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## **Ozone Depleting Substances and Synthetic Greenhouse Gases**

Dear Member

If you or your company are involved in the importation of motor vehicles into Australia, then please take notice of recent enforcement action taken by the Department of the Environment and Energy.

The Department recently fined two companies for offences under the ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989 one of which was a major automotive retailer.

A major New South Wales company was fined \$12,600 for importing a bus with an air conditioning system containing HFC-134a, a synthetic greenhouse gas, without the appropriate license.

HFC-143a is a hydrofluorocarbon – a type of synthetic greenhouse gas commonly used as a refrigerant in refrigeration and air conditioning equipment, including vehicles.

Synthetic greenhouse gases trap heat in the atmosphere, and HFC-134a has a global warming potential of 1,430, meaning it traps 1,430 times more heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide.

The import into Australia of equipment containing these substances is prohibited unless the correct licence or exemption is held.

Head of the Department's Office of Compliance, Monica Collins, said: "Reducing emissions of synthetic greenhouse gases and ozone depleting substances is a priority area for the Department.

"We work with the Australian Border Force to monitor and inspect imported and exported goods to ensure compliance with the Act and where appropriate undertake enforcement activities.

"Importers and customs brokers should check import requirements for synthetic greenhouse gases or ozone depleting substances, including when they are contained in equipment, before importing or exporting goods.

"It is advisable to allow adequate time to apply for a licence or exemption as this may take up to 60 days".

Ms Collins said: "The Department and ARC work together to promote voluntary compliance with the Act and its regulations.

The ARC engages widely with businesses and technicians to help them to understand and comply with their obligations. This includes the obligation not to discharge scheduled substances", said Ms Collins.

The Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989 controls the manufacture, import, export and use of a range of synthetic greenhouse gases and ozone depleting substances in Australia.

Under the regulations persons and companies who acquire, possess, dispose of or handle these substances in the refrigeration and air conditioning sector are required to hold an appropriate permit.

For more information about the Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989 visit [www.environment.gov.au/protection/ozone](http://www.environment.gov.au/protection/ozone). For more information about the refrigeration and air conditioning permit scheme, visit the ARC website at [www.arctick.org](http://www.arctick.org).

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