ARC Technical Resources

State regulatory requirements for refrigeration and air conditioning

All States/Territories have licence schemes which overlap with Refrigeration and Air Conditioning (generally Electrical Work) although only 4 have actual RAC licence schemes. The remainder rely solely on the OPSGG scheme for any RAC specific requirements.

The table summarises states and territories that require state-based licences (in addition to the mandatory ARCtick licence) to work on refrigeration and air conditioning equipment.

State/Territory	RAC Occupational Licence	Restricted Electrical RAC Licence
ACT	-	**√**
NSW	**√** including Assoc Electrical	**-**
NT	-	**√**
Qld	**√**	**√**
SA	**√** Air Cond Installation only	**√**
Tas	-	**√**
Vic	**√**	**√**
WA	-	**√**

a. Australian Capital Territory

Its Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate does not require a refrigeration and air conditioning occupational licence to carry out refrigeration and air conditioning work, except for a restricted electrical work licence (refrigeration and air conditioning), which allows licence holders to carry out Incidental electrical wiring work in relation to refrigeration and air-conditioning disconnection and reconnection work. To be eligible for this licence, the applicant must hold a Certificate III in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration qualification including relevant restricted electrical units of competency.

b. New South Wales

NSW Fair Trading classifies Refrigeration and Air Conditioning work as Specialist Work and its definition includes:

- any work needed to install, maintain and service an air-conditioning system (other than a self-contained single-phase plug-in home air-conditioning system, such as portable air conditioners people use at home) in a structure, building, vessel, container or railway vehicle.
- work required to comply with the requirements of AS/NZS 3666:2011, Air handling and water systems of buildings—Microbial control, relating to the maintenance of cooling towers.

- any work needed to install, maintain and service a refrigeration system (other than a self-contained single-phase plug-in domestic refrigeration system, such as fridges people use at home) in a structure, building, vessel, container or vehicle.
- work required to comply with the requirements of AS/NZS ISO 817:2016, Refrigerants—Designation and safety classification and AS/NZS 5149:2016, Refrigerating systems and heat pumps—Safety and environmental requirements.
- associated electrical wiring work.

This includes work on split system plug-in and fixed-wired heat pumps and air conditioners including restricted electrical, but it is not required for self-contained plug-in heat pumps and air conditioners.

NSW Fair Trading issues a Qualified Supervisor Certificate that allows the holder to supervise and do Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Work. To be eligible for this Certificate the applicant must hold a Certificate III in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration qualification.

More details are available at: https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/trades-and-businesses/licensing-and-qualifications/air-conditioning-and-refrigeration

c. Northern Territory

The NT Electrical Workers and Contractors Licensing Board does not require a refrigeration and air conditioning occupational licence to carry out refrigeration and air conditioning work except for a restricted electrical work licence (refrigeration and air conditioning). It allows licence holders to carry out low voltage electrical work relating to equipment that is connected to a fixed electrical installation, associated with your primary trade, vocation or calling (occupation) and would otherwise require the services of a registered electrical contractor or a licenced electrician. To be eligible for this licence, again the applicant must hold a Certificate III in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration qualification including relevant restricted electrical units of competency.

d. Queensland

The Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) requires workers to hold its Mechanical services — air-conditioning and refrigeration occupational licence for the following scope of work:

- Constructing, installing, replacing, repairing, altering, maintaining, testing or commissioning air-conditioning, air handling systems and refrigeration for a building.

This includes work on self-contained and split plug-in and fixed-wired heat pumps and air conditioners. To be eligible for this licence the applicant must hold a Certificate III in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration trade qualification or equivalent.

WorkSafe Qld also requires refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics to hold an electrical worker licence or a restricted electrical work licence (refrigeration and air conditioning) to carryout electrical work. A restricted electrical work licence limits the holder to specific electrical work associated with refrigeration and air conditioning equipment such as testing, repairing or maintaining the equipment. It does not permit

electrical installation work. To be eligible for this licence, again the applicant must hold a Certificate III in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration qualification including relevant restricted electrical units of competency.

e. South Australia

SA Consumer and Business Services requires a Building work licence (air conditioning installation) as a contractor and/or supervisor covers only the installation of fixed appliances that circulate airflow within a building that provide heating and/or cooling of the building space. It is not required for service, repair and maintenance work on self-contained and split Plug-in and Fixed Wired heat pump or air conditioning systems.

The SA Office of the Technical Regulator requires refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics to hold an electrical worker licence or a restricted electrical work licence (refrigeration and air conditioning) to carry out electrical work. A restricted electrical work licence limits the holder to carry out low voltage electrical work relating to equipment that is connected to a fixed electrical installation, associated with your primary trade, vocation or calling (occupation) and would otherwise require the services of a registered electrical contractor or a licenced electrician. To be eligible for this licence, the applicant must hold a Certificate III in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration qualification including relevant restricted electrical units of competency.

f. Tasmania

Consumer, Building and Occupational Services does not require a refrigeration and air conditioning occupational licence to carry out refrigeration and air conditioning work except for a restricted electrical work licence (refrigeration and air conditioning), which allows licence holders to perform certain limited electrical work to enable them to carry out their primary trade. Generally it enables a licence holder to disconnect a particular item of equipment, work on it, and then reconnect it. To be eligible for this licence, again the applicant must hold a Certificate III in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration qualification including relevant restricted electrical units of competency.

g. Victoria

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) requires workers to hold its Plumbing Work - Refrigerated Air Conditioning Registration for the following scope of work:

a. the construction, installation, replacement, repair, alteration, maintenance, testing or commissioning of refrigerated air-conditioning equipment associated with the heating or cooling of a building, including:
    i. any compressor, condenser, condensing unit, fan coil unit, fan and air distribution equipment, evaporator, pipework, refrigerant pipework and any tubing, motors and associated controls;
    ii. any ductwork that is necessary for the purpose of any work described in this paragraph;

iii. any roof sheeting and roof flashing that is necessary for the purpose of any work described in this paragraph; and

iv. any part of a single head split system, ceiling cassette system or any add-on condenser unit for the ducted system.

b. the construction, installation, replacement, repair, alteration, maintenance, testing or commissioning of a split system heat pump water heater; and

c. any design work that is incidental to, or associated with, any work described in paragraph (a) or (b)

This includes work on self-contained and split plug-in and fixed-wired heat pumps and air conditioners. To be eligible for this licence the applicant must hold a Certificate III in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration trade qualification or equivalent. To be eligible for this licence the applicant must hold a Certificate III in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration trade qualification or equivalent.

Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) also requires a Restricted Electrical Worker's licence (REL) which entitles the licence holder to perform low-voltage electrical disconnect and reconnect electrical installation work relating to:

- equipment that is connected to a fixed electrical installation,
- associated with a primary trade, vocation or occupation, and
- would otherwise require the services of a registered electrical contractor or a licensed electrician.

This licence type only allows the disconnection and reconnection of 'like for like' equipment, for the purposes of repair, replacement or maintenance.

To be eligible for this licence, the applicant must hold a Certificate III in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration qualification including relevant restricted electrical units of competency.

h. Western Australia

The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS) does not require a refrigeration and air conditioning occupational licence to carry out refrigeration and air conditioning work except for a Restricted Electrical Licence; Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic which is required on completing successfully an apprenticeship in the trade of Refrigeration and Airconditioning.

The Refrigeration and Airconditioning Mechanic's Licence will have the following Scope of Work:

- Disconnect/reconnect R&AC equipment.
- Fault find R&AC power and control circuits.
- Modify, replace or repair within the R&AC "package".
- Modify R&AC control circuits in switchboards/panels.
- Assemble factory supplied cable between R&AC split system components (up to 4 kW).