# Starmer's automotive plan misses the mark amid US tariffs



Sir Keir Starmer's recent announcement to bolster British manufacturers in the face of US tariffs reveals a deeply concerning lack of foresight and understanding of the challenges presently facing the automotive industry. While he proclaims a desire for UK manufacturers to lead the charge in the electric vehicle revolution, his proposed measures appear more like desperate gestures than robust solutions, leaving many to question whether the new Labour government can truly support businesses.

In a rather perplexing move, Starmer has introduced a relaxation of penalties for manufacturers that fail to meet electric vehicle sales targets, suggesting a lack of accountability that could undermine the industry's growth potential. Furthermore, luxury supercar brands like Aston Martin and McLaren—hardly the backbone of UK manufacturing—are conveniently exempt from stringent regulations due to their limited production numbers, essentially allowing them to sidestep the necessary transformations expected of the broader automotive sector.

The Labour government's reluctance to confront the realities of Trump's hefty tariffs—25% on foreign vehicles and 10% on other imported goods—casts a long shadow over the future of UK manufacturers. The announcement by Jaguar Land Rover to pause shipments to the US highlights the urgent need for a cohesive strategy, one that this administration has yet to deliver.

Starmer's confirmation to uphold the existing 2030 ban on selling new petrol and diesel cars, while simultaneously promising to revise manufacturing targets, reflects a disjointed approach to policy-making that places undue pressure on an already struggling industry. While hybrid vehicles may find temporary reprieve, this piecemeal action does little to inspire confidence in a comprehensive transition strategy.

The phrase "engine room of British industry," which Starmer uses to describe the automotive sector, feels hollow amid the ongoing crisis. With over 50 nations vying to renegotiate with the White House on tariff strategies, the UK could easily find itself on the losing end of a trade war that this government appears ill-prepared to handle.

Meanwhile, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent recognizes the complex layers involved in adjusting trade practices, but here in the UK, Starmer's government seems to be fumbling in the dark, offering little more than vague promises while the industry waits anxiously for clarity and direction.

Crucially, industry associations are already voicing their concern that the government's weak response to these turmoil-inducing tariffs falls drastically short of what is needed to protect UK manufacturers. With opposition from within his own ranks, including Conservative Party and Liberal Democrat members, the Labour government's unwillingness to adopt aggressive strategies for incentivizing electric vehicle purchases poses significant risks. The automotive industry deserves a proactive, innovative, and bold approach, not the tepid measures currently being debated.

As the situation unfolds, one thing is clear: the nation's automotive industry cannot afford to be left at the mercy of a Labour government that seems intent on offering half-hearted measures rather than the decisive action needed to secure its future in a global trading landscape.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/starmer-trump-tariffs-electric-vehicles-b2728419.html> - This article explains Sir Keir Starmer's plan to support UK carmakers by revising rules for electric and fossil-fuel vehicles in response to Trump's tariffs. It discusses the challenges faced by UK manufacturers like Jaguar Land Rover due to these tariffs.
* <https://news.sky.com/story/sir-keir-starmer-pledges-to-protect-uk-companies-from-trump-tariff-storm-13343046> - This news piece highlights Sir Keir Starmer's pledge to use industrial policy to shield British businesses from the impact of US tariffs, including the 25% tariff on foreign vehicles.
* <https://www.mass.gov/guide-to-evidence/article-xi-miscellaneous> - Although not directly related to the automotive or trade topics, this resource illustrates legal frameworks for admissible evidence, which can be relevant in disputes related to trade practices and industry regulations.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-net-zero-2030> - This government publication does not directly address Trump's tariffs but provides background on the UK's net-zero commitments and the transition towards electric vehicles, which is part of Starmer's strategy.
* <https://www.smmtonline.co.uk/2023/06/uk-set-to-ban-sales-of-new-petrol-and-diesel-cars-from-2030/> - This link supports the discussion about the UK's plan to ban new petrol and diesel cars by 2030, a policy reaffirmed by Starmer, which could impact car manufacturers and aligns with efforts to promote electric vehicles.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-65447776> - This article discusses the broader impact of global trade tensions and tariffs, which affects countries like the UK as they navigate complex trade relationships amidst rising protectionism, aligning with concerns raised about Starmer's approach.
* <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/starmer-wants-britain-at-front-of-electric-car-revolution-as-reforms-unveiled-GQTM7GVLZNLQHCN2VTUP3O3D3Q/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data