



Australian Government

Department of Sustainability, Environment,
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RAC industry and ARC licence scheme – Growing from strength to strength

Refrigerant Trading Authorisations (RTAs) and Refrigerant Handling Licences (RHLs) have experienced amazing growth since the licensing scheme's inception in 2005.

This reflects a strong and healthy refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) industry – an industry that has embraced the licensing scheme and its environmental goal to minimise the release of fluorocarbon refrigerants into the atmosphere.

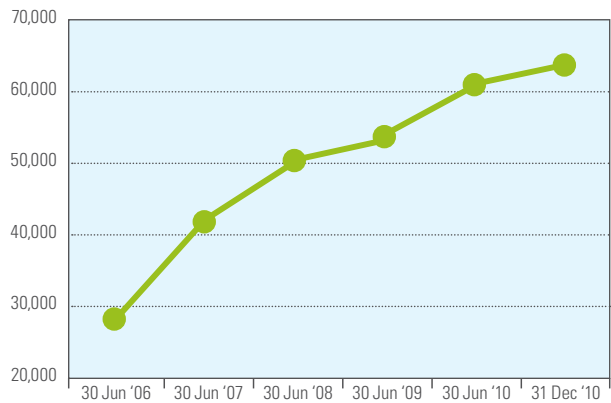
At the inaugural ARC Members' Forum held in Sydney in September 2010, it was recommended by our members that the ARC highlight the growth of the licensing scheme. The graphs to the right show the growth of both RTAs and RHLs over the last six years.

Average growth – per year – for RHLs since 2006 is almost 20 per cent, with 10 per cent average growth recorded for RTAs over the same period

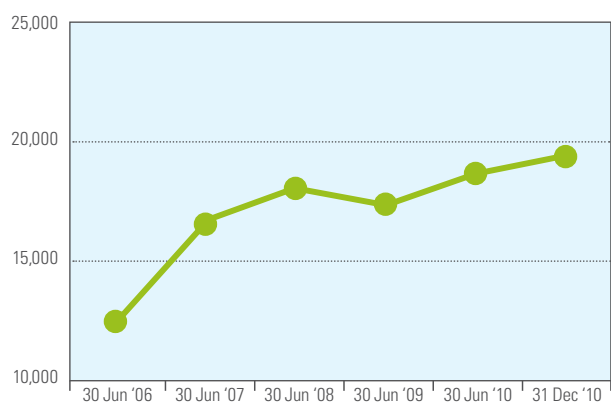
You are making a difference.

The Antarctic ozone hole is the smallest it has been in the past five years, according to research by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research in New Zealand in December 2010. Researchers say that this improvement is directly related to international initiatives such as the Montreal Protocol. Keep up the good work!

Refrigerant Handling Licence (RHL) Trend Year on Year



Refrigerant Trading Authorisation (RTA) Trend Year on Year



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Understanding ARC Audits

As part of delivering the ARC licensing scheme for the RAC industry, the ARC conducts audits of RTA holders and unlicensed businesses/individuals suspected of handling refrigerants.

If your business is contacted and notified that an audit will be taking place soon, don't be alarmed. In fact, use the audit as an opportunity to benchmark yourself against industry best practice and as a means to better understand the regulations affecting your business.

The ARC conducts two types of audits:

Compliance Audits

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Drive-by Audits

Compliance Audits – These are audits conducted by trained ARC field officers on existing authorisation holders to ensure they are following the regulations and conditions, as per their licence requirements. The outcome of a compliance audit is either – compliant or non-compliant.

Drive-by Audits – These are audits conducted by trained ARC field officers on businesses/individuals who are not licensed but are suspected of handling refrigerants. The outcome of a drive-by audit is as follows: no further action required as unlicensed handling is not occurring; or conversion (the business/individual is found to be handling refrigerant and as a result becomes licensed).

Audit Statistics 2010-11 – From July 1, 2010 to mid Jan 2011, a total of 1830 compliance audits have been conducted, with 1572 Licensees found to be compliant. If you are found to be non-compliant, the ARC provides you with a list of the areas that need to be addressed and you will be given 14 days to rectify the areas of non-compliance.

Retailers show support for ARC licensed technicians

National retail chain Sam's Warehouse recently included a statement in their Christmas catalogue encouraging purchasers of a particular air conditioner to use ARC licensed technicians for the installation of their new system.

The statement read:

Split System Air Conditioner

3.4kW heating and cooling capacity, sleep/timer functions, adjustable louvres. Includes remote control. Installation must be carried out by an Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC) licensed technician.

This is a fantastic promotion for licensees and reinforcement that ARC efforts to communicate the 'Look for the Tick' message have been working.

Getting major retailers on board with the 'Look for the Tick' message will continue to be a goal of the ARC in 2011.

We will continue our concerted efforts to increase exposure for licensees and encourage other retailers, like Sam's Warehouse, to spread the word about the importance of using licensed technicians.

Our first step will be to encourage retailers to stock Air Conditioning Guides. The current one is available for download at lookforthetick.com.au. If you come across any retailers who are interested in stocking the guide, then let the ARC know on **1300 88 44 83** or email enquire@arctick.org

ARC Auto Guide drives home 'Look for the Tick' message with consumers

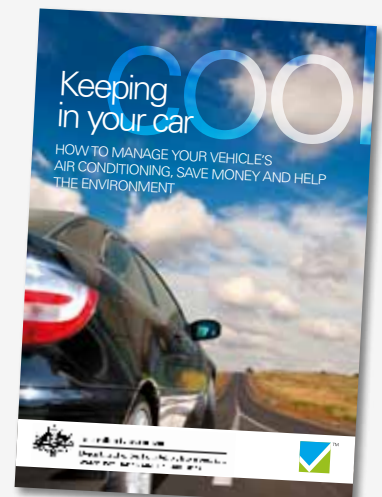
The success of our online Air Conditioning Guide for consumers has continued with the introduction of a dedicated online guide for car air conditioners. This guide was created to raise awareness about the importance of using licensed technicians to manage a vehicle's air conditioning system.

The Auto Guide provided the final piece of the puzzle for the ARC's summer online marketing campaign. A targeted online communication plan involving search engines such as Google and banner advertising on relevant websites has resulted in the following consumer downloads of our air conditioning guides.

- 2600 downloads of the Air Conditioning Guide
- 500 downloads of the Auto Air Conditioning Guide

Licensees in the automotive sector make up almost 50 per cent of all licences issued by the ARC. That is in excess of 36,000 licences, Australia-wide. They play a vital role to help minimise the impact of harmful refrigerants released into the atmosphere and it is essential that consumers are aware of the role of licensed technicians when they get their car air conditioning serviced.

Note that at the time of going to print the online campaign was still in progress. Updated figures will be provided in the next issue of CoolChange.



Spam warning for RTA holders

A spam email that targeted RTA holders in 2008 has resurfaced again.

The email – reputed to be from an online business directory – specifically targets ARC licence holders and comes from the email address – artcik@aircondition.com.au (sic).

Neither the ARC nor the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPaC) have any association with these emails and do not endorse the service advertised therein.

Details provided to the ARC by licensees are stored in confidence and are not released to any organisation for marketing purposes.

If you have received this email, we would encourage you to refer it to the ACMA on 1300 850 115 or visit: www.acma.gov.au for more information to assist you with identifying spam emails.

If you have any further concerns about this matter, please contact the ARC on 1300 88 44 83 or email enquire@arctick.org



Understanding imports: vehicle or boat air conditioning systems

The Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989 controls the manufacture, import and export of ozone depleting substances (ODS) and synthetic greenhouse gases (SGG) in Australia.

The Act stipulates that a Pre-Charged Equipment (PCE) Licence is required for the importation of refrigeration and/or air conditioning equipment that contains hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) or hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC) refrigerant.

A PCE licence is required even if the air conditioner or refrigeration equipment is incorporated into equipment such as cars, boats, caravans, or any other vehicle or equipment (including earth moving equipment).

All imports of refrigeration and air conditioning equipment trigger the PCE licence requirement unless the equipment does not contain an HFC or HCFC refrigerant. Detailed information about PCE licences, including application forms can be found at:

www.environment.gov.au/gaslicence

Importers should note that the importation of most air conditioning equipment pre-charged with HCFC refrigerant was banned on 1 July 2010. For more information on the HCFC equipment ban, please visit:

www.environment.gov.au/atmosphere/ozone/licences/pre-charged-hcfc-ban.html

Importers should note that air conditioning and refrigeration systems in vehicles, boats and equipment manufactured prior to, or during the 1990s may be designed to run on chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

The importation of air conditioning or refrigeration equipment designed to run on CFCs (whether gassed or degassed) has been banned and has not been allowed in Australia since 1996.

If you are importing an old car and its air conditioning system is designed to run on CFC refrigerant, then all CFCs and CFC components must be removed and the system retrofitted before the article's arrival in Australia.

If the refrigerant has been removed (therefore not charged) and the system has been retrofitted so that it can no longer operate using a CFC refrigerant, a PCE licence may not be required. In this instance, detailed documentary evidence will need to be provided to Customs and Border Protection before the import can be released.

For detailed information about documentary evidence requirements, including various import scenarios, please visit:

www.environment.gov.au/atmosphere/ozone/licences/vehicle-import.html



If you require further information please contact the Ozone and Synthetic Gas Team on:

Ph: +61 2 6274 1373

Fax: +61 2 6274 1610

email: ozone@environment.gov.au



Have you changed address?

To keep you informed of issues relevant to your profession, we need your correct mailing address. We respectfully request that you advise us of any changes to your contact details via email to enquire@arctick.org



Prefer email?

If you would prefer to receive *CoolChange* via email, please email your details to coolchange@arctick.org

No occupational licensing for WA RAC industry



In November 2010, Bill Marmion, WA Minister for Commerce, advised that the WA Government had 'no current intention' to introduce occupational licensing for air conditioner and refrigeration installers.

This was in response to the Occupational Licensing National Law (WA) Bill 2010 which has been passed by the lower house of Parliament.

Occupational licensing is not to be confused with the national environmental licensing program administered by the ARC – which is still very much a requirement for all states & territories – including WA.

Occupational licensing focuses on consumer protection and public health and safety, whereas the RTA and RHL Licences administered by the ARC on behalf of DSEWPac are environmental protection based licences.

There is a push for a national occupational licensing system by COAG (Council of Australian Governments) to eliminate the burden that a state-based licensing scheme can have on businesses operating in different states. However, with this particular system, powers would still reside with the states – except for administration which would be handled nationally by the National Occupational Licensing Authority.

Don't let your licence expire if you are still working in the RAC sector

Re-applying for your Refrigerant Trading Authorisation (RTA) or your Refrigerant Handling Licence (RHL) was made easier with the introduction of the online application facility on the ARC website in July 2009. Now, 82 per cent of licensees are choosing to re-apply online.

If you decide to re-apply after your details have been archived, you will have to undergo the entire application process again. This includes providing full details of staff who handle refrigerant and equipment (for RTAs), providing certified qualifications and a passport sized photograph for RHLs, as well as undergoing the entire application assessment process. This is time consuming and will delay the issue of your licence.

It is an offence under the Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Regulations 1995 to acquire, store or dispose of refrigerant without a Refrigerant Trading Authorisation or to handle refrigerant without a Refrigerant Handling Licence. The maximum penalty for handling refrigerant without a RHL is \$1,100 and the maximum penalty for acquiring, storing or disposing of refrigerant without a RTA is \$1,100 for an individual and \$5,500 for a corporation.

The ARC also targets expired RTAs and RHLs for drive-by audits, with 3,000+ drive-bys conducted each year.

So keep an eye out for your re-application notice and jump online to re-apply. It's quick and easy and will allow you to continue to do what you do best.



The ARC Customer Service team reminds you to re-apply, with letters sent 60 and 30 days prior to your RTA or RHL expiring, as well as a third and final reminder sent 30 days after your licence expires. Unfortunately, if you have not re-applied by this stage, your details are archived in the database.

IF YOU DON'T RENEW YOUR LICENCE, YOU WILL HAVE TO RE-APPLY AND FACE NEW ASSESSMENT