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## UK Government to Publish Guidance on Public Sector Emissions Monitoring and Reporting

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In August 2023, **the UK government announced** that it would publish guidance on emissions monitoring and reporting for public sector organizations in order to help achieve its aim to reduce direct greenhouse gas emissions from public sector buildings by 75% by 2037 (compared to 2017 levels).

Developed through three key stages, the guidance is intended to help the public sector transition to a green economy effectively by, among other things, ensuring it is able to identify decarbonization opportunities. The three key stages identified by the government are:

1. **Conduct research and develop the policy:** research to determine the different reporting approaches available and what decarbonization outcomes they can achieve.
2. **Consultation:** to maximize impact and deliverability, public sector stakeholders and external experts will be asked to provide their views.
3. **Develop and publish guidance:** following research, policy development and consultation, the finalized policy will be published into formal guidance.

The Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ), which is leading this initiative, expects to publish the guidance in 2025.

Importantly, the DESNZ will take existing emissions reporting policies into account when developing the guidance. Currently, such existing policies for the UK include: (i) Defra's Greening Government Commitments, in place until 2025 and under which the UK government has **reportedly already reduced** its emissions by 57% as of 2020-21 (compared to 2009-10)

and (ii) a phased implementation of the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations. In July 2023, [HM Treasury published guidance](#) for the Phase 1 implementation of the TCFD for central government. Although HM Treasury does not have responsibility for setting reporting requirements for local government and devolved authorities, it nonetheless can utilize the guidance.

**Taking the Temperature:** This latest initiative by the UK government follows a number of developments related to public sector decarbonization. Through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, the government provides funding for heat decarbonization and energy efficiency measures and has allocated £2.5 billion for the financial years 2020-21 to 2024-25. Capacity and capability in the sector is supported through the Public Sector Low Carbon Skills Fund, making £78 million available to public sector organizations since 2020, enabling them to secure the support required to design and deliver heat decarbonization projects.

The aim to reduce GHG emissions in public sector buildings by 75% by 2037 is an important part of the UK's Net Zero by 2050 goal given that public sector buildings are [reportedly responsible](#) for approximately 9% of GHG emissions. It will be increasingly important now given that, [as we discussed recently](#), the UK is reportedly scaling back parts of its green agenda.