

# [News story: Transport Minister visits Reaction Engines to see space sector technology](#)

Transport Minister John Hayes visited Reaction Engines today (7 December 2017) to meet engineers, graduates and apprentices working on cutting-edge technology that will enable the UK to compete in the global space market.

Touring the innovative engineering company in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, the minister was shown the site's advanced manufacturing facilities.

Supported by a £60 million funding commitment from the UK government via the UK Space Agency and the European Space Agency, Reaction Engines are partnering with UK aerospace suppliers to deliver a prototype engine over the next few years.

During the visit, John Hayes met apprentices on the company's 4 year Level 3 Advanced Apprentice scheme, as well as Reaction Engines' first intake of graduates, who have been working alongside design engineers since September 2017.

The [Space Industry Bill](#), which is currently making its way through Parliament, will ensure businesses like Reaction Engines can take advantage of new markets, boosting the economy and creating new jobs.

Providing the framework for commercial launch and sub-orbital flight operations, the legislation will include regulations that are flexible to respond to emerging technologies. The aim is to position the UK as a market that appeals to investors and attracts the finest talent.

The minister was briefed on SABRE (Synergetic Air Breathing Rocket Engine) and the exciting heat exchanger technology which significantly reduces engine temperatures associated with high-speed flight, potentially unlocking future high speed air transport and space flights.

SABRE – Synergetic Air Breathing Rocket Engine – is a new class of engine for powering both high speed aircraft and spacecraft, enabling flight over 5 times the speed of sound in the atmosphere. The technology could enable space launch vehicles to be built that will radically improve the affordability and responsiveness of access to space.

Alongside their SABRE development Programme, Reaction Engines has developed world-leading capabilities in advanced manufacturing and offers a unique range of services from propulsion systems to advanced heat exchanger design.

Minister of State for Transport, John Hayes said:

It is tremendous to see the ingenuity and significant breakthroughs

in aerospace technologies being made by Reaction Engines here in the UK.

Increasing our space capabilities will create jobs and career opportunities for young people looking to go into science, technology, engineering and maths.

With the UK's space sector worth £13.7 billion and ambitions to grow our share of the global market by 10%, the Space Industry Bill will ensure we achieve this goal and continue to be one of the forerunners in the new space age.

Mark Thomas, Chief Executive Officer at Reaction Engines said:

I am delighted that the Right Honourable John Hayes MP chose to visit Reaction Engines today to take a closer look at our technology and to meet with our brilliant apprentices and graduates.

Being at the forefront of next generation aerospace propulsion we have a great opportunity to inspire, develop and excite young engineers and scientists who I am sure will go on to make a difference in the world. We are proud of our achievements to date, have benefited from the support of the UK government and we look forward to taking part in the ['Year of Engineering' celebrations in 2018](#), which will showcase the best of UK engineering and innovation.

Reaction Engines is enthused by the recent Spaceflight Bill and Industrial Strategy, which will unlock further opportunities and growth in a thriving UK space sector”.

John Hayes was making his first visit to the company, which is a pioneer in hypersonic and space access propulsion. Meeting the company's senior executives, the minister was able to listen to the views of those at the frontline of the space sector and understand how they will look to capture the opportunities that the Space Industry Bill will provide.