

1 September 2026

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Personal details removed for proactive release

OIA 31163

Thank you for your email of 18 August 2026, in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

I am seeking information concerning diplomatic vehicle registration plates in New Zealand, including DC registration plates, and the relationship between diplomatic status, vehicle registration and enforcement of New Zealand law.

Please provide:

- 1. The current rules, policies, procedures or guidance governing the allocation and use of diplomatic vehicle registration plates in New Zealand.*
- 2. The eligibility criteria for a vehicle to be issued with diplomatic registration plates.*
- 3. The categories of individuals or organisations whose vehicles may be eligible for diplomatic registration plates.*
- 4. Any guidance concerning who is authorised to drive a vehicle displaying diplomatic registration plates.*
- 5. Any guidance concerning whether possession or display of diplomatic registration plates itself provides any form of diplomatic immunity or legal privilege to the driver or vehicle.*
- 6. Any guidance concerning the circumstances in which diplomatic immunity applies to a person driving a diplomatic vehicle.*
- 7. Any guidance provided to diplomatic missions or diplomatic representatives concerning compliance with New Zealand road rules and traffic laws.*
- 8. Any policies, procedures or guidance concerning suspected misuse, fraudulent use, unauthorised use or inappropriate display of diplomatic registration plates.*

9. Any records of complaints, investigations, discussions or correspondence concerning suspected misuse of diplomatic registration plates from 1 January 2021 to the present, with personal information redacted where necessary.

10. The number of vehicles currently registered under diplomatic registration categories, preferably broken down by registration category if this information is held by MFAT.

11. Any correspondence, briefing papers, reports or internal advice since 1 January 2021 concerning public or government concerns about the use or misuse of diplomatic registration plates.

On 27 August 2026, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) informed you that question nine and ten of your request would have been transferred to the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) under section 14(b) of the OIA. However, NZTA had already received your request, so a transfer was not necessary. You will hear further from NZTA regarding question nine and ten.

Response to your request

Questions one to seven of your request are refused under section 18(d) of the OIA, as the information is publicly available on MFAT's website under the *Guidelines for the Diplomatic and Consular Corps*. Please refer to these chapters specifically:

- www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Consular/Diplomatic-and-Consular-Corps-Guidelines/Chapter-12-Motor-Vehicles-2026.pdf
- www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Consular/Diplomatic-and-Consular-Corps-Guidelines/Chapter-18-Diplomatic-and-Consular-Immunities-2026.pdf
- www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Consular/Diplomatic-and-Consular-Corps-Guidelines/Chapter-20-Traffic-Violations-and-Immunity-2026.pdf

Please note that diplomatic vehicles may be driven by non-diplomatic staff (for example a locally employed driver of an Ambassador's car).

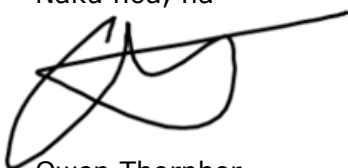
Question eight and eleven of your request are refused under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information requested does not exist.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website:

www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Owen Thornber
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade