

# MEETING NET ZERO: HOW THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY CAN HELP



**Peter Ross, founder and MD of CP Cases, provides his insight into what manufacturers can do to cut emissions and meet the 2050 net zero targets.**

The UK government's net zero target aims to reduce the country's greenhouse gas emissions by 100% from 1990 levels – by 2050. However, in a new report, the government has admitted that the new strategy could fail to meet the legally enforceable targets. The government's recently released [Powering Up Britain](#) policy showed revised calculations that they would only deliver 92% of the emission reductions needed to meet the UK's 2030 goal.

With the importance of meeting net zero targets becoming very apparent if we're to make a significant change, it's time for many industries to help reduce their own

emissions. One of those industries is manufacturing. As part of the net zero targets, the government aims to cut emissions from manufacturing by about two-thirds by 2035. To help make these changes, the government is providing [£160 million to update manufacturing infrastructure](#).

Whilst structural changes and improved energy efficiency in the UK's manufacturing sector have helped to halve industry emissions since 1990, the pace has begun to slow.

As it stands, the manufacturing and refining sector produces 15% of the UK's CO2 emissions. Peter Ross – founder and MD of [bespoke protective equipment cases](#) company CP Cases – shares some insights into how manufacturing can help to reach those net zero targets.

How the manufacturing industry can help reach net zero

The government's net zero plans are extremely ambitious, with revisions already underway. With £34.8m being allocated to help energy-intensive industries decarbonise, critics say there is still more that can be done. Here are three key areas where manufacturers can decarbonise:

## Onshore manufacturing

Onshoring is the sourcing and production of goods from the company's origin country. Whilst many companies look to offshore their manufacturing to save money, several benefits come with onshore manufacturing cutting the risks associated with offshoring, with the added benefit of investing in your country's economy.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the need for a secure supply chain that's both resilient and agile became clear. By manufacturing in your home country, you face much shorter lead times, cutting delays due to global shipping waits and customs clearance. The lack of reliance on volatile markets that can face global disruptions puts companies in a great position to adapt to change.

Another key benefit to onshore manufacturing is the sustainability of eliminating global supplies. This reduces the environmental impact of manufacturing as the distance between suppliers and their final points of arrival has been decreased. By reducing our emissions and manufacturing closer to home, we can get closer to winning the battle for net zero.

CP Cases are and always will be a fully in-house manufacturer based in the UK as our main base but also with a base in the US to manufacture for the US markets, predominantly military. It has been an interesting road to over 50-years and we are continually innovating into how we can streamline our onshore manufacturing with a lot of investment into digitisation.

## **Circular manufacturing**

Circular manufacturing focuses on remanufacturing existing products to extend the product's life, preventing excess waste and consumption. The product can then continue to be used by the existing customer or sold to a new customer. By using this model, you're also further encouraging onshore manufacturing as customers will send products directly to your company to be remanufactured.

Research from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation claims 45% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions can be tackled by changing the way goods are made and used. Not only does this reduce emissions, but it also provides a competitive advantage as customers can save money through remanufacturing rather than purchasing a brand-new product.

The demand for new materials places a significant strain on the environment, with companies producing more emissions to keep up with demand. Circular manufacturing enables companies to reduce this demand by 50-98%. What's more, the energy required to remanufacture products is often up to 90% less than when manufacturing from scratch with raw materials.

Our cases go through rigorous testing to achieve the strength and protection provided for your equipment. We continually have orders for new latches or handles or other assembled features which shows the long life-cycle of our cases.

## **Lean manufacturing**

Lean manufacturing was developed by Toyota, who wanted to streamline their production processes by reducing waste and increasing productivity. The idea of lean manufacturing focuses on cutting unnecessary transportation (remaining onshore), reducing inventory, overproduction and excess processes. Lean manufacturing is essential, as with the growing global supply chain, opportunities for warehouse waste are higher than ever. By focusing on stripping back production processes, we can not only save money, but also reduce emissions, getting closer to those net zero targets.

At CP Cases, the [protective equipment cases for transit & storage](#) feature foam inserts. To reduce waste, we've signed an agreement with Ramfoam for them to collect foam waste free of charge. This will greatly decrease foam waste going to landfill, by perhaps 90%. The waste foam is then sent to Finland, where it is ground up and used as a base layer on 5G football pitches. Even small changes like this can significantly reduce waste going into landfills, helping to further cut those emissions.

Whilst the road to net zero is long, manufacturers can all make small changes to greatly reduce emissions and contribute to the government's targets. Not only will targets be met, but companies can position themselves above competitors, as better placed to transition into a greener future.