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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Refrigeration is career of first choice

Australians are increasingly turning to refrigeration and air conditioning as a career of first choice, according to new licensing data released by the Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC).

ARC figures for the past five years show strong year-on-year growth which peaked in 2023-24 for both Refrigerant Handling Licences (RHLs) and Refrigerant Trading Authorisations (RTAs), especially in the automotive sector.

Net growth in the number of RHLs exceeded 10,000 for the financial year, 14% up on the previous year, while RTA numbers grew by almost 2,000, or 10%. The strongest growth was in automotive, which accounted for a third of RHL growth and half of RTA growth.

Of particular note was a massive increase in classroom training licences, with 3,211 additional young people obtaining a training licence in the year – a lead indicator of an increasing workforce.

ARC Chief Executive Officer Glenn Evans said the growth in licensed technicians and businesses – and especially in apprentices – showed a much brighter outlook for the industry than many people believed it had.

'We hear about a skills shortage and a lack of new people entering our industry, but these figures give us evidence to prove the RAC industry is actually growing,' he said.

Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Training Alliance (RACTA) co-chair Paul Wright said the ARC data confirmed the lived experience of registered training organisations.

'ARC's data shows us that people are getting the message that ours is a good industry to be in – and we are seeing that in our classrooms around Australia,' he said.

'I know that ARC promotes our industry to school careers advisers and students as a career of first choice for bright young people, and the numbers suggest this is having an impact.'

Similarly, ARC's consumer marketing campaigns highlight the value of licensed technicians and businesses, which puts the industry on the radar of consumers who might be considering careers for themselves or their children.

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