

Written evidence submitted by NAPIT

Executive Summary:

While NAPIT continues to support the Government's commitment to reach Net Zero by 2050, particularly its focus on the electrification of heating and electric vehicles, we agree with the public accounts committee that there is no clear plan for achieving this from Government. The industry needs greater clarity, targeted milestones, and efforts to educate the public about the benefits of new and emerging technologies, to meet this target by the timeframe set in law. Issues we note to be instrumental in the weaknesses of the Government's approach to meeting their net zero targets to date are:

- The delay to the publication of the Net Zero Strategy and the Heat and Buildings Strategy
- The commitment to installing 600,000 heat pumps per year by 2028 without any information about how this will be realised
- An evident emerging skills gap
- High levels of policy confusion and lack of confidence in Government policy from installers due to the short-term nature of recent policy in this area

What is NAPIT?

NAPIT is a leading Government approved and United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) accredited membership scheme operator in the building services and fabric sector. There are currently more than 15,000 NAPIT registered installers in the electrical, heating, plumbing, ventilation, microgeneration and building fabric trades across the UK domestic, commercial, and industrial markets. NAPIT's certification schemes include Competent Person Scheme, Microgeneration Certification Scheme and PAS 2030 (retrofit energy efficiency measures).

NAPIT is focused on raising standards and safety within the building services sector and support our members to work competently, compliantly, and safely. We are submitting evidence in response to this request to represent the views of our highly qualified and competent registered installers.

Why the delay?

June 2019, saw the Government announce it was the first major economy globally to pass laws to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. However, over two years later and we are still waiting for the publication of the Net Zero Strategy. The first concern we would like to raise is how is it possible for installers to plan and commit to the training and certification requirements they will need to carry out the work anticipated by these targets if there is no published strategy? Secondly, the further delay of the much-awaited Heat and Buildings Strategy (HBS) that was set to be published in late 2020, adds to the issue of a lack of clarification of policy. The HBS will be instrumental in how the industry gears up to assist with the delivery of net zero carbon, and the delay of this is causing uncertainty within the market.

The issue with heat pumps...

To reach the Government Target of installing 600,000 heat pumps per year by 2028, there needs to be a significant increase in Heat Pump Installers. Quarter One 2021 figures show there were 1,044 MCS registered Air Source Heat Pump contractors installing 3,500 ASHP a year. A recently published report by Onward¹ suggests that if we continue the current trajectory the 600,000 target will not be met until 2057 at the earliest. The Heat and Buildings Strategy needs to clarify how the Government intends to support the delivery of 600,000 heat pumps per year by 2028.

Alongside a need for a greatly increased number of qualified, competent and registered heat pump installers, there are further issues that need to be addressed to meet this heat pump target. Such as how best to incentivise the installation cost of these for homeowners and how to raise awareness and promote the benefits of such technologies to encourage trust in them.

The Clean Heat Grant is due to replace the domestic RHI in April 2022 yet the delayed Government response to the consultation², is adding to the uncertainty around this area.

Upskilling and Upscaling the workforce

It is becoming increasingly evident that there is a skills gap in the 'green skills' workforce that will need to be overcome to meet the net zero carbon emission targets. A report from the Institute of Public Policy Research³ has suggested that industry is fragmented and there is a need for strong leadership from the Government. This issue is worsened by an infrastructure investment gap and an aging workforce, the report suggests more than one in three workers in the sector are over 50.

Additionally, a report by Friends of Earth⁴ suggests that only 161 out of the 571 approved apprenticeships in England, support decarbonisation with many needing important updates, such as how to install heat pumps.

Reassuring signs from Government suggest they are aware of the potential skills shortage and are taking steps to assist with this, such as the investment into short and modular courses from the Institute of Technology⁵, however, these short courses do not go far enough to create a workforce confident in installing clean heat measures and could simply be seen as a short-term fix for a very long-term problem.

Streamlining Installer Requirements

Whilst continuously improving standards and protecting consumers must remain the cornerstones of Government policy, consideration must be given to the impact on installers of the cost and complexity of complying with differing certification requirements. The table in appendix 1 of this infographic⁶, details the multitude of requirements for the many Government schemes.

The multiple certification and registration requirements, required by installers who wish to access Government incentive schemes, cause frustration within the industry. The process is often over

¹ Onward (October 2021), Green Shoots How to drive innovation to meet net zero

<https://www.ukonward.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Green-Shoots.pdf>

² Clean Heat Grant: further policy design proposals - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

³ Institute of Public Policy Research (February 2021), Skills for a Green Recovery

<https://www.ippr.org/files/2021-02/skills-for-a-green-recovery-feb2021-summary.pdf>

⁴ Friends of Earth (February 2021) An emergency plan on green jobs for young people

https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2021-03/EMERGENCY_PLAN_GREEN_JOBS_FEB_2021.pdf

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-more-adults-set-to-benefit-from-new-technical-skills>

⁶ [Meeting-the-Governments-Net-Zero-Emissions-Targets-an-installers-perspective.pdf \(napit.org.uk\)](#)

bureaucratic, and the Government must consider how to make the process of demonstrating compliance and reporting information as streamlined as possible to generate interest in this area from installers.

Policy Confusion

A major issue exists in competing policies and an overwhelming number of different sources of information. Although we hope the Heat and Buildings Strategy and Net Zero Strategy will be a step in the right direction to overcome this issue by providing clarity and certainty, the delay to both is not promising.

As a business, NAPIT is committed to providing installers with high quality, relevant certification options, to enable them to get their work done as efficiently as possible. We invest a lot of time in educating our installers about Government policy and priorities, in order to give them plenty of time to get prepared if they so wish. However, the delays to the overarching strategy documents and the short-term, stop-start nature of previous schemes such as the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme and a lack of clarity over the replacement of the Renewable Heat Incentive makes this task difficult.

We need long term clarity and certainly to rebuild trust in this sector and encourage installers to play their part in the move to net-zero carbon emissions. They are the UK's delivery network, and without a strong, stable, confident, and competent installer base- reducing the carbon emissions in dwellings will not be possible.

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