



Travel in Uzbekistan, april 2009, by Yves Laussucq



New plates from 01/01/2009



We spent ten days from west to east of the country. From the very rural viloyat of the autonomous Karakalpakistan to the modern, western Toshkent we were guided by Saodat from "Orient Voyage", and thanks to her, we spent an excellent trip. It look they are two countries in Uzbekistan : One is Toshkent and around (and less true, city of Samarkand) which is incredibly modern and you can compare easily to western cities like Paris or Berlin...and the rest of the country, where you can see a life which not really change from ages. With donkey cart on road, or camels or jalopies from soviet era which transport people from elsewhere to nowhere. From my point of view cities like Khiva or Boukhara where you have the feeling to back 500 years ago, have a marvellous charm, and was exactly what I hope to found by this trip. Probably locals are not so romantic, mobile phone and parabolic antennas are everywhere. Another thing to note, despite a lot of policemen, and a very strict control, people was incredibly friendly.

Furthermore for a plate spotter, as the system change late on the past year, it was close to heaven. So now for plate scene:

!!! The "soviet" system (pre 1996) is fully out. Only few old agricultural tractors and antic motorcycles bear something close to soviet plates. Time to time, you can see an old vehicle parked on bricks still with these plates but none on roads,



!!! The former system, which started in 1996, is still in live. About 50% of plates in Toshkent and 75 to 80% in the rest of the country. It is well known, with 2 digits in blue for the "viloyat", the fact that letters C W X were used has to be mentioned in RPW,



!- The "new" system, that started probably on January 1st, 2009 :

Many vehicles have new plates, not only new vehicles. So I think we can suppose that when a vehicle gets to another viloyat, the registration change too. And in this case an old vehicle can obtain a new number

With the new system, new codes have been created:

- !!!! TOSHKENT uses 01 - SAMARKAND 30 (Toshkent in RPW) ?
- !!!! BOUKHARA 80 - NAVOIY 85 - KHIVA 90
- !!!! KARAKALPAK 95 - seen between DZHIZHAK and Syr Darya (Guliston) 25 ?

Normal registrations are : Viloyat code / 1 letter / 3 digits / 2 letters / UZ flag . Commercial use plates have : Viloyat code /3 digits / 3 letters / flag above UZ

OFFICIAL : In Toshkent I saw two huge black Mercedes with : "Flag then PAA594 and other Flag then PAInnn". My idea is that P=Parliament.



I saw front of official buildings dozens of UZ code but still on the former style and all with 10=Toshkent code :



I saw one 21NV007= Navoiy Viloyat, in the 1996 former style.

I saw ALL police vehicles, in the former system, starting with an A. I saw from AA to AF currently. In the crowded Toshkent area codes were AD to AG. In new



system, it could be nnnAAA, but I did not saw many to be sure.

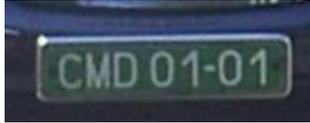
MOTORCYCLES were very rare with plates. Quite all were antic soviet relics, except one superb HONDA Goldwing with a plate in former system and code 66 ???



FOREIGN RESIDENT still us former system plate, with a yellow background. I saw dozens in Toshkent.

I noticed a harmful of "foreign" plates without code but I'm not sure it were from UZ or neighbouring countries.

DIPLOMATS : Again no change from the former system. I'm lucky enough to see the Turkey ambassador car CMD 01-01 and saw the Russian ambassador car CMD 07-01.



For D (Diplomat) and T (Technical staff) codes, again no change from the former system.



For M code (foreign company) still in white on blue and in the former system. These plates are everywhere and not only on recent or "western" cars, but also on bus, and one time on a motorized tricycle !!!



I also saw in Bukhara a 4WD Toyota with UNICEF stickers, but the plate say just UN nn-nn not UNICEF in full.



I didn't see any K code, I didn't see any TRANZIT plates.

MILITARY : "real" military vehicles such troop transport have no plates at all, but civilian vehicles (= cars) have plates with the code in blue (always 10 Toshkent) then MX nn-nn in white on black.

I can add, I saw dozens of vehicles without plates, cars, bus, trucks should be awaiting definite registration, maybe due to the new system, but something normal.

Like in the former system, the new plates are not reflectorized. But the new ones have lines of hologram in pale grey, the height pointed star chosen by the regime as symbol. Someone told me the former supplier (a Russian-Uzbek company named GODA GOST or so) lost the market to the benefit of UTSCH. But, due to some delays or mismatch, you can see on roads:



Former system with UTSCH plate but the viloyat code is BLACK



Newer system made by former supplier but the viloyat code is higher, close the same size as the registration



The very last plate made in the former system with addition of a flag, but on left and a small mark on the viloyat code, made by former supplier as replacement

Regarding foreign vehicles: I saw "exotic" countries like FRANCE (44) GERMANY(ER) but also a vanity from LV (UZ33). I saw a lot of trucks from TURKEY, IRAN (always black on yellow plates) plus vehicles from KZ (one with appropriated X395XBM on a BMW, but what X code ?) Kirgizstan, Turkmenistan and a 4WD from AFG.



At last I want to thanks our Uzbek friends M & Mrs UMAROVA and family, who's open her house for us.

Yves Laussucq, May 2009

