Using the Road Vehicle Certification System

This supplement provides a guide to finding those elusive engine numbers and other useful vehicle data using the Department of Transport and Regional Services’ [DoTaRS] internet site.

Before you start you will need some identification information from the vehicle. To get this information find the vehicle’s compliance plate and note the compliance plate approval number referred to as the ‘CPA’. Record this number as you will need it later.

The information you will need to access on the web site is known as a RVD (Road Vehicle Descriptor). These are forms providing technical information for particular vehicles. As well as engine and vehicle identity number locations, the forms provide suspension, brake and engine data and other useful info.

To find the engine number location you will also need a copy of the AMVCB grid system. This is a multi page document that contains ‘maps’ of vehicles and engines and is set up like a Melways. That is, it is marked up into grids and you use reference numbers to identify locations. The reference numbers are obtained by following the instructions below but it is recommended that you download the grid system and save it for future use. Be warned that if you print it out it is 38 pages long.

Finding the Engine Number Location.

Step 1 – Go to the RVCS site. To do this:

- Open a web browser on your computer and type in the following address: [http://www.dotars.gov.au/]
- Scroll down the left side of the web page until you locate the link to “Road Vehicle Certification System”. Click on this link and it takes you to the RVCS MENU - the screen shown below.

[You can also go directly to it at [http://rvcs-prodweb.dot.gov.au/ if you prefer]
Step 2 - From the previous screen you can enter the RVD search page or get the AMVCB grid system charts. If you have the charts then go to Step 3.

Step 3 - Go to the RVD search page [shown below], enter the CPA number from the Compliance Plate you recorded earlier and make sure “ALL” is selected in the status box so that all relevant approvals are included - not just the latest ones. Click on the search button.

![RVCS Certification Unit Search](image1)

In the sample screen above, the CPA approval number 35628 for the VE Commodore, has been used. Clicking the SEARCH button takes you to the page below.

![RVCS Certification Unit Search Results](image2)

Step 4 - Click on the link shown above to get a listing of all the approvals that have been issued under the CPA approval number you entered. This will take you to a page like the one following.
Step 5 - Select the RVD chart you need to get to the next screen with all the details of the particular vehicle.

Note: The descriptors for the documents do not always describe exactly what they contain so you might have to open a few to find the right one. For example, the document in the second row down has to be chosen to find the SS series vehicles as shown in the screen below.
Step 6 - Scroll down to find the AMVCB Grid Location details as shown in the screen below. It also shows you the typical structure of the engine number you are looking for.

Step 7 - Use the AMVCB Grid Locations details to determine where on the engine you need to look to find the engine number. In this case the location is at G 17 on grid chart 5.

EUREKA!!!!

You now know exactly where to look to find that elusive engine number.

There is also extra information right down the bottom of the page in the remarks area of the RVD. This may give additional information that may be relevant to the vehicle identifiers, vehicle dimensions, etc. It may also tell you things like what you may have to do to see the engine number. For the example shown above, the remarks section says you have to remove the engine cover to view the V8 engine number.

You can also use the same processes to find out where on the vehicle the VIN is located. The remarks area may also tell you where else on the vehicle additional VINs can be found.

For the example used above the remarks area tells us:

"THE VIN IS ALSO AVAILABLE AT 10-O-18".

Therefore, use grid chart 10 and at location O 18 that is where you will find another imprint of the vehicle’s VIN.