

Australian Arborist

Industry Licence

Information Brochure



Arboriculture Australia Ltd, with the full support of TGWA, SASA, VTIO, NTAA, QAA, NSWAA and ACTC are launching a new industry licence. This licence will be valid in all states and territories of Australia and will be known as the *Australian Arborist Industry Licence*.

The development of this licence has been driven by the general demand of the arboriculture industry professionals nationally (including municipalities, state and federal government agencies, private enterprise, construction companies, utilities, arborists and vegetation workers) who are frustrated with the Arboriculture industry being unregulated. This is a national issue with inexperienced loppers and toppers cutting and removing healthy and valuable trees, and inexperienced unqualified 'consultants' giving poor advice. In the worst cases, unscrupulous 'consultants' sell out, providing biased, unprofessional advice to meet the desired outcomes of land owners and developers.

A high percentage of those trees lost or removed by untrained operators and advisors could be maintained for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations, as well as for the conservation and protection of plants, animals and ecosystems throughout Australia.

People benefit from trees through improved physical and psychological well-being. Equally the environmental benefits of carbon sequestration, cleaner air, the removal of atmospheric pollutants plus improved soil and water management. These values are unnecessarily lost if trees are removed as a result of poor or biased advice.

Driven by industry demand

The licence is being implemented for several reasons:

- 01 To promote greater public awareness of trained and qualified professionals working in the tree industry.
- 02 To ensure tree work and advice is completed in accordance with all relevant Australian and international standards.
- 03 To establish a self-regulating process to drive the industry towards government regulation of the industry, which will have the additional benefits of:
 - ✓ Bringing a wage structure to the industry that ensures all individuals employed are paid an appropriate minimum wage.
 - ✓ Create better apprenticeship opportunities and funding for training.
 - ✓ Removing from the industry those people who are not acting in a professionally responsible manner.
- 04 To ensure the arborist being engaged has a Construction Induction Card.
- 05 To confirm that the arborist being engaged for consultancy or tree work has had their qualifications vetted by an impartial professional third party.

What is the Australian Arborist Industry Licence Structure?

The key criteria of the licence are covered in four points:

- ➔ A licence holder must hold an Australian qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- ➔ A licence holder must have a current Construction Induction Card
- ➔ A licence holder must adhere to the licence Code of Ethics.
- ➔ A licence holder, if trained and AQF certified to work above ground, will be shown as EWP (high-risk licence) or Tree Climber.

The licence shows the holder has a qualification to perform the level of service they are offering and will adhere to the licence Code of Ethics. The licence does not warrant a licence holder will act appropriately and ethically. If a licence holder is found to operate in breach of their qualifications, safety regulations or Code of Ethics, their licence will be cancelled.



What does the licence look like?

The licence will be the size of a normal bank card or driver's licence. The card structure will be broken into five (5) key areas:

- 01 Licence Number. This will be a number allocated to the licence holder for as long as they would like to have a licence.
- 02 Passport-style Photograph. This is to allow anyone to visually check that the person holding the licence is actually the licence holder.
- 03 Name. This is the licence holder's name.
- 04 The Tier One or Two Criteria showing the level of qualification.
 - Ground-based or
 - Aerial (Climber and/or EWP)
- 05 Expiry Date. Once the card expires the card is no longer valid.



An additional key factor is the arboriculture and vegetation management industry currently has one of the highest accident rates of any work sector in Australia. It is imperative Arboriculture Australia and its membership ensure everyone who arrives at work each day returns safely home to their family each evening without major injury or deaths occurring.

Over the past 5 years approaches have been made to the current and previous governments to have our industry regulated, in a similar manner to plumbers, electricians, and crane operators. The federal government continually tells us they are averse to regulating industries that are not already regulated. They state that, if the industry itself can demonstrate a clear desire to be regulated, then the federal government will take note and move forward to assist the arboriculture industry.

Many industry people and arborists have asked how we can achieve an inclusive, regulated industry. There are several steps to achieve the desired outcome. To start with, we have to demonstrate the value and benefit of being regulated to all stakeholders, which includes all those within and allied to our profession.

The first step along the path was recently completed when many of the state-based associations met with Arboriculture Australia in Adelaide in early March 2017. At this national meeting, the consensus of the associations represented was that the industry should move to develop a national licence.

This is where we, as an industry, have to demonstrate the need and desire for regulation and, to achieve this, it was agreed to introduce an industry licence system that initially works on a voluntary basis.





To help explain the licensing structure in more detail, the licence has been divided into eight (8) categories. This is not to make the licence confusing, but to enable everyone with a licence to show the various levels of expertise they may have in the profession.

Tier One Licence

The Tier One Licence category demonstrates that the arborist has a more current qualification (post 2010) and is also undertaking continuing education units each year. This licence level is called the 'Professional Qualified Arborist' and is the same criteria already utilised by the Arboriculture Australia Professional Membership category. This category requires the licence holder to complete Continuing Education Units (CEU) annually, just like an engineer or Certified Practising Accountant (CPA).

For this licence category, the minimum acceptable qualification is the AHC 10 (2010) Arboriculture issued under the Australian Qualification Framework.

The Tier One Licence is primarily identified by the colour of the card being **Gold**, then the level of qualification listed on the card in the following three (3) categories:

- ❖ Australian Arborist Industry Licence – Professional Registered Consulting Arborist.
- ❖ Australian Arborist Industry Licence – Professional Registered Consulting and Practicing Arborist.
- ❖ Australian Arborist Industry Licence – Professional Registered Practicing Arborist.

To be eligible for the professional licence, you need to have the correct insurance for the level of licence, please refer to <http://arboriculture.org.au/Membership>

Tier Two Licence

The Tier Two Licence categories certify the licence holder has a qualification only and may not necessarily undertake continuing education on an annual basis.

Qualifications deemed acceptable to meet the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) are from RUH 1998 onwards. The early qualifications will have for example RUH50298 Horticulture (Arboriculture). Any AQF prior to 1998 is not deemed an arboriculture qualification with the specific exception of Certificate 4 Arboriculture issued by the VCAH Burnley– this is acceptable prior to 1998.

Further descriptors are also included in each category.

In all cases, the Tier Two Licence will be coloured **Red**, and the level of the licence will be shown on the card under the following categories:

- ❖ Australian Arborist Industry Licence Level 5 – Consulting Arborist.
- ❖ Australian Arborist Licence Level 4 – Supervising Arborist. Please note: at this level there is one exception (the Burnley Cert 4 Arborist qualification) which is recognised back to 1990.
- ❖ Australian Arborist Licence Level 3 – Practising Arborist.
- ❖ Australian Arborist Licence Level 2 – Practising Arborist Certificate. For this level a relevant arboriculture certificate must be issued after 2015. A UET20312 Certificate II in ESI (Powerline vegetation control) issued after 2005 will be accepted.
- ❖ Australian Arborist Licence Trainee. This licence is only valid for two (2) years and cannot be extended. The purpose of this category is to allow new people entering the industry to have basic training to enter onto a site and conduct work only under supervision. The licence holder must have, before entering any worksite, in addition to their Construction Induction Card, the following three (3) competencies -
 - ✓ AHCARB210 Work effectively in the arboriculture industry
 - ✓ TLID1001 Shift materials safely using manual handling method
 - ✓ FWPCHAR2206 Operate a mobile chipper/mulcher.

Do I need to be a member of an Industry Arboriculture Association to be eligible to apply for a licence?

No! The **red** category licence is an industry licence. It is a national, independent project supported by all arboriculture associations that have an inclusive membership policy.

Arboriculture Australia does, however, stress the importance of being a member of your industry body. Membership provides genuine benefits. Membership enables your executive to represent you (individually and collectively) in many different arenas – including local/state/federal political discussions, ongoing research, industry development and professional education. It is prudent to be involved in your national and state-based arboricultural association.

If you wish to apply for the Tier One Licence, then you need to be a professional member of Arboriculture Australia Ltd and adhere to the additional requirements set by Arboriculture Australia Ltd.

How often will the licence be renewed?

The initial licence issued in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (excluding the trainee licence) will have a once-off expiry date of 2020. This is allow time to process the high volume of industry people requiring the licence – a strong demand is anticipated.

After 2020 all licences will have a one-year expiry period. The reason for the annual renewal is to ensure that, as the licence evolves, new requirements (such as changes in WHSE legislation, workplace regulations or other reasons unknown) may be added.

What do I need to obtain a licence?

If you're applying for either a Tier One or Tier Two Licence, you don't need a lot to get started. You are required to provide:

- A colour current passport size photo,
- A colour copy of your driver's licence or passport,
- A colour copy of your original qualification including the transcript of results,
- A colour copy of your construction induction card.

If you are certified to be a tree climber or operate a EWP (high-risk licence), please ensure you include evidence of this when you submit your information.

In addition, please:

- ◆ Complete the application form.
- ◆ Sign it.
- ◆ Date it.
- ◆ And have a witness sign the documents as well.

Then when you have all your documents in order post the documents to Arboriculture Australia Ltd. In about four-six weeks you will receive your industry card in the mail.

How much does the industry licence cost?

If you are a registered professional member of Arboriculture Australia Ltd, you will receive your licence at no charge for your first issue.

If you are not a registered professional member industry licence will only cost \$50.00 (GST inclusive). The cost is to cover the administration processing time, printing of the card and mailing it out to you.

I have a lot of employees, and this becomes expensive?

We hear you. We want to encourage employers to pay for their employee's industry cards. So, we have a sliding scale to help in purchasing bulk numbers of the Tier Two Licence cards. To gain the discount, there is some additional work you will need to do to help us to gain the reduced rates.

- 5-10 employees \$45.00 per card.
- 11-20 employees \$35.00 per card.
- 21-50 employees \$30.00 per card.
- 51-100 employees \$25.00 per card.
- 101-500 employees \$20.00 per card.
- 501 - 1000 employees \$15.00 per card.
- >1001 employees \$10.00 per card.

Please contact the Arboriculture Australia office (1300 664 374) for guidance to be able to use the bulk purchase licence categories.

What happens if I lose my card?

Your card will be saved electronically. A new card can be printed quickly and sent out upon payment of a small fee of \$10.00 (GST inclusive) to cover the cost of printing and mailing.

How does the renewal work when the card is about to expire?

Arboriculture Australia Ltd will monitor the expiry date on all licences and automatically send out a tax invoice six (6) weeks prior to the expiry date, so you can either pay the invoice via EFT or over the phone with your credit card.

Once the Licence is up and running, Arboriculture Australia Ltd will be introducing a direct debit system. This will allow the association to deduct the money from your bank account on the renewal date if you opt for this service.

What happens to anyone who makes their own card?

Let's be absolutely clear on this matter; it is illegal and fraudulent. Arboriculture Australia Ltd has placed a financial value on the use of this card, nominated at \$10,000.00 annually.

Any person found to be reproducing the card will be prosecuted for the annual value of the card plus all legal costs incurred.

