



MEDIA RELEASE

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AIRAH ENCOURAGES QUEENSLAND TO KEEP RAISING THE BAR ON LICENSING

The Australian Institute of Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heating (AIRAH) commends the Queensland government's new licensing system, and supports the plan to make it even stronger by closing an important loophole.

At the beginning of 2020, a new HVAC&R licensing framework was introduced in Queensland to raise industry standards and accountability. Workers will now require a Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) licence for mechanical services work. This includes air conditioning and refrigeration, as well as plumbing and medical gases.

"The new licensing framework is a step forward for the HVAC&R industry in Queensland," says AIRAH CEO Tony Gleeson, M.AIRAH.

"It recognises that mechanical services work involves working with dangerous elements, such as hydrocarbon refrigerants, and directly impacts the comfort, health and safety of the people who use mechanical services systems such as air conditioning systems."

AIRAH notes, however, that the technical qualifications accepted for a limited design or occupational licence include the Certificate III in Engineering Mechanical Trade MEM30219. The skills associated with this qualification are intended to apply to a wide range of mechanical trade work, including fitting and machining, but not necessarily air conditioning and refrigeration.

"Because of the elective nature of many of the units of competency in the course, tradespeople can obtain this qualification without having the knowledge to work on air conditioning and refrigeration systems," says Gleeson.

"We understand that the Queensland government is planning to update the regulations to close this loophole and ensure that the new licensing system achieves its goal of raising the bar for our industry. The current situation is causing confusion within the industry."

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“We look forward to the Queensland government promptly addressing this issue.”

AIRAH has also applauded the setting of a Certificate III qualification or equivalent as the minimum requirement for a QBCC air conditioning and refrigeration licence.

“We believe this should be the minimum qualification for HVAC&R technicians throughout Australia, as indicated in our licensing position statement. This will help create an Australian HVAC&R industry that is highly skilled and professional, safe, sustainable and environmentally effective.”

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For more information, email AIRAH communications manager Matthew Dillon via matt@airah.org.au

AIRAH is the recognised voice of the Australian HVAC&R industry. We aim to minimise the environmental footprint of our vital sector through communication, education and encouraging better practice.