

Correct as at 5th June 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: In-service certification (WoF and CoF) > Heavy vehicles > Vehicle identification

## 1 Vehicle identification

- See also [Introduction 3-2: Identifying the vehicle class](#)

### 1-1 VIN and chassis number

**Important** Ensure that the VIN or chassis number is recorded in full on the checksheet.

This number must be:

- the VIN if fitted – not the chassis number (locally allocated VIN)
- the stamped VIN on the VIN plate – not the VIN etched on the glazing.

Also refer to **Table 1-1-1. Location of New Zealand VIN numbers, Figure 1-1-1. Structure of a VIN issued by the NZ Transport Agency and Figure 1-1-2. Structure of a VIN issued by the vehicle manufacturer.**

## Reasons for rejection

### Mandatory requirements

1. A vehicle first registered or re-registered in New Zealand before 1 April 1994 does not have a VIN or chassis number (Note 1) (Note 3).
2. A vehicle first registered or re-registered in New Zealand from 1 April 1994 does not have a VIN number (Note 1) (Note 3).
3. A VIN number is not valid (Note 1) (Note 2).

### Condition

4. A VIN or chassis number has been (Note 1) (Note 3):
  - a) removed, or
  - b) erased, or
  - c) altered, or
  - d) defaced, or
  - e) obscured, or
  - f) destroyed, or
  - g) obliterated, or
  - h) affixed unlawfully or by unauthorised persons.

### **Note 1**

The vehicle inspector must notify NZTA using the *Vehicle report* form if there is reason to believe that the VIN or chassis number has been tampered with in any way.

#### **Vehicle report form**

The vehicle inspector must not issue a WoF/CoF/permit until approved by NZTA. Approval will usually include the issue or re-issue of a new VIN plate.

The vehicle inspector must not issue a WoF/CoF/permit if there is reason to believe that the VIN or chassis number has been tampered with in any way.

Refer the vehicle to a VIN issuing agent ([VTNZ](#), [VINZ](#), [NZAA](#), [Drivesure](#), [CVC](#), [Autochecks](#)). They will inspect the vehicle and seek approval from NZTA to issue or re-issue a VIN plate. Once the vehicle has been approved the vehicle may continue through the inspection process.

### **Note 2**

A valid VIN is a unique number that has been assigned to the vehicle in the vehicle's country of origin or by a person appointed by the NZTA. It consists of 17 characters that never contain the letters I, O or Q, and that is capable of being decoded to provide identifying information about the vehicle.

### **Note 3**

If the vehicle is failed because the VIN/chassis is missing or unreadable, then 'not found' must be recorded in place of the VIN number on the check sheet.

**Table 1-1-1. Location of New Zealand VIN numbers**

Vehicle	Permitted VIN locations
Vehicles that are not forward controlled (passenger cars and off-road passenger vehicles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the engine compartment on the right-hand side of the firewall</li> <li>• In the engine compartment on the right-hand side adjacent to the front suspension mounting point</li> <li>• In a location inside the engine compartment approved by NZTA for a specified vehicle or vehicle model</li> <li>• On the firewall or inner guards so it is visible from the front of the vehicle.</li> </ul>
Forward-controlled vehicles (passenger vans and off-road vehicles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the passenger compartment, on the top of the right-hand side wheel arch adjacent to the seat cushion</li> <li>• In the passenger compartment, on the inner panel of the right-hand A-pillar, adjacent to where the floor meets the A-pillar</li> <li>• In the passenger compartment on the B-pillar.</li> </ul>
Goods vehicles and light omnibuses	<p>Vehicle with a separate chassis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the outside of the chassis adjacent to the right front wheel arch,</li> </ul> <p>Vehicle without a separate chassis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As specified for forward-controlled vehicles.</li> </ul>

If the vehicle is unfamiliar, and the VIN or chassis number cannot be located, the vehicle inspector should contact the manufacturer’s agent or the local VIN issuing agent ([VTNZ](#), [VINZ](#), [NZAA](#), [Drivesure](#), [CVC](#), [i4Checkpoint](#)).

**Figure 1-1-1. Structure of a VIN issued by the NZ Transport Agency**



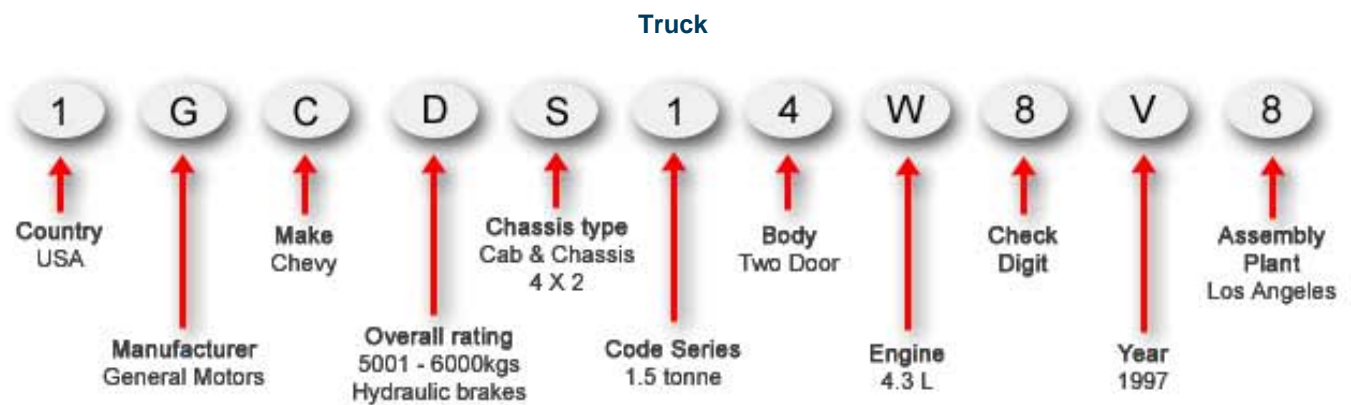
Post-29 November 2009



Figure 1-1-2. Structure of a VIN issued by the vehicle manufacturer



A26658 ← Vehicles unique number



132166 ← Vehicles unique number

# Summary of legislation

## Applicable legislation

- [Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Standards Compliance 2002](#).

## Mandatory requirements

1. A vehicle first registered or re-registered in New Zealand before 1 April 1994 must have a chassis number or VIN.
2. A vehicle first registered or re-registered in New Zealand from 1 April 1994 must have a VIN.

## Condition

3. A VIN or chassis number must not have been removed, erased, altered, defaced, obscured, destroyed, obliterated or affixed unlawfully, or be unauthorised.

Page amended **1 October 2022** (see [amendment details](#)).

## 1-2 Vehicle details

## Reasons for rejection

1. The number on the registration plate(s) is not the same as stated on the licence label.
2. The licence label does not correctly describe the vehicle
  - do not reject the vehicle if the label type is incorrect, eg 'B' or 'A'.
3. The Vehicle Inspection and Certification (VIC) or LATIS system does not correctly describe the vehicle.

Page added **1 October 2020** (see [amendment details](#))

Page updated 1 November 2024 (see [details](#))