



**Press Release: 13/01/2010**

## **Science & Engineering Policy Debate - Tonight**

The Campaign for Science & Engineering (CaSE) is kicking off its work to make science and engineering an election issue with a debate between the three party spokespeople for science. Questions will come from the audience of 450. The debate is chaired by Roger Highfield (Editor, New Scientist) and the panel will be:

- **Lord Drayson**, Minister for Science & Innovation, Labour
- **Adam Afriyie MP**, Shadow Minister for Science & Innovation, Conservative
- **Dr Evan Harris MP**, Liberal Democrats' Science Spokesman, Liberal Democrats

**7.30pm Wednesday January 13th** 2010, with a reception beforehand from 6.30pm. It will be held at the Main Lecture Theatre, IET, Savoy Place, London WC2R 0B. Details: <http://casepolicydebate.eventbrite.com/>

- **Please reply to this email to let us know if you would like to attend and make yourselves known at the information desk on arrival.**
- **Watch live from 7.30pm on:** <http://tv.theiet.org/>

### **Commenting on tonight's debate:**

Lord Drayson said "Science and engineering are crucial to the future success of the UK. How we go for growth in the years ahead will be a key choice facing the country at the next election. I look forward to debating these issues in front of a live audience tonight."

Adam Afriyie MP, said: "Conservatives want to get Britain working with more high-tech jobs from our world-class research. I'm delighted that the main parties are coming together to discuss science ahead of the election. With the economy on its knees, forcing science cuts today, we must seize the opportunity to rebalance the economy towards the high-tech industries of the future."

Dr Evan Harris MP, said "Science and engineering are vital to the health - economic and otherwise - of the nation, and I'm glad that CaSE is once again at the forefront of holding politicians to account. We have to provide the funds, the freedom, and the framework necessary for scientists to prosper."

Nick Dusic, CaSE Director, said "The debate shows that there is a strong desire to hear what the parties' positions on science and engineering are in advance of the election. Over the coming months, each of the parties will need to develop and elaborate upon the issues that the science spokespeople cover during the debate."

Professor Christopher Snowden, IET President, said: "The major challenges facing the world today all depend critically on science and engineering solutions to bring about large scale change. With a general election just around the corner, these issues will be key topics of debate, which all of the parties must address in their manifestos. Key to ensuring the UK's economic success will be making tough decisions now, such as targeting investment in science and engineering to enable us to remain competitive in global markets."

## ENDS

### Notes to Editors

1. Press contacts:
  - Nick Dusic, CaSE Director, [nick@sciencecampaign.org.uk](mailto:nick@sciencecampaign.org.uk), 07749 953041.
  - For Lord Drayson: Will Sherlock, [will.sherlock@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:will.sherlock@bis.gsi.gov.uk), 07786 836562.
  - For Adam Afriyie MP: Daniel Gilbert, [gilbertde@parliament.uk](mailto:gilbertde@parliament.uk), 020 7219 8023, 07534 256584 or Russell Walters, 07879 644 333.
  - For Dr Evan Harris MP: Imran Khan, [KHANI@parliament.uk](mailto:KHANI@parliament.uk), 01865 245 584, 020 7219 5128, 07967 831333.
  - Robert Beahan, Communication Manager, The IET, [RBeahan@theiet.org](mailto:RBeahan@theiet.org), 01438 767336, 07595 400912.
2. There will be pictures of the debate available following its conclusion. The debate is being filmed and will be available online at <http://tv.theiet.org>. The twitter tag is #scidebate.
3. Campaign for Science & Engineering (CaSE) is a policy advocate for science and engineering in the UK. CaSE is supported by its members, which includes individuals, corporations, universities and learned societies. For more information, visit <http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk>.
4. The event is kindly hosted by The Institution of Engineering and Technology. The IET dates from 1871 and has 150,000 members in 127 countries with offices in Europe, North America and Asia-Pacific. For more information, visit <http://www.theiet.org>.