unveiled on 25 July. Prawn and white fish fishermen in Scotland have faced tough conditions in recent years with high fuel prices, export markets under pressure and the EU’s Cod Recovery Plan (CRP) having a detrimental effect. The dramatic fall in the availability of prawns has also caused the fleet to experience exceptionally hard times so far this year. The five-point action plan includes the following measures underpinned by up to £6 million in funding:
  - The establishment of a £3 million hardship fund for fishermen who may be facing exceptional stresses on their viability
  - An invitation to vessels to trial a discard-free prawn fishery this year by fishing with gears that eliminate whitefish by-catch. These vessels will have additional time at sea to catch their quotas where necessary, and the Scottish Government will look to secure, through European funding, a guaranteed income as they adapt to new ways of working.
  
  *The Government action plan can be viewed here.*

● **Planning Scotland’s Seas - marine consultation launched:** Sustainable economic growth that is sensitive to the environment is at the centre of draft management plans that will form the future National Marine Plan. A joint marine consultation has been launched that will help decide how Scotland’s seas are managed in the future. The joint consultation includes:
  - Scotland’s first National Marine Plan which will provide a single framework to manage all activity in Scottish waters. This will provide clarity to developers and decision makers on Scotland’s priorities for sustainable use of the sea
  - Proposals for a network of new Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) which if designated would increase protection for Scotland’s iconic marine species and habitats
  - Draft sectorial marine plans which will guide development of a sustainable and successful offshore renewable energy industry in Scotland

Throughout the 16-week consultation process Marine Scotland along with SNH and Joint Nature Conversation Committee (JNCC) will be hosting a series of events and workshops throughout Scotland. Please refer to **Scottish Government Consultations: Planning Scotland’s Seas** on page 7.
Scottish Government News continued

- **Bee disease confirmed - American Foulbrood detected in Stranraer:** An outbreak of American Foulbrood (AFB), a disease affecting colonies of honeybees, has been found in an apiary in the Stranraer area. The disease was confirmed on 2 July following laboratory diagnosis by Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA). Outbreaks of AFB have previously been reported and dealt with in this area over recent years. The AFB infected hive has been destroyed as there is no permitted treatment for the disease in the UK. There are no risks to public health from AFB and no implications for the quality and safety of honey. The movement of bees and related equipment into or out of the affected apiary are under specific controls. Bee farmers and beekeepers are being urged to be vigilant for signs of the disease, to maintain good husbandry practices and to notify any suspicion of disease to BeesMailbox@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.

  [Access the Scottish Government website on bee health here](#)

- **Standardised tobacco packaging:** In July 2013 the Scottish Government reaffirmed its commitment to introducing standardised packaging to prevent young people from starting to smoke. This followed on from the UK Department of Health’s decision to wait until standardised packaging in Australia can be measured before making a final decision on this policy. The Minister for Public Health, Michael Matheson MSP stated that the Scottish Government would now identify an appropriate timescale to introduce legislation on standardised packaging to the Scottish Parliament. Scotland launched its ambitious new tobacco control strategy in March 2013. Scotland is the third nation in the world to set a target to become tobacco-free – by having less than five per cent the population choosing to smoke by 2034.

- **Donation and Transplantation Plan for Scotland:** A new Donation and Transplantation Plan for Scotland was launched on 11 July with the aim of increasing the number of donors and transplants in order to save more lives. The plan builds on Scotland’s current record of having more than two million Scots on the NHS Organ Donor Register (highest rate of any UK country) - as well as increasing deceased donation rates by over 74% since 2008 (compared to UK-wide increase of 50%). Produced by the Scottish Transplant Group, the plan sets out 21 recommendations to increase the availability of organs and tissue for transplantation and to raise awareness with the public and professionals about organ donation, such as: deliver more high-profile and effective campaigns; continue to work with the black, asian and minority ethnic communities; involve Specials Nurse for Organ Donation in all discussions with family members; await the evaluation of the move to opt-out in Wales before making any decision about the introduction of opt-out in Scotland.

  The Scottish plan complements the new [UK Strategy, Taking Organ Transplantation to 2020](#).

  [View Donation and Transplantation Plan for Scotland here](#)

- **Operation of the homeless persons legislation in Scotland 2012-13:** On 16 July Scotland’s Chief Statistician released statistics on the operation of the homeless persons legislation in Scotland. This bulletin provides information on homelessness applications, assessments and outcomes in the period up to 31 March 2013. It also includes information on households placed in temporary accommodation as a result of a homelessness application and notifications of households at risk of homelessness due to eviction. In November 2012 the Scottish Parliament approved the Homelessness (Abolition of Priority Need Test) (Scotland) Order 2012 and the priority need test for homeless households was abolished; all unintentionally homeless households became entitled to settled accommodation. From December 2012 all local authorities met the 2012 homelessness commitment.

  [Full statistical publication can be accessed here](#)

  [Further information on Housing and Regeneration statistics within Scotland can be accessed here](#)
Scottish Government News continued

● **Fulbright-Scotland Summer Institute**: A group of American students are in Scotland to learn about our culture and identity as part of the first ever Fulbright-Scotland Summer Institute. The nine undergraduate students will take part in an intensive programme of lectures, seminars and cultural visits on the theme ‘Scotland: Culture, Identity and Innovation’ at the Universities of Dundee and Strathclyde over the next five weeks. The Education Secretary, Mike Russell, stated: “This is a great opportunity for the students from the United States to learn about the cultural, political and technological factors that have shaped modern Scotland and I hope they enjoy their time here. We value our higher education links with US counterparts and look forward to strengthening these ties in the years to come.”

[Access further details here](#)

● **Millport marine station**: Work to secure a future for the Millport marine station has moved forward following a meeting of key partners to discuss funding options. The Education Secretary, Mike Russell, chaired a meeting to help prospective new owners, the Field Studies Council - who have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding with existing owners the University of London to take on the marine station. Work is continuing to maximise potential funding available to them to secure and develop the base and the contribution it makes to the Island. Mike Russell stated that the marine station could continue to play a key role in both environmental science teaching in Scotland and the economic future of the island – and that this was why the Scottish Government would continue to work with partners including North Ayrshire Council to find a viable solution, following the University of London’s decision to close it.

● **Scottish Government Consultations: Planning Scotland’s Seas**

  **Planning Scotland’s Seas: Consultation on Priority Marine Features** - Marine Scotland is consulting on a number of proposals to take forward integrated marine planning for Scotland’s seas. The National Marine Plan proposes that Priority Marine Features should be specifically taken into account in future planning and decision making. [Consultation period - 25/07/2013 to 13/11/2013]

  **Planning Circular: The relationship between the statutory land use planning system and marine planning and licensing** - The Scottish Government has produced a circular which explores the linkages between the marine and terrestrial planning systems and provides guidance about joint working. [Consultation period - 25/07/2013 to 13/11/2013]

  **Planning Scotland’s Seas: National Marine Plan: Sustainability Appraisal Report** - This report summarises the findings from a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the draft National Marine Plan (NMP). SA of the draft plan is required by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. [Consultation period 25/07/2013 to 15/11/2013]

  **Planning Scotland’s Seas: 2013 - Possible Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas Consultation** - The Scottish Government’s aim is to achieve a well-managed network of Marine Protected Areas by 2016...and is seeking views on the case for designation of these possible Nature Conservation MPAs. It is also seeking views on other aspects of the proposals including management options to protect the features. [Consultation period - 25/07/2013 to 13/11/2013]

  **Planning Scotland’s Seas – Scotland's National Marine Plan Consultation Draft** - Creation of the National Marine Plan is a major component of the Marine (Scotland) Act and will for the first time set out national strategy. It will aim to ensure sustainable economic growth of marine industries, while taking the environmental into account, and will set out policies including economic, social and marine ecosystem objectives. [Consultation period - 25/07/2013 to 15/11/2013]

Scottish Government News continued

Scottish Government Consultations: Others Noted

Delivering Scotland’s River Basin Management Plans: Next Steps in Implementing an Integrated Approach to The Protection of Shellfish Growing Waters [Consultation period - 08/07/2013 to 27/09/2013]

Draft Scottish Marine Litter Strategy Consultation [Consultation period 4/07/2013 to 27/09/2013]

Towards a Litter-Free Scotland: Consultation on a strategy to tackle and prevent litter and flytipping [Consultation period - 04/07/2013 to 27/09/2013]

The future provision of specialist intensive chronic pain management services for residents of Scotland [Consultation period 03/07/2013 to 08/09/2013]

NHS Working Longer Review - The NHS Working Longer Review has been set up to consider the possible impact of a raised pension age on the NHS. [Consultation period - 1/07/2013 to 05/09/2013]

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill - This Bill would introduce same-sex marriage and also make various general changes to the law on marriage and civil partnerships. The Equal Opportunities Committee is looking for views both on the provisions set out in the Bill and on wider issues relating to the Bill such as freedom of speech. [call for evidence will remain open until 23 August 2013]

All current Scottish Government consultations can be accessed here

Scottish Government Publications for July 2013:


Implementation of the Certification of Death (Scotland) Act 2011 - Consultation on the Expedited "not staying registration" Procedure (15.7.13): consultation seeks views on one aspect of the planned changes to the death certification process in Scotland.

Scottish Marine and Freshwater Science Volume 4 Number 2: Connectivity of benthic priority marine species within the Scottish MPA network (15.7.13): A biophysical modelling approach that accounts for regional oceanographic variation and some degree of biological realism was used to estimate larval transport of 18 benthic invertebrates identified as priority marine features for possible nature conservation MPAs.

Amending the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (12.7.13): consultation paper sets out policy proposals for amendments to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. It takes forward recommendations made by the Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education which require legal changes.

The Future of Right to Buy in Scotland - consultation report (12.7.13): document outlines the consultation process, the policy options considered and the final decision taken, with reasons.

A Donation and Transplantation Plan For Scotland 2013-2020 (12.7.13): Scottish Government’s national plan setting out key recommendations around organ and tissue donation and transplantation in order to improve Scotland’s performance.

Scottish Government Publications for July 2013 continued:

Research Findings - An Evaluation of the Scottish Government's Participation in the Saltire Foundation Fellowship Programme (10.7.13): report presents summary findings from an evaluation of the Scottish Government's involvement with the Saltire Foundation Fellowship programme, highlighting key themes emerging from research conducted by Saltire Foundation Fellows, host organisations and Scottish Government staff.


Draft Scottish Marine Litter Strategy Consultation (4.7.13): Marine litter impacts on Scotland’s society, economy and marine environment - draft strategy will aim to address the levels of marine litter present in our marine and coastal environment.

The future provision of specialist intensive chronic pain management services for residents of Scotland (3.7.13): consultation will seek views on the possible options for the future provision of specialist intensive pain management services for residents of Scotland.

All current Scottish Government publications can be accessed here

United Kingdom Parliament News

● UK Parliament in recess: the House of Commons is in recess until 2 September 2013; the House of Lords is in recess until 8 October 2013

● Consultation on comprehensive land reform in Scotland: On 15 July the Commons Scottish Affairs Committee launched an open consultation on a programme of comprehensive land reform in Scotland. The Committee has commissioned a briefing paper from four land experts and is inviting responses from all sectors of society in Scotland and the UK more widely. The paper describes how almost half of all land in Scotland is owned by 432 landowners, who under current law receive large public subsidies but are liable for low levels of taxation on land. The Committee is inviting written responses to the paper and will subsequently hold formal evidence sessions. View paper “432:50 – Towards a comprehensive land reform agenda for Scotland” here

As part of a scheme to encourage paperless working and to maximise efficiency, the Committee is piloting a new web portal for online submissions of written evidence. Written submissions for this inquiry should therefore be sent via the Scottish Affairs Committee website.

● Report “Protecting the Arctic: The Government’s response” (17.7.13): The House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee has launched a report scrutinising the Government’s policy on the Arctic, stating that the Government is failing to grasp the urgency of protecting the Arctic from new oil and gas drilling. The Chair of the Environmental Audit Committee, Joan Walley MP, said at its launch: “What happens in the Arctic will affect the UK, impacting our weather systems and biodiversity. Yet this Government is complacently standing by and watching new oil and gas drilling even though companies like Shell cannot prove they can drill safely in such harsh conditions.” The lack of proven oil spill response techniques and the fact that the world already has more proven oil and gas reserves than can be burnt without exceeding a global average temperature rise of 2 degrees – widely regarded as a dangerous threshold - makes exploring for new reserves in the extreme Arctic environment needlessly risky, according to the report. It challenges the Government to set out how future Arctic oil and gas extraction could be reconciled with its commitment to limit global temperature increases to below 2 degrees. Access the report “Protecting the Arctic: The Government’s response” here
**Energy & Climate Change (Third Report) - UK oil refining (16.7.13):** The oil refining industry is an important component of the UK energy mix, particularly in the transport sector, and sustains an estimated 26,000 indirect and direct jobs. At a time of increased global demand, UK domestic production is in decline, leading to an increased reliance on imports. Regulatory and legislative burdens have added to industry costs, and UK industry has not managed to keep pace with the global shifts in supply and demand. Sir Robert Smith, acting Chair of the Energy and Climate Change Committee, commented: “The aim of our inquiry was to gather evidence and make recommendations ahead of DECC’s review of UK oil refining which is expected to be published toward the end of this year. In particular, we examined the pressures on industry and the implications for security of supply. Since 2009, two refineries have closed and the UK currently has seven refineries in total. Domestic production cannot keep pace with rising demand, especially for diesel products. We heard that the UK is reliant on imports for 56% of its jet kerosene. Such reliance on imports could have significant implications for energy security and resilience. It is also worrying for the estimated 26,000 jobs connected to the oil refining industry in the UK… The UK needs to maintain the health of its refining industry. A mix of domestically refined products and imports is an important ingredient of energy security and the UK refining industry is a welcome provider of jobs and tax revenue for the economy. We agree with witnesses who called for Government to set a long term framework for the industry to help secure its future.” [Access report “Energy & Climate Change - UK oil refining” here](#)

**Lords inquiry into future EU plans for justice and home affairs:** On 29 July the House of Lords Home Affairs, Health and Education EU Sub-Committee invited contributions to its new inquiry, which will examine the EU’s next five-year agenda for EU justice and home affairs (JHA) activity. The European Council is expected to begin formal discussions in June 2014 on what is likely to become known as the ‘Rome Programme’, given that it will most probably be agreed at the end of the Italian Presidency of the EU in December 2014. The next JHA programme will cover the period 2015 to 2019. Lord Hannay of Chiswick, the Chairman of the Committee, said: “We are particularly keen that the scope of this inquiry takes into account the whole extent of JHA activity, including civil and criminal justice, as well migration, internal security, data protection/privacy and international cooperation between the EU and third countries, among other areas. We intend to look at any lessons that can be learned from the application of the current Stockholm Programme, in order to suggest how the next Programme could be improved.” [Access - Call for evidence: Future Justice and Home Affairs Programme here](#)

**Investment in space technology:** The UK’s space sector will to receive almost £200 million of investment to develop the latest space technology. Minister for Universities and Science, David Willetts, made the announcement on 16 July at the UK Space Conference in Glasgow. The government is investing £60 million in SABRE - a British-designed rocket engine which could revolutionise air travel and reduce the cost of reaching space. Built by UK company Reaction Engines, the technology has the potential to create 21,000 high value engineering and manufacturing jobs, maximise the UK’s access to a £13.8 billion launcher market and drive growth in related technology areas. The Minister also announced that space technology company Astrium has been awarded a £134 million contract to develop instruments for the next generation of weather satellites. This is a direct result of increased UK investment in the European Space Agency (ESA) and will be led by a team at the company’s Portsmouth site. The Minister also highlighted Scotland’s role in driving the success of the UK space industry, citing Clyde Space at Strathclyde University for its work with the UK Space Agency to develop small satellites. [The most recent “Size and Health of the UK Space Industry” report can be accessed here](#)
2013 Canada-UK Collaboration Development Award Programme: The British High Commission and British Consulates-General in Canada are pleased to accept applications for the 2013 Canada-UK Collaboration Development Award (CDA) Programme. Applications for the current round are open to academic and industrial science and innovation experts in the UK and Canada. Ideal outcomes include joint publications; joint or complementary funding applications; student / researcher exchange programmes; sharing of equipment, materials and facilities; knowledge exchange of skills and techniques; institutional linkages; technology transfer; and industry sponsorship. Applicants should not be limited by these ideas; the development of innovative models for collaboration are strongly encouraged. Initial outcomes should be delivered over the first 6 to 12 months following the visit and lead to the development of long-term relationships. This programme is sponsored by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office’s (FCO) Superfund and is administered through the UK’s Science & Innovation (S&I) Network based in Canada. Additional details here

UK Agricultural Technologies Strategy: On 22 July the UK Department for Business, Innovation & Skills and UK Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs launched its new Agricultural Technologies Strategy. The strategy aims to establish the UK as a “world leader in agricultural science and technology” – within the context that it will “deliver sustainable, healthy and affordable food for future generations”. It states that breakthroughs in nutrition, informatics, satellite imaging, remote sensing, meteorology and precision farming mean the agriculture sector is one of the world’s fastest growing sectors. To take advantage of agriculture’s opportunities and drive growth the Agricultural Technologies Strategy sets out a range of key actions, including:

- a £90 million government investment in world class Centres for Agricultural Innovation with additional investment from industry. The centres will support the wide-scale adoption of innovation and technology across key sectors, technologies and skills in the food and farming supply chain. This includes up to £10 million for a Centre for Agricultural Informatics and Metrics of Sustainability which will use data from farms, laboratories and retailers to drive innovation
- creating a £70 million Agri-Tech Catalyst to help new agricultural technologies bridge the so called ‘valley of death’ between the lab and the marketplace. Co-funded with industry, the catalyst will specifically support small and medium sized enterprises. The investment includes £10 million to support the transfer of technology and new products to developing countries
- the creation of an industry Leadership Council to unify the agriculture technology sector and make the UK more internationally competitive
- the recruitment of a new UKTI agri-tech team to boost exports and overseas investment in the UK’s agricultural technologies

In addition also announced on 22 July:

- £30 million for four agri-science research and innovation campuses by Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
- a multi million pound scientific research partnership between Rothamsted and Syngenta to increase wheat productivity

The new Leadership Council will bring together representatives from the diverse agriculture sector, including food and farming production, industry, science and research, and government.

Access the UK Agricultural Technologies Strategy policy paper here

UK Policy - Creating stronger and safer banks: On 17 July the UK Government published the consultation document Banking reform: draft secondary legislation, which sets out draft secondary legislation proposed under the Banking Reform Bill. The consultation closes on 9 October 2013. View the UK Policy - Creating stronger and safer banks here
National Travel Survey 2012: The UK Department for Transport published the National Travel Survey on 30 July. The Survey is the latest in an established series of household surveys of personal travel in Great Britain. It is primarily designed to track long-term development of trends in travel, although short-term changes can also be detected.

Access the National Travel Survey 2012 - Statistical Release here

Report - Migration Statistics: In the a Report published on 28 July, the Commons Public Administration Select Committee claims migration statistics produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Home Office are blunt instruments for measuring, managing, and understanding migration to and from the UK. A full and accurate account of migration to and from UK requires new sources of statistics. PASC says they are not accurate enough to measure the effect of migration on population, particularly in local areas, and they are not detailed enough to measure the social and economic impacts of migration, or the effects of immigration policy. Current sources of migration statistics were established at a time when levels of migration were much lower than they are today. These sources are not adequate for understanding the scale and complexity of modern migration flows, despite attempts to improve their accuracy and usefulness in recent years. Access Migration Statistics - Seventh Report of Session 2013–14 here

European Parliament News

European Parliament’s calendar: MEPs are taking a break from official meetings in July / August. The Parliament decides its annual calendar of work on the basis of a proposal by the Conference of Presidents. The calendar is divided into plenary sittings (part-sessions) and meetings. It comprises: 12 four-day part-sessions in Strasbourg and six additional two-day part-sessions in Brussels; two weeks a month for meetings of parliamentary committees and interparliamentary delegations, one week a month for political group meetings; and four weeks a year where MEPs concentrate exclusively on constituency work.

Forthcoming Business: When the plenary sessions recommence at the end of August, the European Parliament will have to decide on matters that will affect the EU and Europeans for years to come, such as the long-term budget, banking supervision, data protection and better protection for temporary workers.

- In the autumn Parliament will vote on a proposed deal for the EU’s long-term budget for 2014-2020. This will also affect the reform of the EU’s agricultural policy.
- During the September session MEPs will vote on tougher rules for tobacco products to prevent young people from taking up smoking and a proposal to promote greener biofuels.
- Parliament is also working on a new regulation on a single set of rules for all data collected online to ensure it is kept safe as well as on a directive on data processing in law enforcement. In addition the civil liberties committee is conducting an inquiry into the Prism scandal and will report back to Parliament by the end of the year.
- In October MEPs are expected to vote on a proposal to give better protection to the one million workers temporarily posted in another European country by their employers every year.
- MEPs will also aim to reach an agreement with the Council on the single supervision of European banks.
July Plenary Overview: Croatia was welcomed as the 28th member state during this plenary, while Lithuania replaced Ireland at the helm of the European Union - promising to focus on financial stability, economic growth and jobs. Parliament voted in favour of Latvia joining the eurozone and gave the green light to a political deal on the EU's long-term budget. In addition:

- Emily O'Reilly was elected European Ombudsman on Wednesday 3 July. She will be the first female European Ombudsman when she takes over in October. The Ombudsman is responsible for investigating people's' complaints concerning how they have been treated by the EU institutions.
- Plans to freeze the auctioning of some CO2 permits to encourage firms to invest in low-carbon innovation were backed by Parliament;
- Bank board members must be personally liable for mistakes and banks' riskier trading activities must be clearly separated from their more conservative lending ones, MEPs stated in a resolution setting out Parliament's priorities for a broad overhaul of EU banks

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