

MEDIA RELEASE



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12 March 2015

PEAK TRUCKING BODY WARNS AGAINST FLAMMABLE REFRIGERANTS

The Australian Trucking Association has today warned businesses of the safety risk associated with the use of cheap, alternative hydrocarbon-based refrigerant gases.

The warning follows a meeting of the ATA's Industry Technical Council (ITC).

ATA Senior Adviser – Engineering, Chris Loose, said the cheaper gas could lead to disaster when used in vehicle air-conditioning systems.

“Vehicle air-conditioning and refrigeration systems are designed to use specialised automotive refrigerant gases. These manufacturer-endorsed products have a low fire risk, and newer products have been formulated to have a reduced environmental footprint,” Mr Loose said.

“However, some after-market repairers will ‘re-gas’ refrigeration systems using cheaper, hydrocarbon-based refrigerant gases, often sold as M30.

“These hydrocarbon gases are highly flammable, and pose a significant safety risk in these systems. In one case, an Australian heavy vehicle driver suffered burns after the re-gassed air-conditioning system in his truck ignited.

“To our knowledge, no heavy vehicle in Australia has ever been designed to use these gases. Vehicle owners using these businesses may not even be informed that their system is being re-gassed using M30 rather than the recommended refrigerants.

“No matter the cost saving, these gases are not worth the risk.

“The ITC recommends that operators exercise caution with cut-price re-gassing services, and ensure that all air-conditioning and refrigeration systems in their fleet use the manufacturer’s recommended refrigerant gas product.”

The ATA Industry Technical Council aims to improve trucking equipment, truck maintenance and maintenance management by sharing ideas with experts from all areas of the trucking industry. For more information about the ITC, go to www.truck.net.au/itc.

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