

# Vehicle registration cancellation

## What does it mean to cancel the registration of my vehicle?

Cancelling the registration of a motor vehicle means that it is removed from the Motor Vehicle Register and the registration plates are returned to an NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) agent. When the registration of a motor vehicle is cancelled it is often referred to as being de-registered or lapsed.

When a motor vehicle has reached the end of its life and is no longer used on New Zealand roads, or is unable to be used on New Zealand roads, its registration should be cancelled.

Cancelling the registration of a motor vehicle is important because it lets the NZTA know that the motor vehicle is no longer being used. If you don't cancel the registration the NZTA will cancel the registration for you after 12 months have gone by without the vehicle having a current licence. If this happens you will still be required by law to pay the 12 months worth of licence fees. If you cancel the registration at the time that the motor vehicle becomes unusable, licence fees are only required to be paid up to the date of cancellation. If the licence for the vehicle is current when the registration is cancelled then you may even be eligible for a refund of the unused portion of the licence fees.

## How do I cancel the registration of my motor vehicle?

You should be certain that the motor vehicle will not be returning to the road. If you cancel the registration and then want to use the motor vehicle on the road again at some point in the future, you will need to re-register the motor vehicle with new registration plates.

To cancel the registration, follow the steps below:

1. Fill out an *Application to cancel registration* form (MR15). You will be required to select one of the following reasons for cancellation. The vehicle:
  - has become permanently useless as a motor vehicle, or
  - is destroyed and will never be able to go back on the road, or
  - is written off by an insurer, or
  - is removed permanently from New Zealand.

You are not entitled to cancel the registration if:

- the vehicle has been stolen and not recovered. You should notify the NZ Police, and then call the Motor Vehicle Contact Centre on 0800 108 809.
- the plates were lost or stolen. You should complete an *Application for replacement plate* form (MR6A) instead.
- you are not the person registered in respect of the vehicle. Only the registered person can cancel a vehicle's registration.
- you are only wanting to replace the registration or personalised plates
- you have found the plates and are only handing them in. The agent will take the appropriate action.
- you have sold the vehicle and the purchaser has failed to notify the NZTA of the acquisition of the vehicle. See factsheet 41: *Buying and selling* for more information.

- you are temporarily taking the vehicle off the road. See factsheet 49: *Vehicle licensing* for more information.

2. You will be required to present ID to the NZTA agent.

- Acceptable ID for an individual is:
  - a New Zealand driver licence, or
  - any combination of documents showing name, date of birth and signature.
- Acceptable ID for a company is:
  - an NZTA customer number, or
  - a certificate of incorporation.

3. Ensure the registration plates are removed from the motor vehicle so these can be returned with your application. If the plates are not returned then you may not be entitled to a refund of licensing fees.

## What happens next?

Take your application and the registration plates to an NZTA registration agent for processing. If the licence for the motor vehicle has already expired you will be required to pay licence fees from the date the licence expired up to the date of cancellation. If you are unable to pay these at the time, the NZTA will post a payment demand to you for these fees shortly after cancellation.

Once your application has been processed the Motor Vehicle Register will be updated and the registration cancelled. Refunds of any unused portion of a licence are required to be approved by the NZTA and cannot be issued by the NZTA registration agent.

## What if there are outstanding licensing fees?

If there are outstanding licensing fees owing you can choose to pay at the time you apply to cancel your vehicle or later. If you choose to pay at the time an administration fee of \$9.10 and the amount owing is due. If you choose to pay later you must still pay the administration fee of \$9.10 at the time of cancellation, and then the NZTA will send you a payment demand which you must pay within 14 days. An additional administration fee of \$10.20 will also be payable at this time.

## What happens if I don't cancel the registration?

If the vehicle is required to be continuously licensed and the registration is not cancelled, the NZTA will cancel the registration 12 months after the last licence or licence exemption has expired. If this happens and the licence fees remain unpaid, the outstanding fees will be sent to debt collection.

## Expired licences

If the licence for the vehicle has expired and the vehicle is subject to continuous vehicle licensing, payment of licence fees calculated from the licence expiry date to the date of cancellation will be required.

## Vehicles subject to road user charges

A vehicle subject to road user charges (RUC) is any vehicle that is diesel powered or has a manufacturer's gross vehicle mass (GVM) of more than 3.5 tonnes (3500kg) or any light vehicle not powered solely by fuel. (Light electric vehicles are currently exempt from RUC.)

Where the manufacturer's GVM is more than 3.5 tonnes an approved hubodometer must be fitted to a non-lifting axle on the left-hand side of the vehicle.

Before cancelling the vehicle's registration you must ensure that all RUC is up to date. If there is any outstanding RUC, you may be invoiced for the outstanding amount.

When cancelling your vehicle's registration for a heavy vehicle you will need to provide the current hubodometer and odometer reading of your vehicle on your MR15 form. For a light RUC vehicle, you only need to provide the odometer reading.

## Refunds

If the Registrar is satisfied that the motor vehicle has been destroyed, become permanently useless, been written off by an insurer, or has been permanently removed from New Zealand, then the Registrar may refund an amount equal to the unexpired licence fee paid. The transaction fee paid at the time the licence was purchased is non-refundable.

In order for the Registrar to be satisfied, the registration plate(s) must be returned. Any refund is liable for audit and is at the Registrar's discretion.

If you are leaving New Zealand and need any refund payable to be paid into a bank account, please send this application with details of the bank account into which any refund is to be paid to the address below.

## RUC Refunds

If the vehicle is subject to RUC, a refund equal to the amount of any unused distance recorded against the hubodometer/odometer may be refunded. In order for the refund to be paid, the current distance reading of the hubodometer/odometer must be provided on the MR15. Claims can only be for licences purchased within the last two years.

If anyone other than the person registered in respect of a vehicle or insurance company wants to apply for a RUC refund they will need to make their request in writing to:

RUC Refunds and Administration  
NZ Transport Agency  
Private Bag 11777  
Palmerston North 4442

## Questions and answers

### Who can cancel the registration of a motor vehicle?

- The person registered in respect of the vehicle.
- An insurance company\*.

\* If your vehicle is written off by your insurer, they are required by legislation to cancel the registration. Written off means a motor vehicle that is damaged and **is** insured, but the insurer has decided not to repair it because its safe tolerance (as defined in Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Repair 1998) has been compromised.

### What if I am not entitled to lawful possession of the motor vehicle?

You must be the person who is responsible for the vehicle to request the registration be cancelled. If you have acquired the vehicle but have not notified the NZTA of the acquisition you will need to complete a *Notice by person acquiring motor vehicle* form (MR13B) before you can cancel the registration.

The information in this factsheet is a general guide only. It is not the source of the law and should not be used in place of authoritative legal documents. Some factsheets are updated frequently and print versions can quickly become out of date. If the currency of the information you are reading is important, check the factsheet index on our website ([www.nzta.govt.nz/factsheets](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/factsheets)) or call us on 0800 108 809.

## What if I am the registered person but I am unable to get to an NZTA agent?

As the registered person you will need to complete and sign the MR15 form and write your New Zealand driver licence number on the form as identification. You can then have someone present the MR15 form and registration plates to an agent with your original identification.

## What if I can't get the registration plates off my vehicle and I want a refund of licensing fees?

If your vehicle has been in a fire or accident and the registration plates are unable to be recovered, you will need to get a letter from the police or fire brigade confirming this. If the vehicle was taken to a wrecker and has been destroyed or dismantled, you will need to get a letter from the wrecker confirming this.

## Storage providers

Approved storage providers must complete an *Application for storage provider to cancel registration* form (MR15A).

## Putting the vehicle back on the road

If your motor vehicle's registration has been cancelled and it will be used on a public road at a later date, there are several steps you need to follow first - inspection, certification, reregistration, licensing, and getting registration plates and labels issued to you (see factsheet 9).

## Registration agents

- **The Automobile Association (AA)**, Head Office telephone: (09) 377 4660, fax: (09) 309 4563, website: [www.aa.co.nz](http://www.aa.co.nz) email: [aatech@aa.co.nz](mailto:aatech@aa.co.nz).
- **Vehicle Inspection New Zealand (VINZ)**, Head Office telephone: (09) 573 3055, fax: (09) 573 3059, website: [www.vinz.co.nz](http://www.vinz.co.nz), email: [info@vinz.co.nz](mailto:info@vinz.co.nz).
- **Vehicle Testing New Zealand (VTNZ)**, Head Office telephone: (04) 495 2500 or 0800 888 869, fax: (04) 495 2530, website: [www.vtnz.co.nz](http://www.vtnz.co.nz), email: [technical@vtnz.co.nz](mailto:technical@vtnz.co.nz).

## General information

The particulars specified on the Application to cancel registration will be stored and/or form part of the Motor Vehicle Register. Collection and dissemination of this information is authorised by Part 17 of the Land Transport Act 1998. Corresponding information held on other parts of the Land Transport Register may be amended.

Under the Electoral Act 1993, s 263B, the NZTA is authorised to release information for data matching purposes to the Electoral Enrolment Centre.

The Privacy Act 1993 provides rights of access to, and correct of, any readily retrievable personal information held about you by the NZTA. Should you wish to exercise these rights please contact the NZTA, Private Bag 11777, Palmerston North 4442 or email [info@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:info@nzta.govt.nz).

When a vehicle is destroyed, removed permanently from New Zealand, becomes permanently useless or is written off, the registered person must surrender the registration plates and notify the cancellation immediately by completing and lodging the required form at an authorised agent of the NZTA. Any person who supplies false or misleading information on a form commits an offence and is liable to a fine not exceeding \$1000.

## Contact details

- Call our contact centre: 0800 108 809.
- Visit our website: [www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz).
- Email us: [info@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:info@nzta.govt.nz).
- Write to us: NZ Transport Agency, Private Bag 11777, Palmerston North 4442.