



COOLCHANGE

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Establishment of the National EPA: what this means for licence holders

On 1 July 2026, the Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Program (OPSGG) transitioned from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water to the National Environmental Protection Agency (National EPA). The National EPA is a newly formed independent statutory agency that will now regulate the licensing scheme.

The National EPA is working with the Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC) to administer the refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) permit scheme.

As a licence holder with the ARC, this transition does not make any changes to your obligations, processes or contacts. Existing licences, permits and approvals remain valid. You will continue to interact with the same systems and staff at the ARC.

What you need to do:

- Keep meeting your current licence requirements.
- Watch out for updates from the National EPA and the ARC.

The National EPA takes a practical, risk-based approach to regulation. This means it makes timely decisions based on evidence and legislation. It is focused on ensuring a smooth transition for licence holders and authorised businesses.



For more information, visit www.nationalepa.gov.au.



Tell us your CoolChange newsletter preferences

The ARC wants to know your views on our CoolChange newsletter. Your feedback will help us plan future communications.

This survey will help us modernise our communication and transition towards more efficient, sustainable delivery methods. We will use the results to:

- improve delivery
- reduce printing and postage where possible
- support more sustainable communication.

The survey has 13 questions and should take 4 to 5 minutes to complete. You can choose to respond anonymously.



Your answers will not affect how you currently receive CoolChange newsletter or any other messages from the ARC. Take the survey [here](#) or scan the QR code.



ARC appoints new CEO and Deputy CEO

The Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC) appointed Mark Lamb as Chief Executive Officer and Susie O'Neill as Deputy Chief Executive Officer, effective 4 May 2026.

Mr Lamb brings many years of leadership experience in Australia and overseas. Most recently, he was Chief Executive Officer of the Murray-Darling Association. He has also held senior roles in peak body organisations and worked closely with government and industry. In these roles, he helped organisations move to new strategies and ways of working.

ARC Chair Dr Greg Picker said the Board was pleased to appoint Mr Lamb to lead the next phase of the Council's work managing the ARCTick Permit Scheme. "The Board is pleased to appoint Mark Lamb as our new CEO. We look forward to working with him as we continue to deliver the ARCTick permit scheme and improve our service to industry. His passion and experience in leading peak body organisations perfectly aligns with the ARC's priorities at this time and our vision for the future," Dr Picker said.

Susie O'Neill, who has been Acting CEO since December 2025, will work with Mr Lamb to support ARC's next phase, with a focus on strategy, performance and service delivery.

Dr Picker welcomed Ms O'Neill to the role and said her work had been important during the recent transition period. "Susie's commitment has significantly supported the ARC during the recent transition period. Her appointment as Deputy CEO further strengthens our core leadership team and I congratulate her on this well-deserved appointment," Dr Picker said.

Read the full media release [here](#) or visit arcltd.org.au/leadership/media-releases/.



Mark Lamb, ARC CEO



Susie O'Neill, ARC Deputy CEO

Wire & Gas 2026: What to look out for

The Wire & Gas 2026 event is back in Queensland's capital from 31 July to 2 August at The Westin Brisbane.

The biennial event, hosted by VASA and The Automotive Technician (TaT), will feature a multitude of exhibitors, training sessions, a gala awards dinner and key industry updates.

The program includes a key session on the new Australian Automotive Air Conditioning Code of Practice. Last updated in 2008, the new Code has been revised by automotive industry association, VASA, following public consultation, and is supported by the National Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The session will discuss the range of updates expected in the new Code.

The Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC) will be exhibiting at the Wire & Gas trade show. Further, the ARC's technical and training manager Noel Munkman will join Refrigerant Reclaim Australia general manager Kylie Farrelley and Refrigerants Australia executive director and ARC chair Greg Picker for a panel on refrigerant and regulation landscape. The panel will discuss the HFC phase-down and what it means for refrigerant management.

To find out more about the event, visit www.vasa.org.au/wg2026/.



Reminder: Report breach incidents

The Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC) has improved the 'Report a Breach' form on the ARctick website.

Now, it's easier for people in the industry and the public to let ARC know about possible breaches of refrigerant handling rules, under the *Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989*.

If you think someone is breaching the law, you can use **this form (arctick.org/information/report-a-breach-relating-to-regulated-refrigerants/)** to notify the ARC.

The ARC compliance team reviews all reports and decides the next course of action. You can also report a suspected breach directly to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water via the **Report a perceived breach of environment law – DCCEEW (www.dcceew.gov.au/about/contact/report-environmental-incident)**.



Have you checked the 2026 edition of the Flammable Refrigerants Safety Guide?

More heating and cooling systems are shifting to flammable refrigerants.

These gases can have a lower Global Warming Potential (GWP). This means they trap less heat in the atmosphere than older gases, but some are flammable. They include hydrocarbons, ammonia and some synthetic refrigerants.

To support the industry, AIRAH has released the **Flammable Refrigerants Safety Guide (FRSG) 2026**. This free guide gives practical advice to safeguard personnel and workplaces.

The 2026 edition reflects current rules, standards and industry best practice for flammable refrigerants.

The guide explains technical standards in plain language. It shows how to handle flammable refrigerants safely and how to manage health and safety risks. It also covers equipment used in workplaces, public buildings and homes.

ARctick permit holders are encouraged to use the updated guide. To access the online guide, **click here** or scan the QR code.



ARC in action at ARBS and AAA Expo 2026

In May, the ARC attended the Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Building Services Exhibition (ARBS) and the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Expo (AAA Expo) in Melbourne.

These events gave the ARC an opportunity to speak directly with people working across the refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) industry. The ARC stand was busy across all 3 days of both events. Common topics of discussion included:

- how to apply for a Refrigerant Handling Licence (RHL) with overseas qualifications
- what a Refrigerant Trading Authorisation (RTA) is and how businesses can apply for it
- how to renew a licence after time away from the industry
- the future of refrigerants in the automotive sector, especially the growing use of R-1234yf.

At ARBS 2026, the team took part in:

- a seminar by ARC Deputy CEO Susie O'Neill on improving consumer engagement in split-system installations
- 2 panel sessions: the Future Leaders Forum and Women at the Coalface in HVACR
- support for WorldSkills Australia and RAC trade Skillaroo, Adam Morgan.

The ARC team also attended a seminar by DCCEEW. The session shared results from the permit scheme survey and outlined steps the Department is taking in the form of various initiatives. Visitors also picked up Code of Practice booklets, fact sheets and stickers from the ARC stand. The ARC thanks everyone who visited and looks forward to continuing the conversation.



ARC team at the ARBS 2026 event.

BY THE NUMBERS

ARC Licence Scheme: Quarterly review

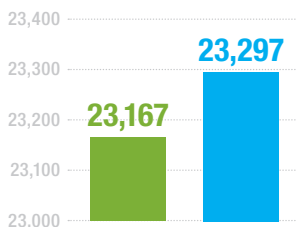
Permit Numbers

▲ 130 RTAs
▲ 1,549 RHLs

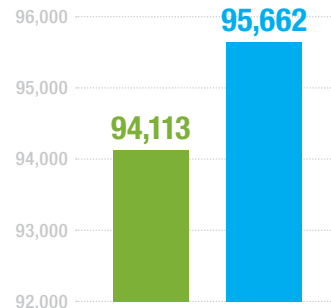
increase in permit numbers for Q4,
2025-26, period ending June 2026



■ March 2026
■ June 2026



Refrigerant Trading Authorisations (RTAs)

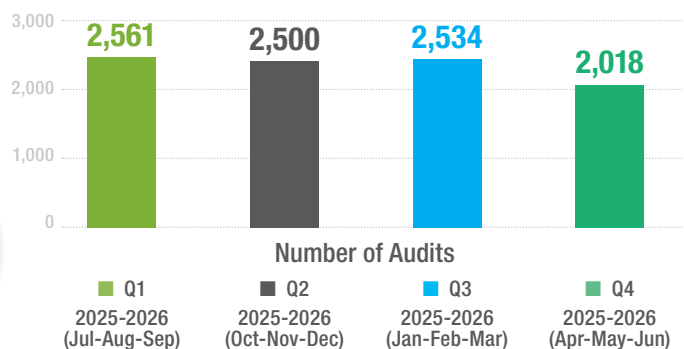


Refrigerant Handling Licences (RHLs)

Field Engagement

9,613

total audits conducted
2025-26 YTD period
ending June 2026



On behalf of Refrigerant Reclaim Australia (RRA) and the team at Nous Group:

Thank you to everyone who participated in the independent RRA Product Stewardship Scheme Review.

860 responses received!

Your expertise and feedback have helped shape the future of Australia's refrigerant stewardship scheme, protecting the environment and supporting a more sustainable future.



**REFRIGERANT
RECLAIM AUSTRALIA**



Summer Campaign

Consumers **LOOK FOR THE TICK**

Campaign period:
October 2025 to March 2026

188,000+

Website visits

15,000+

Licence checks

14,000+

Guide downloads





Bill Yakan

Bill Yakan is a Field Engagement Officer based in Victoria. He joined the ARC in November 2025 and brings 32 years of HVAC&R experience to the team.

Before joining ARC, he worked across the HVAC&R industry in Australia and overseas. His roles included 14 years in commercial refrigeration and HVAC service and installation, 8 years as a commercial refrigeration service manager, and 7 years in construction project management. Bill also completed his TAE4 and taught Certificate II and III in refrigeration and air conditioning at RMIT. He says this mix of field, management and teaching experience helps him engage with industry and support people in his current role.

Bill has also made a strong impact on the people he has trained. He says, “I’m glad to say that over the years, I’ve trained apprentices who have gone on to succeed in life and in the industry — whether by starting their own businesses, becoming teachers or managing other companies.” He is also proud to have helped his two sons build careers in refrigeration.

Bill has seen the industry change over the years. He says, “There is now more awareness of how refrigerants affect the environment. This has led to greater use of lower-GWP options, such as hydrofluoroolefins and natural refrigerants.” He also says the industry is working harder to cut emissions across the life of a system.

Talking about where the industry is heading, he says smart technology and the internet of things are changing how HVAC&R systems are managed. “Smart thermostats, better controls and predictive maintenance tools help businesses save energy and improve performance,” he says.

What he enjoys most about his role at ARC is helping others and supporting the industry. He sees it as a way to keep using his experience to help professionals understand what they need to do. “I can still share knowledge and help technicians and businesses understand their obligations and duties, and help people get the right outcome,” he says.

From the field: Automotive air conditioning RHL restrictions – what do they mean?



If you hold an AAC02 automotive air conditioning refrigerant handling licence, you can service air conditioning systems inside vehicle cabins and handle refrigerants. However, unless you complete additional training, the following restrictions apply.

Retrofitting or modification

- You cannot change the type of refrigerant used. For example, by switching from R134a to R1234yf or moving air conditioning components to a different location.
- You can replace parts, such as the compressor, filter drier or expansion valve, as long as the replacement is the same type of part.

Installation

- You cannot install a new air conditioning system in a vehicle.
- You can replace existing air conditioning parts with new parts, as long as they are the same type.



Overhaul of air conditioning systems

- You cannot rebuild major air conditioning components such as the compressor.
- You can replace faulty components with equivalent new ones.

To remove these restrictions, you must complete the required units of competency listed below.

Restriction	Units of competency required to remove restriction
No retrofitting or modification	AURETU105 (previously AURETU005) Retrofit and modify air conditioning and HVAC systems
No installation	AURETU001 (previously AURETU2001) Install air conditioning systems
No overhaul of air conditioning systems	AURETU007 (previously AURETU4007) Overhaul air conditioning and HVAC system compressors

Avoiding the most common permit application errors

Applying for a Refrigerant Handling Licence (RHL) or Refrigerant Trading Authorisation (RTA) is a vital step in starting or continuing your field work.

However, this is also where many errors occur. Missing documents, unclear qualification evidence and simple mistakes can cause delays, duplicate applications and refund issues. The good news is that most of these mistakes are easy to avoid. This article explains the most common errors made during the permit application process and how to prevent them.



ERROR 1: Submitting multiple applications instead of responding to a request for further information (RFI)

Once you submit an application, it gets locked for processing. This means it cannot be edited. If you need to update any details or provide missing documentation, you do not need to start a new application. Instead, simply send the information or documents to the ARC team via email.

The mistake:

- starting a new application.

The result:

- multiple applications
- duplicate payments and refund issues.

How to avoid it:

- email any updates or additional information to enquire@arctick.org or call 1300 88 44 83

- an application remains active for 120 days after it's submitted; during this window, you can provide extra information to the team without having to start a new application.

The ARC team can assist you with the next steps in your application process.



ERROR 2: Applying for upgrade from trainee licence to a full licence too early

To apply for a full stationary (RAC01) or automotive (AAC02) refrigerant handling licence, you must complete the entire course, including any required competency units and hold an eligible qualification for the specific licence type you are seeking.

The mistake:

- not fully understanding the qualification requirements
- attempting to apply for a full licence without a course completion certificate or with only partial competencies/modules completed.

The result:

- incomplete application leading to processing delays
- cancelled application if the course is incomplete.

How to avoid it:

Thoroughly review all qualification requirements before submitting.

Ensure your application includes all necessary evidence, such as a formal certificate of completion and full academic transcript.

Please note that providing documentation for only select modules without proof of the full qualification may lead to delays or cancellation.

For further assistance, please refer to the **licence types** section on www.arctick.org website or contact our team at enquire@arctick.org or 1300 88 44 83.



What's on: upcoming events

10-12 August 2026

RWTA Conference and Exhibition | The Langham, Gold Coast QLD

The RWTA Conference and Exhibition event will explore the latest advancements and strategies facing the future of the cold chain industry. The conference will feature inspiring keynote speakers, networking opportunities and a diverse exhibition floor featuring latest technologies and solutions from leading providers. Details at <https://www.rwta.com.au/events-source/rwta-conference-and-exhibition-the-langham-gold-coast-qld>

10 September 2026

AIRAH Industry Nights | Darwin

Join AIRAH Industry night at the Mindil Beach Casino Resort – Beachside Pavilion, Darwin to discover the latest technologies, connect with industry professionals, gain new insights and stay up to date with current trends. Details industry nights.airah.org.au/2026-events/darwin/

25-26 November 2026

Melbourne Build Expo 2026 | Melbourne

Melbourne Build is Victoria's largest and leading construction & design show. The expo will feature 300+ exhibitors, 500+ speakers across 10 CPD conference stages and 12 summits, networking parties, government hubs, entertainment and so much more. Co-located with InstallerSHOW Melbourne, The Security Event Australia, and The Fire Safety Event Australia, Melbourne Build brings together the wider built environment, safety and security communities under one roof. Details at www.melbournebuildexpo.com

