

Information note on the duration of an NCT Certificate

In accordance with EU legislation (Directive 2009/40//EC) passenger cars are required to undergo a roadworthiness test when they are four years old and every two years thereafter. Under the Road Traffic (National Car Test) Regulations 2009 (S.I. No. 567 of 2009), the test due date is calculated by reference to the date of first registration of the vehicle. The first test is due four years after first registration of the vehicle and then is set as every two years thereafter. This is the minimum EU requirement.

Accordingly, an annual NCT for cars 10 years and older commenced with effect from 1 June 2011. The effect of this is that all cars presented for their 10th anniversary or subsequent NCT on or after 1st June 2011 will receive a certificate valid for up to one year only.

Where a car is tested other than at the specified time, the test certificate is valid from the date of the actual test until the next date on which the test is due. This is to ensure that the car is again liable for a test in accordance with the test schedule laid down in Regulations. This can result in a certificate of less than 1 or 2 years duration, depending on when the car was presented for a test. No provision exists under the Regulations to permit an extension of the period covered by a NCT certificate beyond the test due date.

Periods of non-use of a vehicle for whatever reason or periods of not having to pay motor tax are not relevant in relation to determining NCT test due dates. The test due date is determined by reference to the date of registration and subsequent anniversaries of that date.

As regards cars that have been off the road for approx three years, such a car would not be liable for two tests in quick succession in order to bring it in line with the test schedule. A test may be undertaken up to 21 months following the test due date and if tested anytime during that 21 month period the NCT certificate will only be valid until the next due date.