

6 March 2019

Damian George
Transport and Regional Council reporter
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REF: OIA-4669

Dear Damian

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 6 February 2019 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Can you please tell me:

- What variations of letters and numbers have been skipped when issuing new registration plates during the past 12 months, and why?

- What personalised number plates have been rejected by the NZTA over the past 12 months? Why were they rejected? What was the letter and number combination for each of the rejected personalised plates?

Depending on the vehicle type, the NZ Transport Agency has three different plate styles known as motorcycle, trailer/caravan and general purpose.

As a general policy, all plates that show the letter 'I', 'O', 'V' or 'X' are automatically excluded from production for the following reasons:

Letter excluded	Reason for exclusion
I	Easily confused with the numeral 1
O	Easily confused with the numeral 0
V	Used for visiting overseas vehicles only
X	Used for trade plates only

In addition to the above table, when deciding which plates will be released into production, the Transport Agency bases its decision on the letter combination that will appear in the next sequence. Should the combination meet one of the criteria to be excluded from release (detailed below), the entire series of plates numbering (001-999 for general purpose or 1-9 for motorcycles) is held back. For example, if the combination 'RAT' is deemed to be offensive, then all plates in the series starting from RAT001 through to RAT999 for general purpose or C1RAT through to C9RAT for motorcycles will not be released. Therefore, it is the letter variations that determine which number variations will be skipped.

Any combination of letters will be considered against the following guidelines to make sure plates are not deemed to be:

- offensive
- derogatory
- obscene
- profane
- promoting violence, discrimination or bias against:
 - race
 - age
 - religious or ethical belief
 - ancestry
 - place of origin
 - citizenship
 - sexual origin
 - family or marital status
 - disability or handicap.

In accordance with your first question, all general purpose and trailer plates excluded from production during the period 6 February 2018 to 6 February 2019 were due to containing the letters 'I', 'O', 'V' or 'X'. No other letter combinations were excluded during this period for being offensive or derogatory.

In regards to motorcycle plates, other than those plates being excluded for containing an 'I', 'O', 'V' or 'X', the following plate series were also excluded for being offensive or derogatory:

Motorcycle plates excluded from production from 6 February 2018 - 6 February 2019			
C1ANC - C9ANC	C1ARC-C9ARC	C1ARS-C9ARS	C1ASS-C9ASS
C1BAD - C9BAD	C1BAG - C9BAG	C1BAH - C9BAH	C1BAT - C9BAT
C1BRA - C9BRA	C1BUM - C9BUM	C1BUT - C9BUT	C1CCC - C9CCC
C1CNT - C9CNT			

In response to your second question, a list of personalised plates that have been rejected by the Transport Agency in the past 12 months, along with the reasons for that rejection, are attached as Attachment 1. Please note, in addition to derogatory or offensive plates, the Transport Agency also has a personalised plate protocol that will decline any letter or number variations chosen by the public which may be deemed confusing for enforcement personnel.

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

Yours sincerely



Michelle Charlton
Senior Manager Customer Services