



Consumer Information Notice

A Consumer Information Notice (CIN) must be attached to any used motor vehicle sold by a motor vehicle trader – whether this is at a traditional car yard, at a car fair or display for sale operation. If a trader is selling used cars on the internet they must have a link to the CIN on the same web page as the car is offered for sale.

[See an example of a CIN here \[PDF\].](#)

Private car sales do not normally need a CIN.

[Note: prior to July 2008 the CIN was called the Supplier Information Notice (SIN)]

Why is the CIN important?

The CIN gives you important information about the particular used motor vehicle you are thinking about buying. You can compare this information with other cars you may be looking at, or you can use it to check that everything is in order with the car itself.

On the back of the CIN there is also information about the rights you have as a consumer and details about where to go if you have problems.

When you purchase the car the trader must ask you to sign the CIN - as proof that they have provided it to you.

The trader must give you a copy of the CIN. If you later have some problems with the car this copy provides evidence of the vehicle details provided when you bought the car.

Information on the CIN

Trader details

The trader must supply their "name", "address" and "contact information". They must state their "registration number".

Under the Motor Vehicles Sales Act 2003 any person who carries on the business of motor vehicle trading must be registered. This includes car dealers, car importers, car wholesalers, and car auctioneers. This does not include car market operators.

You can search the Motor Vehicle Traders Register to check the registration details on the CIN or to find out who is responsible for running a particular motor vehicle trading business and how to contact that trader. You can also search for traders who have been banned.

[To do this visit the Motor Vehicle Traders Registers' website](#) or freephone 0508 668 678.

Money details

You must be given the "cash price". This should include all the costs associated with buying the car and being able to drive it immediately. This includes GST, registration and licensing costs.

You must also be told if the vehicle is subject to "road user charges" and whether there are any "outstanding road user charges" on the vehicle. All diesel powered motor vehicles and vehicles over 3500kg are subject to road user charges. To pay the charges you must buy a Road User Charge licence.

[To find out more visit the New Zealand Transport Agency website](#) or call freephone 0800 655 644.

Money owing

You must be told if there is a "security interest" (or put simply, money owing to someone else) on the car.

If a finance company lends money to someone to buy a motor vehicle, the lender can register a security interest over the vehicle on the Personal Properties Securities Register (PPSR).

A security interest means that the lender has rights over the vehicle. If the security interest entry field on the CIN ticked 'Yes', then the vehicle could be repossessed. If the field is ticked 'No', the vehicle cannot be repossessed from you.

This protection **does not** apply to private sales. To ensure that the vehicle you intend to buy is free of a security interest, you should check the PPSR

[See here for more information on searching the PPSR.](#)

Vehicle details

There are several pieces of information on the CIN, that when taken together, give you some indication of the age, use and performance capability of the vehicle. You should look at these together and not rely on a single piece of information to get a full picture of the vehicle.

- The “make and model” and “vehicle identification number or chassis number” are important identifiers that the car you are buying is actually the one that the CIN is about. With this information you can find out more details about the vehicle if you want to.
- The “vehicle year”.
- The “year of first registration” is the year that the vehicle was first registered for use.
- The “engine capacity” and “operating fuel type” will give you information about the performance capability of the vehicle and alert you to whether road user charges apply.
- The odometer reading is an indicator of vehicle use and the CIN must have a statement either of the “actual distance the vehicle has travelled” (that is the odometer reading) or that the odometer reading is inaccurate or that the Consumer is unable to accurately determine the actual distance travelled because the odometer reading may be inaccurate. However, you should not place too much importance on the odometer reading when buying a used motor vehicle. There is a risk with any used vehicle that the odometer has been wound back. A vehicle’s mechanical condition is a better indicator of its quality. You may wish to have a vehicle checked by a person with mechanical knowledge before you buy.

Registration details

Registration details must also be provided on the CIN. All vehicles must be registered on the Motor Vehicle Register before they can be used on New Zealand roads. Once registered the vehicle is given a registration plate number and you must renew the licence for the vehicle each year. The CIN must tell you whether or not the vehicle is “registered”, the “registration plate number” and the “expiry date of the licence”.

It must also tell you if the vehicle has been “re-registered”. Re-registration is necessary if a motor vehicle’s registration has been cancelled. Common reasons for cancelling registration include vehicles being “written off” by insurance companies, destroyed or rendered useless, or having been unlicensed for more than one year.

Checking vehicle details

You can make an application to an authorised agent of Land Transport New Zealand to check if the motor vehicle has been reported stolen and to check vehicle registration details. To obtain this information you will have to complete an application, show identification and pay a fee.

Warrant of Fitness details

The CIN must indicate whether or not the motor vehicle has a current “warrant or certificate of fitness”. If it does the expiry date must be given.

Used imported vehicle details

If a used motor vehicle has been imported into New Zealand there is additional information that must be on the CIN. It must note when the vehicle was “first registered overseas” and where it was “last registered” before being imported into New Zealand – this gives an indication of the history and use of the vehicle.

It must also indicate whether the vehicle was imported as a “damaged vehicle”. Land Transport New Zealand records whether or not imported used vehicles had obvious structural damage or deterioration identified at the time of import. By contrast, damage that may have occurred in New Zealand will not have been recorded.

You may wish to have any vehicle (whether imported or not) checked by a person with mechanical knowledge before you buy.

What if the CIN is missing, inaccurate, not completed or misleading?

If the CIN is missing, inaccurate, not completed or misleading you can report this to the Commerce Commission.

Freephone 0800 943 600 or write to P O Box 2351, Wellington.

[Visit their website](#) or [email](#).

Your Rights

Consumer Guarantees Act 1993

The Consumer Guarantees Act 1993 (CGA) sets out guarantees that apply to new and used motor vehicles that are of a kind ordinarily bought for personal, domestic or household use from motor vehicle traders. Under the CGA, the vehicle must:

- be of acceptable quality, taking into account its age, price and condition at the time of purchase

- be fit for any particular purpose you make known to the seller
- match its description
- match any demonstration model
- be free of any undisclosed security interest
- not be stolen.

Fair Trading Act 1986

Under the Fair Trading Act 1986 (FTA) it is unlawful for motor vehicle traders to engage in misleading or deceptive conduct, or make false or misleading representations about vehicles that they are offering for sale.

Under the FTA representations made by a motor vehicle trader about the motor vehicle you are buying must be true and the information on the CIN must be correct.

Fair trading complaints can be taken to the Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal or made to the Commerce Commission.

Contact the Commerce Commission:

Freephone 0800 943 600 or write to P O Box 2351, Wellington.

[Visit their website](#) or [email](#).

Contractual Remedies Act

The Contractual Remedies Act gives you some protection if you can show that:

- you were persuaded to buy the vehicle by what the seller said, and
- what the seller said was untrue, and
- the seller's false statements have caused you to lose money – e.g. by having to pay to repair the engine when the seller told you it was in excellent condition.

Compensation from the seller would be based on the difference between what the vehicle is actually worth and what it would have been worth if the seller's statements about the vehicle had been true.

Motor Vehicle Sales Act 2003

Under the Motor Vehicles Sales Act 2003 (MVSA) any person who carries on the business of motor vehicle trading must be registered. This includes car dealers, car importers, car market operators (including those facilitating sales over the internet), car wholesalers, and car auctioneers.

Motor vehicle traders must attach a Consumer Information Notice (CIN) to a vehicle that they display for sale and must provide you with a copy of the CIN if you buy this vehicle.

You can search the Motor Vehicle Traders Register to check the registration details on the CIN or to find out who is responsible for running a particular motor vehicle trading business and how to contact that trader. You can also search for traders who have been banned.

[To do this visit the Motor Vehicle Traders Registers' website](#) or freephone 0508 668 678.

Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal

The MVSA also sets up the Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal. This Tribunal can hear and determine applications or claims made against a motor vehicle trader under the Sale of Goods act 1908, the Fair Trading Act 1986, and the Consumer Guarantees Act 1993. The Tribunal can hear claims of up to \$50,000.

[For more information visit the Ministry of Justice's website on the Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal.](#)

Or freephone 0800 MVDT (0800 367 6830).

These laws offer protection if you buy from a motor vehicle trader. However, your rights depend on the type of motor vehicle trader from whom you buy. You can get further information about your consumer rights from a Citizens Advice Bureau or a Community Law Centre.

[Visit the Citizen's Advice Bureau website.](#)