Transport Systems Catapult Media Release PR02-14

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Business Secretary opens UK centre for smart transport technology

Milton Keynes, 12th June – Business Secretary Vince Cable today opened a new innovation centre for smart transport technology that will transform the movement of people and goods around the world, and help generate up to £90 billion per year for the UK by 2025.

Based in Milton Keynes, the Transport Systems Catapult's 'Imovation Centre' will help make journeys more seamless, smart, and efficient. It will support business growth in this emerging market, positioning the UK as a global leader in Intelligent Mobility products and services -- from driverless vehicles and improved airport data systems to integrated logistics, sentiment mapping and smart traffic lights.

The centre is part of the Government's industrial strategy – a long-term plan to deliver high-skilled jobs and growth.

Speaking at a special media preview of the Centre in Milton Keynes, the Business Secretary, Vince Cable said:

"Britain has a long history of transport innovation; from the shipbuilders who paved the way for globalisation, to the railways, that underpinned the industrial revolution.

This new innovation centre will ensure the UK is well placed to profit from the increased demand for high-tech transport solutions- creating jobs, supporting businesses, and driving economic growth."

Operated by the Transport Systems Catapult, the Imovation Centre (combining Intelligent Mobility and innovation) is a world-class collaboration space for innovators, entrepreneurs, research organisations and businesses using the latest technological developments to improve the transportation of people and goods. It will also offer modelling and testing facilities, allowing new products to be properly trialled and demonstrated.

Steve Yianni, Chief Executive of the Transport Systems Catapult said:

"Intelligent Mobility harnesses new technologies to create seamless journeys, where transport is smart and connected, and delays and congestions are a thing of the past. The Imovation Centre will take the brightest solutions to the most pressing transport challenges, and help make those ideas a commercial success."

It is estimated that the global market in Intelligent Mobility will be worth around £900bn a year by 2025, and the Imovation Centre aims to help the UK secure at least a ten percent share of that market. The Transport Systems Catapult will directly contribute £712 million in economic value to the UK during its first five years (2013-2018).

Following the official opening by Dr Cable, staff at the centre provided a series of demonstrations and simulations of some of the projects already being worked on, including the LUTZ Pathfinder programme which will see driverless pods being tested on the pavements of Milton Keynes. Key players from the transport industry and members of the media were also able to tour the facilities and see examples of the centre's state-of-the-art modelling and visualisation capabilities.

The Transport Systems Catapult is one of a new network of elite technology and innovation centres established by the Technology Strategy Board as a long-term investment in the UK's economic capability. Applying business-led research, Catapults help businesses transform great ideas into valuable products and services to compete in the global markets of tomorrow.

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Media Preview & Press Conference - 12th June, Milton Keynes

The Business Secretary will open the new centre at a special media preview event at 8am on Thursday 12th June. Media are invited to attend but places are limited so please contact the press office below to register. Media should aim to arrive by 7.30 to set up.

Further information and interviews:

The Transport Systems Catapult Press Office can be contacted on 01908 359 940

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Mark Ledsom, Communications Manager (mark.ledsom@ts.catapult.org.uk).

For interview requests for Vince Cable please contact the BIS Press Office:

Anthony Gale, Tel: 0207 215 6577, anthony.gale@bis.gsi.gov.uk

Video News Release (B-Roll and A-Roll footage):

http://onlinepressoffice.tnrcommunications.co.uk/catapult_transport

Password: catapult

Site live from 1700hrs BST, Wednesday 11th June 2014

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Any problems, please contact TNR on +44 (0)20 7963 7163

Examples of projects being undertaken by the Transport Systems Catapult:

The Transport Systems Catapult is already helping SMEs turn ideas into ground-breaking technology. Projects that the Catapult is already involved with include:

LUTZ Pathfinder pods: putting electric-powered driverless pods on the pavements of Milton Keynes, this project will examine the feasibility of autonomous vehicles with the long-term aim of minimising congestion levels and reducing carbon emissions.

Departure Planning Information: improving efficiency and reducing delays at airports through the provision of cutting-edge real-time departure data, linking in to a Europe-wide information network.

Stem Cell Logistics: using intelligent mobility to help save lives, this project will combine multiple datasets to ensure stem cells are delivered to labs and hospitals within critical timeframes.

Instant Weather: combining highly localised weather and transport information to improve the adaptability of transport systems when faced with extreme conditions.

Sensor Data Fusion: investigating alternatives to traditional traffic lights by examining the role that GPS technology, smart phones and in-car computers could play in creating smarter traffic flow systems.

Sentiment Mapping: using social media and other crowd-sourced information to overcome transport challenges and improve end-to-end journeys.

Air Quality Control: finding ways to reduce air pollution without hampering mobility; avoiding scenarios such as the recent Parisian restrictions on car usage in the city.