

17 January 2018

Jay Boreham
Senior Reporter
Rodney Times
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Ref: OIA-3427

Dear Jay

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 7 December 2017 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

What variations of letters and numbers have been skipped when issuing new registration plates, and why?

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

I understand that Jackie Smith, Senior Customer Access Representative, contacted you on 14 December 2017 to clarify the first part of your request. During the phone call you confirmed that with regards to the variations of letters and numbers that have been skipped, you would like this information for general plates (standard motor vehicles) from 2001 till present. Motorcycle and trailer plate information is not required.

When deciding which general plates will be released into production, the NZ 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 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 will not be released. Therefore, it is the letter variations that determine which number variations will be skipped.

The general plate letter and number combinations excluded from production from March 2001 to 15 December 2017 are attached as Attachment 1.

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

Any combination of letters that do not meet the criteria outlined in the table 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 response to your second question, the list of personalised plates that have been rejected by the Transport Agency in the past 12 months, along with the reasons for that rejection, is outlined in the table below:

Plate letter and number combination	Reason for rejection
4UHOES	Derogatory
OR6ASM	Inappropriate
XXXXXK	Confusing
IXXXK	Confusing
CROWN	For Government use only
FUBUFU	Inappropriate
DUMBRS	Disrespectful/profane
4GASM	Inappropriate
FK8R	Inappropriate
I111M	Confusing

If you would like to discuss this reply with the Transport Agency, please contact contact Jan McCarthy, Acting Senior Manager Media, by email at jan.mccarthy@nzta.govt.nz or by phone on 03 964 2885.

Yours sincerely



Michelle Charlton

Senior Manager Customer Service Centre