

Revolutionising Environmental Compliance

Introduction:

Creating a Smarter, Fairer System with a Digital-First Approach

A large central government department is delivering a landmark digital transformation through the Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR) programme - ensuring businesses contribute fairly to recycling costs while driving greater transparency and sustainability in waste management.

Mercator Digital is partnering with ATOS/Eviden to design, develop, and deliver a scalable, compliant digital service for our client. The service will allow businesses to register, report packaging data, and pay compliance fees, while providing real-time monitoring for environmental agencies.

This initiative is simplifying compliance, increasing efficiency, and ensuring regulatory alignment across the UK. With the spring 2025 launch approaching, pEPR is set to redefine environmental compliance, making it smarter, fairer, and more accessible.

The Challenge:

Adapting to Regulatory Demands at Scale

As a critical part of the UK's environmental strategy, pEPR is designed to ensure that businesses contribute proportionally to the cost of recycling packaging waste. However, building a digital service at scale required overcoming key challenges:

- **Regulatory Complexity** - compliance needed to be seamlessly aligned across the four devolved UK nations, while adapting to ongoing policy updates.
- **Business Accessibility** - the system had to work for multinational corporations and small independent traders alike, each with different levels of digital maturity.
- **Operational Efficiency** - the service needed to streamline data collection, automate fee distribution, and provide real-time oversight for regulators.



Our Approach

Our method of working with the pEPR has been rooted in collaboration, data-driven decision-making, and iterative development - ensuring the service is compliant, intuitive and effective.

Our adaptive approach is ensuring pEPR is delivered on time and optimised for success.

A Collaborative Process for User-Centred Design

Ensuring alignment across government, businesses and regulators was key. To achieve this we:

- Engaged stakeholders through workshops and interviews - working directly with producers, regulators and industry experts to refine requirements.
- Used iterative prototyping & testing - developing interactive mockups and running real-world usability testing to optimise functionality.
- Ensured cross-government compliance - collaborating with environmental agencies in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland to meet GDS standards, while addressing regional regulatory variations.

Result: An intuitive, user-focused service designed to ensure smooth adoption and compliance across the UK.

A Digital-First Compliance Service

Mercator's approach to service design and automation is shaping pEPR into a seamless and future-proof platform that will:

- Enable businesses to register, submit data, and pay compliance fees effortlessly.
- Provide environmental agencies with real-time dashboards to enhance monitoring and decision-making.
- Automate fee calculations and data validation, reducing administrative burdens.
- Ensure accessibility and usability, making compliance straightforward for all businesses.

Result: A smarter, automated compliance service reducing manual effort while increasing transparency, and regulatory visibility.

Agile, Scalable & Secure Implementation

pEPR is being developed using Mercator's proven experience for delivering secure, scalable government services, at pace using agile methodologies.

- **Agile development & continuous improvement** - operating on two-week sprints ensures rapid value delivery while remaining adaptable to legislative updates.
- **Cloud-based infrastructure** - built on Azure DevOps & Heroku, providing resilience, security, and scalability.
- **Automated testing & QA** - our high level of test automation drives accuracy, compliance, and operational reliability.
- **GDS compliance & accessibility** - the service is fully aligned with Government Digital Service (GDS) standards, to ensure usability and accessibility for all users.

Result: A scalable, resilient and future-proof platform that evolves with changing regulations while maintaining security, efficiency, and ease of use.

Expected Outcomes

The pEPR registration service is set to deliver significant benefits:

- **Faster, more intuitive business registration** - reducing time spent on compliance.
- **Enhanced data accuracy** - automated validation ensures more reliable reporting.
- **Greater regulatory oversight** - agencies gain real-time insights and compliance tracking.
- **Automated fee distribution** - ensuring fair and efficient allocation of recycling contributions.

By combining automation, real-time data tracking, and user-driven design, pEPR is set to provide a new standard for digital compliance in the UK's packaging industry.

What This Means for the Future

- **Scalability for future policy changes** - the system is designed to adapt to new legislation and reporting requirements.
- **Expanding sustainability initiatives** - potential to integrate with wider environmental initiatives such as circular economy models.
- **Setting a benchmark for digital compliance** - establishing a blueprint for future government-led environmental compliance services.



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