

ECUADOR and GALAPAGOS 2006, by Jean-Emmanuel Chevry

I was in Ecuador in April 2006 and had the chance to visit the Galapagos islands after a couple of days in the Quito and Lago Agrio (Amazonas) regions.

Let's start with **passenger** plates: All of them are black on a white background, and I saw only one with year 93 on the top left. A few of them had the D letter (duplicates), an apart from a couple of plates made in Germany (with the D Euroband !), all plates have the standard american size. In Quito (Pinchicha povince) the first letter is P, and in all provinces the second letter starts with B, etc... In the Galapagos Islands , the most recent registration observed was WBA-446. As you may know, the second largest town, Guayaquil has always been in competition with the capital Quito. Probably for this reason, the Guayas province is the only one showing a light blue logo with "Comision de transito de la Provincia del Guayas", already seen at least 3 years ago.



Other common black on white plates are **Police** plates, always with a W as second letter. In Quito, I saw mainly PWA and a few PWB plates, on cars and motorcycles; and in the Galapagos Islands , the most recent registration was WWA-013. Here are Police motorcycles starting with IWZ and PWZ. I saw only once a plate with blue and grey bands and showing "Policia".

I saw only two of what I suppose to be the **new type of provisional** plates in Quito , on new cars: P10-0040 and P10-0046, as I did not see any of the former white on black series.



Let's go on with plates with an **orange (public service), bright yellow (municipal) or beige (official)** background. Taxis and public buses have **black on orange** plates, with an A as second letter in most provinces : WAA-353 as the most recent registration in the Galapagos, UAH 547 is a bus plate seen in Cotacachi, Imbabura (coming from Sucumbios Province ?) and PAG-086 is an old bus plate in Quito region. In Quito, I saw public buses registered PUA-123, but the majority of taxis, buses and other public services vehicles have a Z as second letter.



In Quito, it seems only municipal owned vehicles have a **bright yellow** background, with an M as second letter, as I saw a 4WD vehicle with a PMD-123 registration and electricity powered tramways too. Most official vehicles have a **black on beige** registration, with an E (**Estado**) as second letter. In the Galapagos, the highest seen was WEA-083, and in Quito PEN-368. Other official registrations have this beige background, such as this GXG-033 duplicate plate, on a car belonging to the "Ministerio de Bienestar Social" or Welfare Ministry. As GXM-442 was seen in 2003 by Jeroen Coninx on a light blue military plate, probably the X as second letter for "Government Agencies" may be used on civil and military vehicles, and then this first letter G would mean Gobierno ?



If you think things are quite clear, let's review a couple of **Army** plates, either on beige or white background.... This FTF-293 plate is a "Fuerzas Terrestres" plate, the AR from ARE-655 seems too mean "Armada", and the DFA-319 is one of the 2 "Defensa" plates I saw in Lago Agrio region.... I also spotted on a truck EE 123456 painted yellow on a black background, as previously reported.



Diplomatic plates are easier to identify: Previously yellow on a blue background, such as this "Organization International" plate (Medicos sin Fronteras), all of them are now black on reflective blue: AT, CC, CD or OI.



Among other curiosities, I spotted this "**Direccion civil de Aviation Civil**" DAC-462 plates on a Guayaquil Airport large vehicle, and also two IT-1234 black on red plates : one ambulance near Quito and a gasoline truck near Lago Agrio.

Let's end with Motorcycles plates: Regular **Motorcycle** plates have a black on bright yellow background, such as these two from the Galapagos and the Esmeraldas provinces. Among many vehicles from other provinces, I have been surprised to spot in the Galapagos Islands two black on white plates on motorcycles such as GZM173 or GZV701, standing for commercial vehicles from the Guayas province.



Jean-Emmanuel Chevy, for Europlate publications - October 2006