

21 June 2013

Tracey Chatterton
Hawke's Bay Reporter
The Dominion Post
tracey.chatterton@fairfaxmedia.co.nz

Dear Tracey

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 27 May 2013 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982:

- 'How many people were fined in 2012 for using an unauthorised number plate?
- How many people have been fined so far this year till May 1 2013?
- Can you provide examples of these unauthorised plates? Were they taken off the road?
- Where were these plates sourced?'

Please note as per Andrew Martin's letter to you of 6 June 2013 this first section of your request was formally transferred to the NZ Police to respond.

- 'How many personalised plates were turned down for registration in 2012? And till May 1 2013?
- Can you provide examples of some of these plates and the reasons they were declined?
- How many plates were recalled during 2012? And till May 1 2013?
- Can you confirm that there is a number plate on the road 2tihat?
- Is there a plate shithot on the road? Would this be allowed?'

The NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) prevents the manufacturing of general plates that contain letters such as I, O, V. These letters can easily be mistaken for 1, 0, U and this can cause issues for enforcement authorities.

OIA-1112

All applications for personalised plates are made through Personalised Plates Ltd (PPL). PPL will decline an application for a personalised plate if it is considered to be offensive. The NZTA does not hold a list of these applications unless PPL have sought the assistance of the NZTA when making a decision. PPL and the NZTA have, however, agreed to guidelines with a view of avoiding the issue of offensive plates. The criteria generally applied are that plates must not be 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.

The NZTA was not contacted by PPL between January 2012 and 3 April 2012 regarding decisions on plate applications. From 4 April 2012 to 22 May 2013, PPL contacted the NZTA about the following personalised plates and it was determined to disallow the manufacture of them due to the criteria previously mentioned:

- KFN247
- WETVAG
- WHAQM8
- MURDED
- O01

The NZTA also has the jurisdiction under section 265 of the Land Transport Act 1998 to require the surrender of any registration plate. If a complaint is received, the NZTA must apply an objective test – weighing the potential for a plate to offend others with the plate holder’s freedom of expression under the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990. Making this determination can be very difficult and the NZTA considers all such complaints carefully.

The NZTA recalled the personalised plate PIG5HT during the time you have specified. No other personalised plates were recalled.

We can confirm that the registration plate 2TIHOT is currently registered in the Motor Vehicle Register. The registration plate SHITHOT is not currently registered as a registration plate has a limit of 6 characters. SHITOT, however, has been allowed and is currently registered in the Motor Vehicle Register.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sue Hardiman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sue Hardiman

Manager, Customer Access

For Chief Executive