



COOLCHANGE

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World Ozone Day: *From Science to Global Action*

Celebrated on 16 September, World Ozone Day, highlights the importance of protecting the ozone layer, a mission that licensed refrigeration and air conditioning professionals contribute to every day.

This year's theme, *From Science to Global Action*, acknowledges the role of scientific research in shaping international agreements such as the Montreal Protocol. This landmark treaty underpins Australia's approach to managing refrigerants and phasing out ozone-depleting substances. According to the **United Nations Environment Programme's Ozone Secretariat**, and assuming continued compliance with the Montreal Protocol, total column ozone is expected to return to 1980 values by:

- Around 2066 in the Antarctic,
- Around 2045 in the Arctic,
- Around 2040 in the mid-latitudes (60°N–60°S), including large parts of southern Australia.

These timelines highlight the critical importance of safely handling and disposing of ozone-depleting substances and synthetic greenhouse gases. ARCTick licensed technicians (RHLs) and trading authorisation holders (RTAs) are central to this work, ensuring refrigerants are handled safely, legally and in line with environmental standards.

To help consumers make informed choices, the Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC) has launched initiatives to promote the *Look for the Tick* message with digital and retail channel campaigns. The tick identifies a business or individual as licensed under the national scheme, which regulates the handling, trade and disposal of refrigerants covered by the Ozone Acts.

World Ozone Day serves as a reminder that protecting the ozone layer is a shared responsibility. Through licensed practice and public awareness, the refrigeration and air conditioning industry continues to support Australia's environmental objectives and uphold the integrity of the Montreal Protocol.



Help shape
the future of
RAC training
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WORLD OZONE DAY

Automotive Code of Practice update underway



The Australasian automotive air conditioning, electrical and thermal management trade association VASA (vasa.org.au) is working with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water to overhaul the nation's 17-year-old automotive air conditioning Code of Practice.

The public consultation window will open in October 2025, and the project completion target is March 2026.

VASA president, Brett Meads, said the organisation, 'recognises the importance of regulatory frameworks that provide best practice for all stakeholders while ensuring sound environmental outcomes and necessary protections for technicians and consumers.'

The automotive landscape has transformed dramatically since the 2008 code was written, with technology influencing most automotive systems including new refrigerants, system architecture changes, subsystem integration, control strategies, and service and repair techniques.

Modern electric vehicle propulsion systems now utilise advanced refrigerant-based thermal management systems to maximise efficiencies across battery charge and discharge cycles, extending beyond conventional passenger compartment comfort applications.

VASA treasurer and former president Ian Stangroome brings his significant industry experience to overseeing the project, saying the association is, 'well placed to provide industry with a relevant and workable Code of Practice'.

'We recognise the value of stakeholder engagement and are looking forward to the industry consultation and feedback phase of the project,' Mr Stangroome said.

VASA vice-president Mark Rowe acknowledged the team's work, with the project scheduled for completion by March 2026.

'It is very exciting for an industry association to help drive the very document that guides our technicians and workshops,' Mr Rowe said.

'We are all hard at work ensuring we maximise the consultation phase during the last quarter of 2025, which will help shape the final code we deliver to industry next year.'

The public consultation window opens in October 2025 with all constructive feedback welcome. To provide your feedback, visit vasa.org.au/copreview2025

Your input can help shape the future of RAC training

The Powering Skills Organisation (PSO) is reviewing the **UEE Electrotechnology Training Package**, including all HVACR qualifications. This review aims to modernise training and ensure it meets current industry needs and supports Australia's clean energy transition. A dedicated Subject Matter Expert group is guiding the HVACR component of the review.

PSO has also released its **Workforce Plan 2025**, outlining nearly 40 actions to address skills shortages, boost apprentice numbers, and improve training infrastructure across the energy sector. The ARC is actively involved in supporting these initiatives to build a stronger RAC workforce.

Get involved

Technicians, educators and employers are encouraged to:

- Register for updates on the **UEE training product review**,
- Read and provide feedback on the **Workforce Plan 2025**,
- Contact the project team at training@poweringskills.com.au.

Your input can help shape the future of RAC training and ensure the sector is ready for the challenges ahead.



Anthea Middleton (PSO CEO) and Glenn Evans (ARC CEO) at the launch of the PSO Workforce Plan.



Increasing RHL education



The Department is supporting the ARC to initiate a pilot program of independent field engagement visits for Refrigerant Handling Licence (RHL) holders who are not affiliated with a Refrigerant Trading Authorisation (RTA).

This initiative responds to feedback from the department's recent *Have your say* survey, in which over half of respondents indicated support for independent field engagement visits for RHL holders. The visits are designed to:

- **support** technicians in best practice, empowering them to reduce emissions
- **reinforce** understanding of regulatory requirements and licence conditions
- **identify** knowledge gaps to understand how to further improve the program
- **promote** best practice in refrigerant handling.

Field engagement visits will be conducted across Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia, primarily through face-to-face site visits with some desktop reviews.

Technicians who hold the following licences may be selected:

- **RSS03** – Restricted heat pump installation and decommissioning
- **RAC01** – Full refrigeration and air conditioning
- **AAC02** – Automotive air conditioning.

ARC Field Engagement Officers will contact selected technicians to arrange a suitable time for a visit. During these visits, technicians will receive educational materials and guidance, with follow-up support if needed.

Importantly, these field engagement visits have an education first approach. They offer technicians a valuable opportunity to engage with ARC experts, ask questions and strengthen their understanding of regulatory requirements. Participants will also be invited to provide feedback, helping the ARC shape the future of the permit scheme's field engagement program. Further updates will be communicated as the program progresses in the coming months.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact compliance@arctick.org.

Spotlight on compliance: ASQA ramps up regulatory activity

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) has significantly increased its regulatory action in 2025, with a renewed focus on integrity, quality, and enforcement across the vocational education and training (VET) sector.

This includes a sharper eye on Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) delivering short, non-compliant courses, particularly in high-risk areas like Certificate II and III qualifications.



Recent enforcement highlights

ASQA's recent **Regulation Report** highlights extensive compliance action taken across the entire VET sector in 2025, including issuing over 90 warning letters, 190 written directions, and more than 210 sanctions, ranging from registration conditions to full cancellations. Several RTOs were deregistered following investigations that revealed serious breaches, including issuing certifications without proper assessment and flawed Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) models.

These actions underscore ASQA's commitment to protecting students, employers, and the integrity of the VET sector. ARC works closely with ASQA to uphold training quality standards in the RAC sector.

To support transparency and uphold training standards, ASQA encourages individuals and organisations to report concerns. You can report them directly via ASQA's [Make a Report form](#).

Promoting licensed technicians: ARC's new retail engagement pilot program

The ARC will be launching a new retail engagement pilot program aimed at increasing consumer awareness on the importance of using licensed refrigeration and air conditioning technicians at the retail channel.



This initiative, designed to elevate the *Look for the Tick* campaign will engage directly with retail outlets, where consumers often make decisions about air conditioning installation and replacement services. The pilot program will place educational materials and promotional signage in participating retail stores to encourage customers to choose ARCTick licensed businesses and individuals.

The program will reinforce the message that only licensed professionals are legally allowed to install, decommission, service, or repair systems containing fluorocarbon refrigerants.

By engaging consumers at the moment of decision-making, the program aims to strengthen the connection between licensing, compliance, and consumer trust. It will also support broader efforts to reduce emissions and uphold regulatory requirements.



For more information, visit www.lookforthetick.com.au/retailers/

BY THE NUMBERS

ARC Licence Scheme: 20 years in review

Celebrating ARC's 20 Years Milestone Journey

2005

ARC was appointed by the Minister for the Environment and Water Resources to administer the refrigeration and air conditioning aspects of the *Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Regulations* (1).

2011-2015

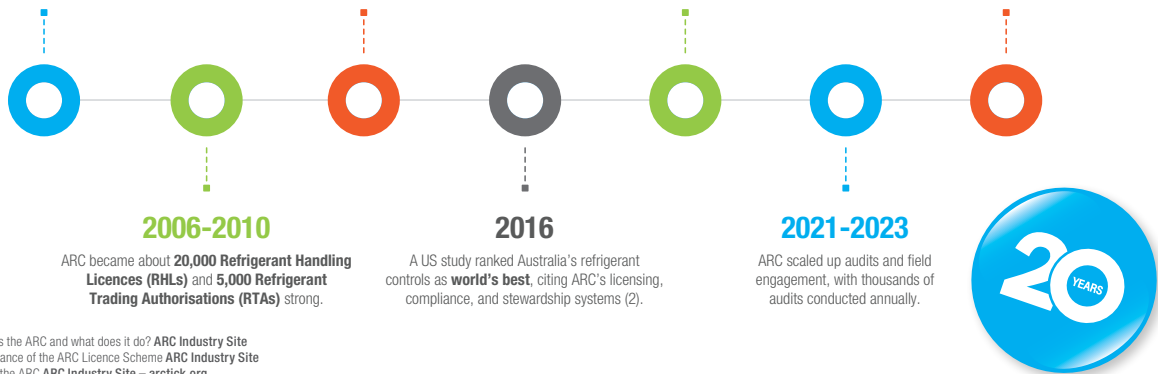
ARC expanded horizon and supported the administration of the Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) star rating labelling scheme (3).

2017-2020

ARC introduced smart licence cards and expanded its digital engagement. The CoolChange newsletter became the most widely read publication in the industry, reaching over **100,000** licensed professionals.

2024-2025

ARC launched automatic renewals improving efficiency as the average time to complete an initial assessment dropped from **6 days in 2023-24 to just 2.5 days** in 2024-25. Over **113,000** current licensed technicians and businesses supported. Record year with **60,538** licence applications processed and **9,079** audits conducted.



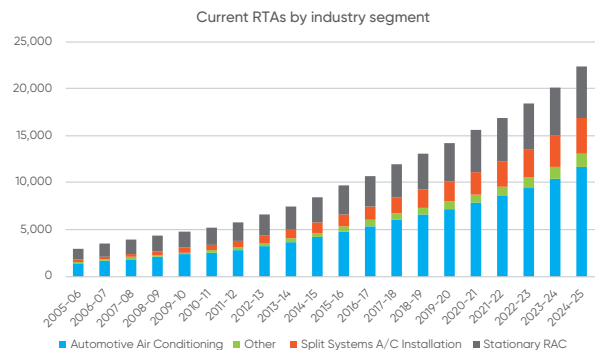
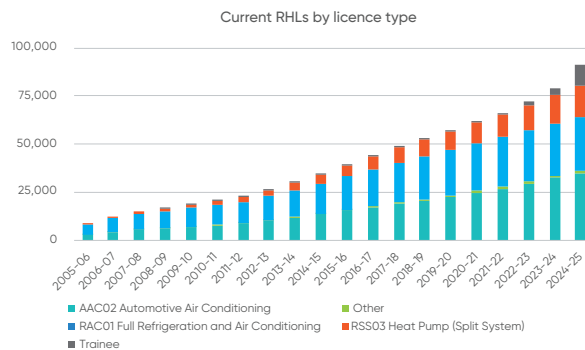
(1) What is the ARC and what does it do? [ARC Industry Site](#)
(2) Importance of the ARC Licence Scheme [ARC Industry Site](#)
(3) About the ARC [ARC Industry Site](#) – [arctick.org](#)

Permit numbers

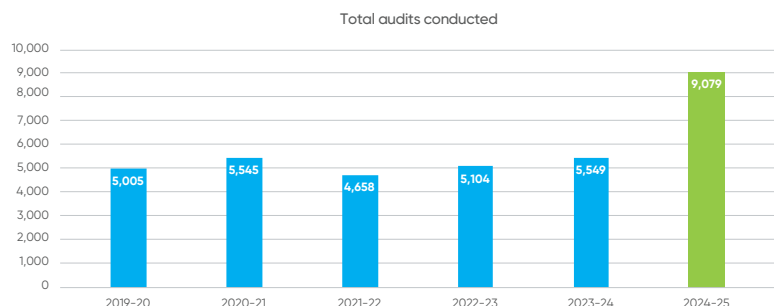


90,996
Current Refrigerant Handling Licences (RHLs), and

22,357
Refrigerant Trading Authorisations (RTAs)



Field Engagement



ARC delivers licensing message at ARBS QLD 2025

The Australian Refrigeration Council was proud to participate in ARBS QLD 2025, held on 27–28 August at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, the first time Australia's leading HVAC&R exhibition was hosted in Queensland.

With over 100 exhibitors and a strong focus on sustainability, innovation and workforce development, ARBS QLD provided a valuable platform for ARC to engage directly with technicians, businesses and industry leaders. ARC hosted a stand, engaging visitors with the new Code of Practice booklets and providing insights into the industry's role in environmental protection and the essential role of licensing in the safe handling of refrigeration and air conditioning equipment.

General Manager of Compliance and Training, Taha Taouti, emphasised the importance of following the Code of Practice. Outreach Engagement Manager, Greg Watts and field officers, Robert Mandla and Michael Rex promoted the ARctick licence, the Look for the Tick campaign, and the importance of using licensed professionals with event attendees.

ARC reinforced that following licence requirements is not only a regulatory requirement, but also a cornerstone of safe, legal and environmentally responsible HVAC&R practice.



ARC's General Manager of Compliance and Training, Taha Taouti, and Outreach Engagement Manager, Greg Watts with visitors at ARBS QLD 2025.

Evacuating automotive air conditioning systems

FROM THE FIELD

Evacuation, using a vacuum pump, is a critical step before recharging an automotive air conditioning system with refrigerant. Its purpose is to remove moisture and non-condensable gases, such as air and nitrogen, which can cause high discharge pressures and reduce system efficiency.

Evacuation lowers the internal pressure, allowing any moisture to boil off and be extracted along with water vapour, gases and other impurities. For example, at normal atmospheric pressure, water boils at 100°C, but when the pressure is reduced to 752,400 microns (-99 kPa) gauge, water boils at 20°C.

Required pressure

Best practice is to evacuate the system to at least 500 microns (≈ 66 Pa) using an electronic vacuum gauge, before isolating the vacuum pump. Once the pump is isolated and turned off, the pressure should not rise by more than 50 microns (≈ 6 Pa) over a 30-minute period. If the pressure increases by more than 50 microns—exceeding 550 microns (≈ 73 Pa) in total—this indicates that further evacuation is needed, as this may indicate the presence of moisture or a leak.

The minimum requirements are defined in the *Australian Automotive Code of Practice 2008*, which is to evacuate the system to a pressure of 675,055 microns (-90 kPa) gauge or below for 30 minutes, checking pressure one minute after the system is isolated, and re-checking the pressure after five minutes. A rise above 15,200 microns (2 kPa) indicates the presence of a leak or residual moisture, which must be rectified before proceeding.

Accurate measurement



Use an electronic vacuum gauge, which is capable of reading as low as 1 micron and position it as far from the pump as possible for accurate readings. Please note that standard manifold gauges are **not** precise enough to measure the deep vacuum levels.

Pump maintenance

You need to record pump maintenance at least once a quarter to ensure compliance with the conditions of your ARctick permit. For more information on how to look after your vacuum pump, refer to **CoolChange issue 75**.

Summer campaign 2025-26 rolls out with engaging reel and visuals

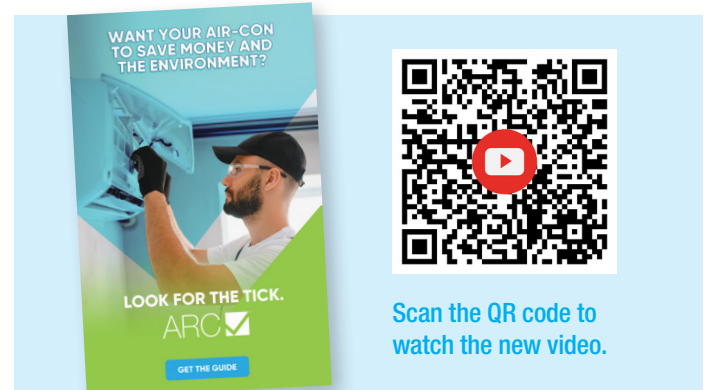
The ARC has officially launched its 2025-26 summer campaign, aimed at raising public awareness about the importance of engaging licensed refrigeration and air conditioning professionals.

By educating consumers, the campaign helps drive demand toward licensed technicians and registered businesses, ensuring safer practices and better environmental outcomes.

Last year's campaign set a record high for website visits, crossing 136,000 visits, which was a 62.66% increase from the previous year. Building on last year's success, which saw over 18,000 business searches and 12,000 licence checks, this year's campaign introduces a fresh suite of image assets, video reels and animated videos, designed to connect with consumers across digital platforms.

These short-form videos are optimised for mobile viewing and tailored for Meta platforms, helping broaden reach and improve engagement across diverse audience segments.

The summer campaign reinforces *Look for the Tick* message, encouraging consumers to choose ARCTick licensed technicians for refrigeration and air conditioning services. The tick identifies individuals and businesses licensed under the ARCTick permit scheme, which operates under the *Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989*. Consumers are guided to lookforthetick.com.au, where they can access free guides and search for licensed professionals in their local area.



What's on

06 November 2025

AIRAH Adelaide 2025 Industry Night

Join AIRAH in Adelaide to learn, network, and discover recent trends and technology in the Australian HVAC&R industry! Details at: industry nights.airah.org.au/2025-events/adelaide/

28 November 2025

AMCA Industry Dinner and National Excellence Awards

Join the HVAC industry at The Ritz-Carlton in Melbourne to celebrate the outstanding achievements of emerging leaders and exceptional staff, and the vital role our industry plays in the economy and community. Details at www.amca.com.au/Public/Events/

31 July – 2 August 2026

VASA Wire & Gas 2026

After a successful Wire & Gas 2024 in Brisbane, Australasia's premier automotive air conditioning, electrical and thermal management industry event will return to the Queensland capital in 2026.



What's new



ARC launches refreshed InfoHub

The ARC has updated its InfoHub with a cleaner design, improved navigation, and streamlined access to key resources. The site offers comprehensive information on support services and training opportunities. It also offers a curated set of refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) standards for ARCTick permit holders, making it easier for industry professionals to stay informed and compliant. To visit the InfoHub, scan the QR code, go to arcltd.org.au or click here [Australian Refrigeration Council Ltd.](https://www.australianrefrigerationcouncil.com.au)

Refrigerant Reclaim Australia (RRA) unveils new website

The newly redesigned Refrigerant Reclaim Australia (RRA) website has been purpose-built to educate and support visitors by making information easy to navigate. As the central hub for Australia's national program for the recovery and safe disposal of refrigerant gases, the site highlights RRA's mission to protect the ozone layer and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The design, planned with users in mind, offers clear pathways to learn about RRA's lifecycle refrigerant management, access practical tools such as safety data sheets and training resources and quickly connect with licensed technicians and wholesalers. It also provides simple, streamlined options for technicians, wholesalers and importers to participate in the program, helping them meet compliance requirements and then be contributing to a safer, more sustainable future. Recovering even small amounts of refrigerant makes a big difference.

Jump on the new website to calculate your refrigerant footprint: **Refrigerant Reclaim Australia | RRA**



**ARC's
2025-26
Summer
Campaign
is now live!**



Driving consumers to *Look for the Tick*