



Australian Government

Department of Sustainability, Environment,  
Water, Population and Communities



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# High compliance rates point to professional and healthy RAC industry

Last year 88 per cent of audits conducted by ARC field officers were compliant.

These results demonstrate the professionalism of many in the RAC industry and acknowledges the licence scheme as an important part of a healthy sector in general.

Over 7000 audits were conducted last financial year.

In normal circumstances, if an audit is deemed non-compliant, the ARC supplies the RTA holder with a list of the items that need to be addressed and provides 14 days to comply. If these areas are not fixed, the issue may be passed on to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities for enforcement action. Also, if the RTA has not corrected the issues come renewal time, any reapplication for a licence or authorisation will be denied until the issues are rectified. Non-compliant businesses cannot renew their RTA and, as a consequence, will not be able to purchase refrigerant gas.

More often than not, the reasons for a non-compliant assessment are easy to fix. The ARC auditors make it a priority

to work with companies and people in a collaborative way to help them comply with the law.

Another way the ARC monitors compliance of licence and authorisation holders is through notifications regarding breaches of the Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Regulations 1995 (the Regulations). Currently the ARC receives notifications through mail, phone and email.

The ARC gathers evidence and information on the alleged breach. Serious offences and offences identified and assessed by the ARC that are not rectified in a timely manner are referred to the department for legal action.

Non-compliant practices may be escalated to the department's compliance management panel.

For further information on the department's approach towards compliance visit <http://www.environment.gov.au/about/publications/compliancepolicy.html>



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# Not happy with a RAC training course? Notify ASQA

The Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Regulations 1995, which underpins the RAC licence scheme and the assessment of licence applications, identifies specific qualifications that are necessary for the issue of a licence.

The ARC's role is to assess that the applicant has achieved the correct qualifications.

The ARC does not differentiate between qualifications obtained from different training organisations.

As well as being set in the regulations, the qualification levels that are required for the various ARC licence-types are nationally recognised through the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and should be of the same quality regardless of the training institution they were received from.

From time to time, two or three day courses are advertised for Certificate II level qualifications in the RAC sector. Without prior training or appropriate experience it is not possible to obtain any of the Certificate II level qualifications required for the various refrigerant handling licences administered by the ARC, after completing a two or three day course.

The training organisations advertising this course requires the person enrolling to have previous experience/qualifications which can

be officially acknowledged as recognition of prior learning (RPL). The criteria for RPL is based on a set of national competency standards, endorsed through the AQF process.

If you believe that a specific training provider is delivering a sub-par course you should contact the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) - the national regulator for the Australian vocational education and training sector – on 1300 701 801 or visit [www.asqa.gov.au](http://www.asqa.gov.au)

## ARC at ARBS – Cool advice on the licence scheme

The ARC would like to say thank you to all the people who took the time to visit our stand at the recent Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Building Services trade exhibition (ARBS) in Melbourne.

With over 70,000 RAC professionals Australia-wide either licensed or authorised through the ARC, it was important that we had a presence at ARBS to ensure all questions were answered, and feedback was responded to, directly.

With help from ARC Field Officers Clive Shaw, Rod Cumming and Laurie Rutter – we made sure we had the knowledge and expertise on hand to help with all licence-related enquiries.

Questions regarding licence entitlements, the online application process and requests for ARC promotional items were popular, as well as guidance on worksite compliance with the regulations.



### Reminder – equivalent carbon price for SGG to take effect from July 1

From 1st July 2012, an equivalent carbon price will be added to all imported and Australian manufactured synthetic greenhouse gases (SGG) – including imported manufactured products containing SGG.

This price will apply to bulk refrigerants and refrigeration and air conditioning equipment, including domestic, commercial and vehicle air conditioners, and domestic and commercial refrigerators and freezers.

To help licence and authorisation holders better understand how the equivalent carbon price will be applied, the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities website has a variety of fact sheets on the affect, application and calculation of the equivalent carbon price on synthetic greenhouse gases, as well as a related FAQs section and an Import Levy and Equivalent Carbon Price Calculator. Visit <http://www.environment.gov.au/atmosphere/ozone/sgg/equivalentcarbonprice/index.html>

## ISC announces new electrotechnology qualifications related to RHLs

The Industry Skills Council (ISC) has updated a number of qualifications from the National electrotechnology Training Package which relate to qualifications required for Refrigerant Handling Licences (RHL) issued through the ARC.

The following table outlines the current and new electrotechnology training package qualifications and the RHLs they apply to. For a full list of licences, entitlements and qualifications required visit [www.arctick.org](http://www.arctick.org) and click on the RHL tab to view the RHL information brochure.

Licence Name	Current electrotechnology qualifications aligned to RHL	New electrotechnology training package qualifications
Full refrigeration and air conditioning licence	UTE 30999 Certificate III in Electrotechnology Refrigeration and Air conditioning; UEE 31307 Certificate III in Refrigeration and Air conditioning	UEE 32211 Certificate III in Air conditioning and Refrigeration; UEE 42711 Certificate IV in Air conditioning and Refrigeration Servicing; UEE 42811 Certificate IV in Air conditioning Systems Energy Management and Control; UEE 42911 Certificate IV in Refrigeration and Air conditioning Systems; UEE 50311 Diploma of Electrical and Refrigeration and Air conditioning; UEE 51211 Diploma of Air conditioning and Refrigeration Engineering; UEE 62511 Advanced Diploma of Air conditioning and Refrigeration Engineering
Restricted heat pump (split system) installation and decommissioning licence	UEE 20107 Certificate II in Air conditioning Split Systems	UEE 20111 Certificate II in Split Air conditioning and Heat Pump Systems; UEE 40510 Certificate IV in Electrical – Air conditioning Systems; UEE 40511 Certificate IV in Electrical – Air conditioning Split Systems
Restricted domestic refrigeration and air conditioning appliance licence	UTE 20599 Certificate II in Electrotechnology Servicing (Appliances - Refrigeration); UTE 20504 Certificate II in Electrotechnology Servicing (Appliances - Refrigeration); UEE 21807 Certificate II in Appliance Servicing-Refrigerants; UEE 21810 Certificate II in Appliance Servicing-Refrigerants; UEE 30507 Certificate III in Appliance Servicing; UEE 30510 Certificate III in Appliance Servicing	UEE 32111 Certificate III in Appliance Service

## R40 refrigerant in Australia

In November 2011, Maersk Line grounded 844 refrigerated shipping containers after three container explosions in Brazil and Vietnam. Maersk identified that the three containers had undergone repairs in the same repair yard in Vietnam. The explosions are believed to have resulted from use of refrigerant contaminated with methyl chloride (R40). R40 is a flammable and toxic gas which if present in a system with aluminium components can form trimethyl aluminium which can spontaneously combust on contact with air.

The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities has recently been notified of contaminated and counterfeit refrigerant containing R40 in Australia.

In April 2012, a recall of a small number of packaged refrigeration units was announced due to substitution of R134a with a refrigerant mix of R40, R22 and R142b. The counterfeit refrigerant was discovered by the manufacturer following serious compressor failure after a period of one-three months operation. The packaged refrigeration units were imported pre-charged with the counterfeit refrigerant.

A small number of cylinders returned through Refrigerant Reclaim Australia's refrigerant recovery program have returned positive

tests for R40. Some of the R40 contaminated refrigerant has entered Australia in the recalled packaged refrigeration units mentioned above. However some of the returned cylinders do not appear to be linked to the recalled packaged refrigeration units. It is therefore possible that some R40 contaminated refrigerant has entered Australia through other sources.

The department and the ARC would like to remind the industry it is a contravention of both your refrigerant handling licence and your refrigerant trading authorisation to store refrigerant in a disposable cylinder. It is also illegal to import disposable cylinders of fluorocarbon refrigerant. Any suspected use of disposable refrigerants can be reported to the ARC at [enquire@arctick.org](mailto:enquire@arctick.org) or to the

department at [RAC@environment.gov.au](mailto:RAC@environment.gov.au).

An industry task force is working to determine the extent of the presence of R40 in Australia and how this issue can best be managed. The department and the ARC commend the industry on its efforts to date.

Technicians are reminded to follow all Australian Standards and Codes of Practice for refrigerant handling. In particular that refrigerant should be appropriately recovered and not emitted to the atmosphere.

If you have concerns regarding the safety of a particular pre-charged product, you are encouraged to contact the relevant Work Cover authority in your State or Territory or the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.





## Have you changed address?

To help the ARC keep you up-to-date with all licence-related information, please visit the Online Application & Change of details section of **www.arctick.org** and update your details if you have changed address or phone/email

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## Prefer email?

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

# What do RTAs think of the ARC audit experience?

As a way to ensure the ARC is providing high quality compliance services, we conduct random surveys on RTAs after an audit is performed. We are particularly interested to learn about the overall audit experience, the performance of the ARC field officers and the value RTA holders get from the audit. The feedback so far has been very positive with the following results recorded for our last round of surveys in March:

*When the auditor first contacted you to organise a time for the audit, was he easy to contact and understanding of your needs?*

- Yes – 100%
- No – 0%

*Did the documents sent to you prior to your audit help you understand what would be involved in the audit?*

- Strongly Agree – 44%
- Agree – 53%
- Somewhat Agree – 0%
- Disagree – 1%

*Was the auditor clear about what was needed from you during the audit?*

- Yes – 98%
- No – 2%

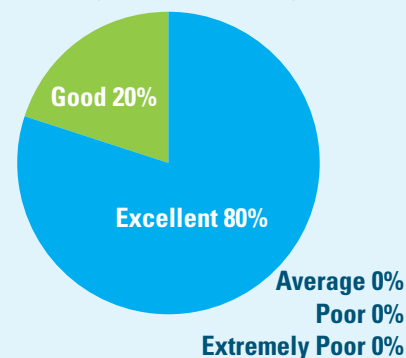
*Did the auditor help you understand your obligations under the law?*

- Yes – 100%
- No – 0%

*Do you feel more confident with your compliance requirements after the audit?*

- Yes – 95%
- No – 5%

*Please rate your overall audit experience*



ARC audits are conducted by qualified field officers who have extensive experience in the RAC sector and understand the pressures and demands you have as technicians and business owners.

For those RTAs who have not been audited yet, these results – and the high number of 'compliant' audits performed – demonstrate that, not only is the audit experience a professional and valuable one, but also, that the majority of authorisation holders are taking their compliance obligations seriously.

For further information on what RTA holders need to be doing to remain compliant – visit **www.arctick.org** and click on the audit tab.

## New department director for the RAC Licence Scheme

Janet Hughes is the new director responsible for the refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) licence scheme at the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.

Janet has a background in industrial chemistry and materials science, as well as an ongoing association with the RAC sector through her work with Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) and the former Department of Industry Tourism and Resources – where she worked on energy efficiency policy development.

"I am excited to be working closely with the RAC industry again", Janet told *Cool Change*.

Her previous involvement with CIBSE promoted mutual understanding of professional issues by museum staff and air conditioning personnel, where she undertook research with an engineer on complex issues related to the operation of the air conditioning system at the National Gallery of Australia.



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Newsletter for the  
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Industry



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# Equivalent carbon price on synthetic greenhouse gases

From 1 July 2012, as part of the Australian Government's Clean Energy Future Plan, importers and domestic manufacturers of synthetic greenhouse gases will be required to pay an equivalent carbon price on these gases in the form of a levy. This will result in an increase in their price based on the carbon price and the global warming potential for each gas relative to carbon dioxide.

Synthetic greenhouse gases are industrial chemicals used in the refrigeration and air conditioning industry, including domestic, commercial and vehicle air conditioners and domestic and commercial refrigerators and freezers. The synthetic greenhouse gases covered under the equivalent carbon levy are hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons, which are more commonly used in refrigeration and air conditioning systems, and sulfur hexafluoride, typically used in the electrical distribution industry.

From 1 July 2012, the import, export and Australian manufacture of these synthetic greenhouse gases will be regulated by the Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989.

Synthetic greenhouse gases are listed under the Kyoto Protocol, and most have a high global warming potential. This can be anywhere between 140 and 23,900 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide. For example, the most common refrigerant in household refrigerators, hydrofluorocarbon R134a, has a global warming potential 1,300 times greater than that of carbon dioxide.

Applying an equivalent carbon price to synthetic greenhouse gases provides an incentive for users to:

- Improve servicing of existing equipment to reduce leakage of gas
- Increase their recycling rates for synthetic greenhouse gases, and
- Switch to alternative gases which have a lower global warming potential, provided this is safe to do so and meets the manufacturers' requirements.

Importers of synthetic greenhouse gases and equipment containing these gases will pay the equivalent carbon levy and will need a licence to import these gases. Australian manufacturers of synthetic greenhouse gases will also have to pay the levy. Refrigeration and air conditioning businesses and technicians must continue to comply with all legislative and regulatory requirements, including

refrigerant handling licence and refrigerant trading authorisation conditions, relevant codes of practice (such as the Australia and New Zealand refrigerant handling code of practice), work health and safety legislation and with competition and consumer legislation. If you are considering substituting an original gas with an alternative gas, check the relevant state and territory legislation to see if the use of the alternative gas is permitted and only use the alternative if it is safe to do so. The decision to pass on the equivalent carbon levy is a commercial decision for each individual business. Your supplier may pass the carbon charge onto you. In turn, you will need to decide on how you pass it onto your consumers. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has provided guidance for businesses on determining carbon price claims. Visit [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au) and click on 'Carbon price claims: business and consumer guidance' in the Hot Topics section.



# Checklist for businesses

## What do I do if my business imports synthetic greenhouse gas in bulk form or contained in equipment?

- **Make sure you have the right import licence and it is current.** To find out which licence is right for your business visit [www.environment.gov.au/equivalentcarbonprice](http://www.environment.gov.au/equivalentcarbonprice).
- **If you do not have the right import licence or it has expired, pay the non-refundable application fee.** This varies between \$400 to \$15,000 depending on the type of licence you require.
- **Apply for the right import licence.** To find out which licence is right for your business and to lodge an application, visit [www.environment.gov.au/equivalentcarbonprice](http://www.environment.gov.au/equivalentcarbonprice).
- **Lodge your import activity quarterly report.** Reports are due within 15 days of the end of each calendar quarter.
- **Pay the quarterly import levy.** This must be paid within 60 days of the end of each calendar quarter. Do not pay the quarterly import levy until you receive an invoice from the department.
- **Only pass on legitimate costs to your customers.** Visit the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission at [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au) for a guide on determining carbon price claims.
- **Be aware of the government's national compliance program.** Authorised inspectors may visit your premises to inspect, examine, test or take away samples of gas for testing and/or view records relating to the gases. Significant penalties apply for breaches of the Act, including importing regulated gases without a licence. To find out more about the compliance program visit [www.environment.gov.au/equivalentcarbonprice](http://www.environment.gov.au/equivalentcarbonprice).

## What do I do if my business does not import synthetic greenhouse gas but we work with them?

- **Make sure you have the right licence.** It is an offence subject to fines under the Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas legislation to handle synthetic greenhouse gases without a refrigerant handling licence and/or acquire, store or dispose of refrigerants without a refrigerant trading authorisation. To apply for a licence or authorisation visit [www.arctick.org](http://www.arctick.org).
- **Ensure safe use of alternative refrigerants.** Only substitute synthetic greenhouse gas refrigerants with alternative gases if safe and in accordance with the original equipment manufacturers' requirements. Ensure you check the refrigerant first for flammability and conduct a risk assessment of each situation before deciding to proceed with an installation or undertake work. The safety factsheet on the department's website has important information that you should refer to.
- **Follow all relevant workplace health and safety requirements.** Handle all gases in accordance with all relevant international and national standards and codes of practice and comply with national, state and territory and local laws.
- **Only pass on legitimate costs to your customers.** Visit the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission at [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au) for a guide on determining carbon price claims.
- **Be aware of the government's compliance program.** A national compliance program has been established for the equivalent carbon price and authorised inspectors may visit your premises. The RAC Industry Board's compliance audit program to ensure compliance with the RAC Industry Permit Scheme will remain in place. For more information visit [www.arctick.org](http://www.arctick.org).

For more information about the equivalent carbon price on synthetic greenhouse gases, visit [www.environment.gov.au/equivalentcarbonprice](http://www.environment.gov.au/equivalentcarbonprice). For more information about the carbon price package visit the Clean Energy Future website: [www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au](http://www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au).