

Australia's HFC Phase-down

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are a type of synthetic greenhouse gas which are commonly used in Australia in refrigeration and air conditioning and fire protection equipment, medical aerosols, foam and as solvents. Common HFC refrigerants are R134a, R410A and R404A.

HFCs generally have a high global warming potential which means they have a greater ability to trap heat in the atmosphere compared to a similar mass of carbon dioxide. For example, the release of one tonne of HFC 23 is equivalent to releasing 14,800 tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Australia's HFC phase-down started on 1 January 2018. The HFC phase-down is a gradual reduction in the maximum amount of HFCs permitted to be imported into Australia. Reduced imports will lead directly to reduced emissions.

The HFC phase-down has been developed with industry which supports the phase-down as it benefits the environment and provides long-term investment certainty. The HFC phase-down is being implemented through the Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989 and associated Regulations through a quota system for imports of HFCs as bulk gas.

The HFC phase-down covers only imports of bulk gas such as in cylinders. It does not cover gas imported in pre-charged equipment such as air-conditioners or refrigerators. HFCs contained in imported equipment are accounted for in the country of manufacture. Existing equipment that has already been imported into Australia is not affected by the phase-down.

For key facts and quick information on who will be affected, please read the Fact Sheet available at: <http://www.environment.gov.au/protection/ozone/publications/hfc-phase-down-factsheet>

More information is available on the Dept. of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's website at: <http://www.environment.gov.au/protection/ozone/hfc-phase-down>