

The primary purpose of the vehicle registration system maintained by DVLA is for road safety and revenue collection. It is vital that we do all we can to secure and maintain the accuracy and integrity of the vehicle register. This includes accurately describing the body type of the vehicle in question to assist the police in identifying vehicles involved in criminal activity.

As you are aware DVLA have recently seen an increase in the number of applications to change the body type description on their vehicle registration certificate (V5C), including converted single or double decker buses and heavy goods delivery vehicles, to what the customer describes as motor caravan. Whilst the interior of these vehicles may have been fitted with basic living facilities, the external appearance of these vehicles remains as they were constructed.

Unfortunately, there is no body type descriptor 'living van' or 'camper van' which could in some cases describe the majority of self/professional conversions of goods vehicles. 'Motor caravan' is the only body type description at DVLA's disposal to describe vehicles converted after first registration, either professionally or by the keeper and even those that are originally manufactured as motor caravans.

Whilst the internal specifications of a vehicle which has been converted as a 'Motor caravan' are easily defined, when describing the external appearance DVLA applies a 'reasonableness test' which is based on how someone would describe the vehicle in traffic or if parked on the road i.e. if you saw a Ford Transit with a window for example would you describe it as a 'van' or a 'motor caravan'?

As a result DVLA has reviewed the use of the body type descriptor 'motor caravan' in conjunction with the Police to ensure it accurately describes vehicles externally. The Police fully support the 'reasonableness test' and are of the opinion that if a vehicle is not first registered as a motor caravan or does not have a custom coach built body, it should not be described as a 'motor caravan'. This means that all goods vehicles fitted with basic living facilities should be described externally as panel van, van with side windows or other relevant body type description.

I attach some examples of vehicles which we will accept as a motor caravan for 'body type' purposes. I also attached some examples of the vehicles which do not meet the criteria.