12/11/2024

**United Nations Meeting Showcases Australia’s 20-Year Retrospective and Future Plans for Refrigerant Lifecyle Management**

Refrigerant Reclaim Australia (RRA) along with a delegation of the Board recently attended the combined Thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Thirty-Sixth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, held in Bangkok. The United Nations discussion provided an important opportunity to reflect on the Lifecycle Refrigerant Management (LRM) journey and to consider the advancements required to succeed over the next two decades and beyond.

Thirty years ago, RRA and Australian industry partners launched a pioneering approach to LRM, designed to reduce the environmental impact of refrigerants at each stage of their lifecycle. The program, initially voluntary, developed into a co-regulated, industry-led stewardship model that has served as a foundation for sustainable practices in refrigerant recovery, reclamation, and disposal for the past twenty years. The co-regulatory structure combines government oversight with industry-driven implementation, creating a collaborative model that supports environmental goals and regulatory standards.

Reflecting on this approach and RRA’s representation at the meeting, Refrigerant Reclaim Australia Chair, Greg Brooker, commented that Australia’s stewardship model has been successful because of strong collaboration between industry and government.

“For the Australian model to continue to evolve effectively, all voices need to be at the table. Our commitment ensures that policymakers can make informed, practical decisions that truly serve the industry and the environment”. This sentiment resonated strongly with other meeting participants from around the world.

This model has enabled Australia to build a culture of refrigerant recovery that encourages licenced technicians to return used refrigerants for reclamation or safe disposal, ensuring these substances are handled responsibly and emissions are minimised. Through ongoing investment in education, awareness, and standards, the Australian framework has evolved to meet industry needs and adapt to emerging technologies—serving as a valuable standard for other countries.

The Lifecycle Refrigerant Management Workshop that preceded the meetings outlined the importance of shared responsibility in the LRM process between all actors in the supply chain.

“What’s been remarkable is the sense of shared responsibility within Australia’s refrigerant sector. From technicians to policymakers, everyone has a role, and that culture of responsibility is what sets our model apart and keeps it evolving effectively.”

Attending this meeting as a delegation from Refrigerant Reclaim Australia has been invaluable," said Kylie Farrelley, General Manager of RRA.

"Lifecycle refrigerant management (LRM) is an emerging topic on the global stage, and it was important for the RRA delegation to witness how countries worldwide are now beginning to embrace practices that Australia has been implementing for some time.

The meeting provided a unique opportunity for RRA Board members to contribute to the dialogue, share experiences, and gain fresh insights from others. Engaging in these discussions allows us to stay at the forefront of sustainable refrigerant practices while reinforcing RRA’s role in advancing these initiatives globally."

The meeting also highlighted the value of comprehensive regulation for all refrigerant types including what has traditionally been referred to as not in kind, a practice that Australia supports but is yet to achieve.

"We increasingly recognise that for effective outcomes, all refrigerants must be included in regulatory frameworks and international models, as well as leak prevention and proactive maintenance protocols, offer valuable practices that could further strengthen Australia’s efforts.”

“Adopting a proactive maintenance approach, could bring multiple benefits to Australia—reduced emissions, improved energy performance, and a structured end-of-life process for RACHP equipment,” Greg said.

As Australia’s refrigerant landscape continues to evolve, RRA is committed to working collaboratively with government and the international community in strengthening its LRM framework. These learnings will inform RRA’s future direction, ensuring that Australia remains at the forefront of sustainable refrigerant practices while adapting to emerging global standards.

**For media inquiries, please contact:**

Stacey Kershaw-Brant
Communications Manager, Refrigerant Reclaim Australia (RRA)
0409 690 714