



Mechanical Services

Introduction

The Department of Housing and Public Works is seeking public feedback on the proposal to introduce a new mechanical services licence class, similar to the current Victorian model.

Background

Mechanical services involve mechanically heating, cooling and ventilating residential and commercial buildings. A mechanical services licence exists in Victoria and Tasmania.

The scope of work for the Victorian mechanical services licence class includes:

- The construction, installation, replacement, repair, alteration, maintenance, testing or commissioning of a mechanical heating, cooling or ventilation system in a building, which is associated with the heating, cooling or ventilation of that building and includes:
 1. the construction, installation, replacement, repair, alteration, maintenance, testing or commissioning of:
 - a. any valve, regulator, register, pipe, duct, flue, tank, heating or cooling pipe or surface, boiler, burner, solid fuel heater, coil or other item that is used in the system; and
 - b. any single head split system; and
 - c. in relation to a cooling tower, any water pipe, valve, pump, automated dosing device or automated bleeding device or any other mechanical component that affects the cooling tower's cooling water flow rate or wastewater disposal; and
 - d. any fixed component used in a reticulation system for the supply or removal of medical gases from the gas source to a wall outlet; and
 - e. roof sheeting and flashing that is necessary for mechanical services; and
 2. any design work that is incidental to, or associated with mechanical services

The minimum technical qualification to obtain the Victorian Mechanical Services licence is completion of a Certificate III course relating to plumbing work, which includes approved competency units, assessment and experience requirements.



Current Queensland situation

In Queensland, work associated with mechanically heating, cooling and ventilating residential and commercial buildings is undertaken by various licence classes including the following:

- plumbing and drainage licence (heating and ventilation systems)
- air handling duct installation
- refrigeration, air-conditioning and mechanical services (limited and unlimited design)
- fire detection, alarm and warning systems (certify, inspect and test fire ventilation systems)
- gas fitting
- metal fascias and gutters (roof flashing)
- roof and wall cladding licence (roof flashing)
- roof tiling (roof flashing).

What are the proposed reforms?

- As a part of the proposed reforms, the scope of work within the mechanical services licence will become regulated plumbing work in Queensland, requiring a plumber's licence to undertake the work.
- An individual who does not currently hold a QBCC licence who wants to undertake work within the scope of work for a mechanical services licence will be required to undergo a plumbing apprenticeship, and then obtain a plumber's licence.
- If a new mechanical services licence is introduced, current licensees will be able to continue to work within the scope of work for their existing licence class.
- Any work within the scope of a mechanical services licence will require a licence, regardless of the value of work being performed.

Questions

We want you to comment on the proposed reforms.

1. Should a new mechanical services licence class be introduced in Queensland?
2. If a mechanical services licence was introduced in Queensland:
 - a. what should the scope of work include e.g. refrigeration systems in a building, which relate to installing and commissioning air-conditioning systems, testing air-conditioning systems for leaks, repairing, altering and maintaining air-conditioning systems and components and the completion of any compliance documentation regarding the handling of gases?
 - b. what technical qualifications should be required to obtain the licence?
3. What impact would the introduction of a mechanical services licence have on:
 - a. industry
 - b. current licensees
 - c. current unlicensed individuals.

Please provide any other feedback that will help the Department to consider this matter.



Have your say

Community and industry consultation will be held around the State and online from November 2016. You are invited to comment on the proposed reform options by:

- attending an industry or community engagement session—details available at www.hpw.qld.gov.au
- completing the online survey on the Queensland Government's *Get Involved* website: www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au
- joining us in our Engagement Space at www.hpw.qld.gov.au
- preparing a written response and sending it to:
 - email: qldbuidingplan@hpw.qld.gov.au
 - post: Queensland Building Plan
Department of Housing and Public Works
GPO Box 2457
CITY EAST BRISBANE QLD 4000

<http://queenslandbuildingplan.engagementhq.com/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&query=survey>

You will be asked to register and confirm via email, then use this link again and select licencing reforms

Hi

Thanks for completing the survey.

Your responses are listed below.

If you are a QBCC licensee, what licence grade and class do you hold?

I am not a QBCC licensee

Roofing (stormwater) Reforms

We are seeking feedback on whether a new licence should be created for roofing (stormwater). Under the proposal, the scope of work for the new licence would become regulated plumbing work in Queensland. Regulated plumbing work must be performed by an appropriately licensed individual, regardless of the value of the work. This may impact on any licensee that can currently install metal roofing under their licence class. The scope of work for the proposed new licence includes the construction, installation, replacement, repair, alteration, maintenance, testing or commissioning of metal roof covering or roof flashing, or any part of a roof stormwater drainage system which connects to the ground level. However it does not include the following: (a) Any cleaning, painting or preparation work in relation to any item, device or equipment involved in the collection or disposal of stormwater other than the connection, disconnection or alteration of that item, device or equipment; or (b) The construction, installation, replacement, repair, alteration, maintenance, testing or commissioning of any roof covering consisting of non-metallic tiles, slate or flat membrane sheeting or any design work that is incidental to, or associated with, that work.

Would you like to provide feedback on the proposed roofing (stormwater) reforms?

Yes

Do you think there is a need to introduce a new roofing (stormwater) licence class in Queensland?

No

Is a Certificate III in Plumbing the appropriate technical qualification that should be required to obtain a roofing (stormwater) licence?

No

If not, why? Can you suggest an alternative technical qualification?

No Answer

Do you currently undertake some or all of the proposed scope of work under another licence?

Yes

Do you hold a Certificate III in Plumbing ?

No

What impact would the introduction of a roofing (stormwater) licence have for you?

Very bad

Any other feedback?

The (RAC) refrigeration and air conditioning tradespeople must be able to access roofing to install, maintain or repair any refrigeration systems inclusive of air conditioning. The RAC trade is very unique, requiring skills in many different sectors/trade skills limiting the ability to carry out works by having to hire a plumber will drive up prices for consumers. RAC tradespeople are technically competent for this and I would request clear scope of works be determined via further industry consultation especially where the scope overlaps onto other trades/services

Mechanical Services

We are seeking feedback on whether a new licence should be created for mechanical services. Mechanical services involve mechanically heating, cooling and ventilating residential and commercial buildings. Under the proposal, the scope of work for the new licence would become regulated plumbing work in Queensland. Regulated plumbing work must be performed by an appropriately licensed individual, regardless of the value of the work. This may impact on any licensee that currently performs this work under another licence. The scope of work for the proposed new licence includes the construction, installation, replacement, repair, alteration, maintenance, testing or commissioning of a mechanical heating, cooling or ventilation system in a building, which is associated with the heating, cooling or ventilation of that building and includes— (a) the construction, installation, replacement, repair, alteration, maintenance, testing or commissioning of— (i) any valve, regulator, register, pipe, duct, flue, tank, heating or cooling pipe or surface, boiler, burner, solid fuel heater, coil or other item that is used in the system; and (ii) any single head split system; and (iii) in relation to a cooling tower, any water pipe, valve, pump, automated dosing device or automated bleeding device or any other mechanical component that affects the cooling tower's cooling water flow rate or wastewater disposal; and (iv) any fixed component used in a reticulation system for the supply or removal of medical gases from the gas source to a wall outlet; and (v) roof sheeting and flashing that is necessary for mechanical services; and (b) any design work that is incidental to, or associated with mechanical services

Would you like to provide feedback on the proposed introduction of a Mechanical Services licence?

Yes

Should a new mechanical services licence class be introduced in Queensland?

No

Is a Certificate III in Plumbing an appropriate technical qualification that must be completed before obtaining this licence?

No

If not, why? Can you suggest an alternative technical qualification?

Current licencing as Refrigeration and Air Conditioning tradespeople, occupational licence and zero threshold. Mechanical services complete a certificate 2 within their studies which does not provide a person to become technically competent within refrigeration and air conditioning works. The Certificate 2 is completed in as little as 1 day and is not a technical competency for rac works, it is an environmental licence only.

Do you currently perform any of the proposed scope of work under another licence?

Yes

Do you hold a Certificate III in Plumbing?

No

What impact would the introduction of a mechanical services licence have for you?

Very negative

Any other feedback?

Must remain scope of works for refrigeration and air conditioning tradespeople, the only trade technically competent to carry out the works. Only 32 new RAC jobs expected over the next 5 years as estimated by Energy Skills QLD data, a direct result of electricians carrying out a/c installs in QLD. A mechanical services licence will see no future available for the RAC trade and works will be carried out by non technical competent peripheral trades such as plumbing with expected increases in deaths/injuries to workers and consumers.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Under this proposal, all QBCC licensees will need to undertake continuing professional development as a condition of their licence.

Would you like to provide feedback on CPD?

Yes

How could a CPD scheme be implemented to make it easy and accessible for licensees to participate?

Less than 5% of industry are trained in natural refrigerants, urgent upskilling of all trade qualified refrigeration and air conditioning tradespeople. Lowering standards of training have created a significant need for gap training to ensure base technical competencies in RAC.

Should certain licence grades or classes be required to obtain more points than others?

No

How many CPD points should licensees be required to obtain each year? (Under the proposed scheme, 1 point will generally equate to one hour of CPD.)

No Answer

What type of activities should be eligible for CPD points? (Choose all that apply)

Seminars
Training Courses
Industry Events
Tertiary Study
Online Courses
Other

Other—Please specify

Participate in a physical Capstone test, allowing industry to assess any gap training required.

What is the best way to deliver CPD activities? (Choose all that apply)

Online
Face-to-face
Other

Other—please specify

Must provide flexible delivery

Who should deliver CPD activities? (Choose all that apply)

Industry Groups
RTOs

What is the best way to record and report CPD activities?

Online

What subjects should be included as CPD? (Choose all that apply)

Technical
Business and financial administration
Management
Licensing obligations
Record keeping obligations
Interpreting legislation

High risk defects
Role of local government

What benefits would a CPD scheme have for industry?

Improve licensee skills and knowledge
Improve standard of work
Reduce disputes and delays during construction
Increase consumer confidence in the building and construction industry

Automatic Mutual Recognition

Automatic Mutual Recognition means that a person who is licensed to practise an occupation in their own state or territory can also practise the same occupation in another jurisdiction without needing to be licensed by that jurisdiction. There are 19 building and construction licence classes that may be eligible for Automatic Mutual Recognition between New South Wales and Queensland. Although licensees will not need to obtain a licence in the other state, they would need to register as working the state and comply with the any disciplinary processes and insurance and financial management requirements.

Would you like to provide feedback on Automatic Mutual Recognition?

Yes

Should Automatic Mutual Recognition be introduced in Queensland for selected building and construction licences?

Yes

How likely would you be to work in multiple states or territories?

Likely

Are there any additional licence classes that could be considered for Automatic Mutual Recognition?

YES, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning inclusive of restricted electrical same as New South Wales.

What are the risks associated with adopting Automatic Mutual Recognition in Queensland?

Limited as long as the correct trades are appropriately licenced.

Any other comments?

The suggestions provided ensure a significant step toward a nationally consistent licence for the refrigeration and air conditioning industry. Increasing safety for tradespeople and consumers, increasing energy efficiency and provide the urgently needed stability for the trade to commence growing again.

QBCC powers and functions

The QBCC is responsible for licensees that are regulated under three different Acts and has different investigation powers depending on the licensee. Under the proposal, the QBCC's investigation powers and functions would be standardised for plumbers and drainers, pool safety inspectors and building and construction licensees. The proposed reforms could provide consistency and certainty for both licensees and investigating officers and ensure licensees are treated equally during the investigation process. We are also seeking feedback on the current powers and functions of the Service Trades Council (STC). Currently, the STC is responsible for plumbing and drainage matters, however, this could be expanded to include allied trades.

Would you like to provide feedback on QBCC powers and functions?

Yes

Should the QBCC's investigation powers be standardised for all licensees?

Yes

Should the QBCC's investigator powers be:

Standardised across the three different Acts

Should the powers and functions of the Service Trades Council be expanded to include other licence classes?

Yes

If so, which licence classes should be included in the STC's oversight??

Air handling duct installation

Refrigeration, airconditioning and mechanical services including unlimited design

Refrigeration, airconditioning and mechanical services including limited design

Fire protection

Any other feedback?

As long as there are technically competent persons representing industry.

Gas licensing and administration

The Department of Natural Resources and Mines is responsible for licensing Type A domestic gas work and Type B industrial gas work. A Type A licence is needed before applying to the QBCC for a gas fitting contractor licence. This proposal aims to streamline the application process by transferring licensing and compliance functions for domestic gas work to the QBCC. However, it is noted that Type A gas work involves a broader scope of work than the QBCC gas fitting licence. We are also seeking feedback on whether a licence should be required to undertake medical gas work, which is currently not regulated in Queensland.

Would you like to provide feedback on Gas licensing and administration reforms?

Yes

Would you support the proposal to transfer Type A gas work licensing and compliance functions to the QBCC?

Yes

Would consolidating certain gas work licensing functions make the application process easier?

Yes

Should a licence be required to undertake medical gas work?

Yes

What technical qualifications / competencies and experience should be required to obtain a licence for medical gas work?

Must be Certificate 3 Refrigeration and Air Conditioning with further consultation from industry.

Which agency should be responsible for medical gas work?

QBCC

Should any other changes be made to improve standards for medical gas work?

Seek further consultation from the refrigeration and air conditioning sector

Any other feedback?

A licence for the RAC trade with endorsements added for natural refrigerant training skills. The licence should be sufficient to cover all types of refrigerants as long as appropriate training has been completed.

Monetary threshold

Generally, a QBCC licence is needed to carry out building work with a value of more than \$3,300 (exceptions include fire protection and plumbing work). The monetary threshold for licensed building work was last reviewed in 2009 and Queensland currently has the lowest threshold in Australia. We are seeking feedback on whether the current threshold should be increased to \$5,000 to align with most other states and territories. The threshold for both undertaking incidental work (where a licensee can carry out work of another licence class) and coverage for the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme is also \$3,300.

Would you like to provide feedback on the Monetary Threshold changes?

Yes

What is an appropriate monetary threshold for licensed building work?

No Answer

Should the monetary threshold for incidental work always align with the monetary threshold for licensed building work?

No Answer

What are the potential benefits and disadvantages to increasing the monetary thresholds?

No Answer

Any other feedback?

To increase compliancy and ensure technically competent persons are doing the work all works must be included so a zero threshold.

Plumbing licences

A person can apply for a provisional plumbers and drainers licence after completing their apprenticeship. Like an apprentice, a provisional licensee must be supervised. However, no other QBCC licence requires a person who has completed an apprenticeship to undertake additional supervised work. It is proposed that the provisional licence class be removed to align with other building and construction industry trades, allowing individuals to apply for an occupational licence after they complete the apprenticeship. It has also been proposed that a new licence class be introduced for plumbing and drainage apprentices. The new licence would be aimed at helping the QBCC to easily identify whether an individual working on a building site is an apprentice or if they are undertaking work unlicensed, without having to make further inquiries with a supervisor or training institute. An apprentice licence class does not currently exist for other trades in the building and construction industry or any other jurisdiction in Australia.

Would you like to provide feedback on the Plumbing reforms?

No

Thanks again

Queensland Building Plan

Petition link https://www.change.org/p/mick-de-brenni-regulate-the-hvac-r-trade-in-qld-as-a-specialised-trade-require-min-cert-iii-rac-quals?recruiter=294923941&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink