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ICBC yanked 2,600 vehicle licences

Special to The Province

VICTORIA — Motor Vehicle Superintendent R. G. Whitlock said Tuesday that licence plates for 2,600 vehicles have been lifted for default of auto insurance payments since the government-run car insurance scheme began in 1974.

The defaults arose from bad cheques issued in payment for insurance. Very few of the 2,600 licence cancellations he said, relate to the insurance year that began last March 1, but come from bad cheques

tendered for insurance payments in 1974 and 1975.

But, Whitlock added, "it looks like we're going to get a lot more." The insurance Corp. of B.C. estimated last week that about 16,000 motorists have defaulted on first instalment payments for the current insurance year.

Whitlock said he hopes ICBC will be able to "straighten out" many of the 16,000 defaults, otherwise Motor Vehicle Branch office staff will be "hard pressed" to keep up with the work involved in proc-

essing suspensions. When there is a default in payment, the person in default is given an opportunity to make good the amount owing; if he does not, the Motor Vehicle Branch suspends vehicle licences and orders them picked up by sheriffs' deputies or police.

An ICBC spokesman said Tuesday an unknown number of the estimated 16,000 defaulters this year apparently are in default because of error rather than intent, and that it is hoped the errors can be corrected.