

V24: Vehicle number plates

Information Bulletin

Requirements for number plates

Registered vehicles must display approved number plate/s.

Design, type and material of number plates

- All number plates must be approved and issued by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles.
- Number plates not issued by the Motor Vehicle Registry (MVR) are not approved and are illegal.

Affixing number plates

It is the responsibility of the vehicle owner to ensure that the number plate/s is/are securely affixed:

- at the front and rear of a registered motor vehicle, no more than 1300mm from the ground
- at the rear of a registered motorcycle, at least 300mm from the ground or
- at the rear of a registered trailer.

Requirements for the position of the number plate light will also determine the position of the number plate.

Number plate visibility

Number plate/s must be affixed so that the characters are in an upright position parallel to the vehicle's axles. The characters on the number plate must be legible and visible from a distance of 20 metres at any point within an arc of:

- 15 degrees above (from the horizontal plane) and 45 degrees to each side (from the vertical plane) for a vehicle with a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM)/Aggregate Trailer Mass (ATM) not more than 4.5 tonnes.
- 45 degrees above and to each side (from the horizontal and vertical plane) for a vehicle with a GVM/ATM greater than 4.5 tonnes.

Defaced or damaged number plates

Where any number plate becomes defaced or damaged and the characters are not easily legible, the vehicle owner must apply to the MVR within 14 days from the date of damage (or defacement) for replacement number plate/s. Fees may apply.

Faded or paint defective number plates

If number plate/s are faded or the paint is lifting off, the vehicle owner must attend the MVR as soon as possible to obtain replacement number plate/s.

If the MVR considers that the problem is due to poor manufacturing, the vehicle owner may be entitled to obtain another set of new plate/s (a different number) free of charge.

If the vehicle owner wishes to keep the same plate character combination, a fee will apply in all cases as the plates will have to be re-made.

Lost, destroyed, or stolen number plates

If any number plate has been LOST, the vehicle owner is required to apply to the MVR for replacement plate/s within 14 days.

If any number plate has been STOLEN, the vehicle owner is required to report the theft to the NT Police and apply to the MVR for replacement plate/s within 14 days. The vehicle owner must provide a copy of the police report.

If any number plate has been DESTROYED as a result of a motor vehicle accident, or for some other reason, the vehicle owner is required to apply to the MVR within 14 days to:

- obtain replacement plate/s or
- advise MVR that the vehicle has been written off or wrecked, in which case the vehicle owner will be asked to provide evidence.

Fees may apply in these cases.

Obscured number plates

It is an offence to obscure any part of any character/s of a number plate. Obscured number plate/s can be caused by:

- frames placed around number plate/s
- protective covers on number plate/s
- towbars/towballs
- bicycle carrying racks - refer to [Information Bulletin V50 Bicycle carrying racks and other rear-mounted carrying devices](#)
- bull bars
- loads incorrectly carried on the vehicle
- incorrect fitment.

A vehicle presented for inspection which has number plate/s obscured by any fixture, device, or load, **will not** be passed for registration. In such circumstances, it will be necessary to either remove the obstruction, or relocate the number plate. If the rear number plate is being relocated, illumination of the number plate is required.

Number plate/s that have been altered and do not comply with the above requirements may be issued with a vehicle defect notice and the driver may be subject to prosecution.

More information

For more information, contact MVR on telephone 1300 654 628 or email mvr@nt.gov.au