

26 May 2017

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Dear Jacques

Thank you for your email of 28 April 2017 and subsequent clarification of 11 May 2017, requesting information with regard to overseas licence conversions. Your request has been considered under the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982. Please find your questions and my responses below:

1. *How many NZ drivers licences have been issued to overseas drivers in the past three years?*

The total number of applicants granted an application for an overseas conversion from 01 May 2014 to 30 April 2017 was **143,662**.

Please note that some applicants may already hold a NZ drivers licence before choosing to convert a class from an overseas licence. For example, a NZ car licence may already be held before an applicant converts an equivalent overseas motorcycle licence.

2. *How many of these converted licences have been revoked, suspended, or disqualified in the past three years?*

Of the 143,662 applicants granted an application for an overseas conversion from 01 May 2014 to 30 April 2017, the following number of applicants were revoked, suspended or disqualified, on or after the date the overseas conversion was granted:

- Revoked: **39**
- Disqualified (including partial and indefinite disqualifications) or suspended due to demerit points: **1,278**
- 28 day roadside suspension: **589**

Please note:

- Applicants may appear in more than one of the above categories depending on the nature of their sanctions.
- The data is limited to overseas conversion applications granted from 01 May 2014 to 30 April 2017, regardless of the application creation date.
- Revocations, disqualifications and suspensions are limited to start dates on or after the grant date of the overseas conversion application, before 01 May 2017.
- A driver licence holder can have their licence, a class/stage, or an endorsement revoked. Most revocations are recorded due to medical reasons, but revocations can also be recorded against an endorsement by a commercial licence adjudicator.

3. *What steps do you take to validate the driving licence from the approved countries list (ie to ensure it's not a fake licence)?*

To mitigate the risk of fraudulent overseas licenses being converted, the NZ Transport Agency strengthened its processes on 1 August 2016. An overseas conversion application may now only be lodged at selected driver licensing agents; a total of 32 sites have been approved nationwide. These agents have been trained and provided with resources to help verify that the licences presented are genuine, and to identify those that may be fraudulent.

While selected agents have the ability to enter an application into the driver licensing system, they do not have the authority to grant or decline the application. All overseas conversion applications, including copies of overseas licences and supporting documents, must be sent to the Transport Agency's Palmerston North Office for review and approval. Where the Transport Agency has concerns about the validity of an individual's overseas licence, the applicant must prove its authenticity by supplying their original licence as well as written confirmation from the overseas licence issuing authority. Until the Transport Agency is satisfied with the authenticity of an overseas licence, an overseas conversion application will not be granted.

4. *How many of these converted licence holders have been involved in serious vehicle accidents in NZ in the past 3 years?*

Of the 143,662 licence holders granted an overseas conversion from 01 May 2014 to 30 April 2017, 204 individuals have been involved in fatal or serious crashes. Of this 204, 19 were involved in fatal crashes, and the remaining 185 were serious crashes.

Please note:

- This data is provided from the road traffic crash database; Crash Analysis System (CAS).
- Data is limited to police reported crashes from 1 May 2014 to 30 April 2017 inclusive as recorded in CAS to date – 15 May 2017.
- This data does not imply that the holder of an overseas conversion licence was at fault.
- Traffic crash data covers all NZ roadways or places where the public have legal access with a motor vehicle.
- Due to the police reporting time frame and subsequent data processing there is a lag from the time of a crash to full and correct crash records within CAS.

If you would like to discuss this reply further with the Transport Agency, please contact Andrew Knackstedt, National Media Manager, by email to andrew.knackstedt@nzta.govt.nz or by phone on (04) 894 6285.

Yours sincerely



Michelle Charlton
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For Chief Executive