

The RSA logo consists of the letters 'RSA' in white, sans-serif font, centered within an orange square with slightly rounded corners. The square is positioned in the top right corner of the page.

RSA

***National Car Testing Service
(NCTS)***

2022 Annual Report

Final Report

Údarás Um Shábháilteacht Ar Bhóithre
Road Safety Authority

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This report was prepared by Deloitte Ireland LLP ('Deloitte') and approved by the Road Safety Authority ("RSA") to present information on the operations of the National Car Testing Service ("NCTS"), in 2022. Its contents are strictly confidential. The performance analysis presented herein are based on provided inputs from: Applus Inspection Ireland Limited AISIL; and the Technical Inspection Services Provider (TISP), the Automobile Association (AA).

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The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the preparation of this report and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all matters that exist, or all actions that might be taken. This report is made solely to the RSA. We do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the RSA.

1. Introduction & 2022 overview

Introduction

This report sets out a summary of the National Car Testing Service (NCTS) operations in the 12-month period from 01 January 2022 to 31 December 2022.

Periodic roadworthiness testing of passenger cars and commercial vehicles is mandatory in all Member States of the European Union, in accordance with Directive 2014/45/EU. The NCTS was introduced in Ireland in January 2000 as part of the EU Directive that makes car testing compulsory in all member states. It is aimed primarily at improving road safety and enhancing environmental protection by providing an independent assessment of the roadworthiness and emissions level of vehicles at regular intervals throughout their life.

Following a competitive tendering process, a contract between the RSA and Applus Inspection Services Ireland Ltd. (“AISIL” or “the Contractor”), a member of the Applus+ Group, to operate the NCTS in Ireland, for a period of ten years, came into effect on the 27 June 2020.

The NCTS contract sets out a suite of eight Service Levels used to assess the Contractors performance in delivering the NCTS. Full details of these Service Levels are set out in **Appendix 1**.

The performance of the Contractor is monitored in line with agreed and documented performance standards which have been set out in the Project Agreement. The performance of AISIL is monitored on behalf of the RSA by the Supervisory Services Contractor (SSC), currently Deloitte Ireland LLP (Deloitte), and the Technical Inspection Services Partner (TISP), currently the Automobile Association.

Significant matters which impacted the NCTS in 2022

Throughout 2022 there were a number of issues which had a material impact upon the delivery of the NCTS:

1. **Covid-19** – The Government announced that all the Covid-19 restrictions would be lifted in March 2022. Covid-19 continued to impact the delivery of the NCTS. There was also an increased level of customer no-shows and late cancellations due to Covid-19 particularly in Q1 2022, with some residual effects in subsequent months.
2. **Slot availability** – Throughout 2022 there was a lack of slots for NCTS customers which in turn led to high numbers of NCTS customers on the Priority List. The NCTS Contractor introduced a number of initiatives throughout 2022 in an attempt to increase slot availability including, enhanced opening hours and increasing recruitment of Vehicle Inspectors (VIs).
3. **Recruiting and retaining VIs** – At the start of 2022 there were 586 Vehicle Inspectors (VIs) employed in the NCTS. Throughout 2022, the overall lack of, and high demand for qualified mechanics impacted the retention and recruitment of VIs in the NCTS. In response to this, the Contractor introduced a number of initiatives to retain VIs including associated employee benefits and the introduction of a management development programme.

The Contractor continued to recruit VIs throughout the year. In addition, in Q4 2022 the NCTS Contractor seconded 21 VIs from its sister company in Spain. Following a change in regulations initiated by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, to permit recruitment of vehicle testers, the company recruited 44 VIs from the Philippines. Throughout the year there were 113 VIs (based on Full Time Equivalents (FTEs)) who ceased employment in the Service, including the returning secondees from Spain. This resulted in 595 VIs being employed at the end of 2022.

2022 Performance Summary

Test volumes decreased marginally when compared with 2021. Please see **Section 6** (performance management) of this report for more detail in this regard.

Note – The information presented hereunder is extracted from the Contractor’s ICT system at the time of reporting.

1. 2022 activity levels across the service were lower than those seen in 2021 as can be seen below.

Table 1.1: Test volumes 2017 – 2022

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Full test	1,355,534	1,343,761	1,390,586	1,006,982	1,418,113	1,395,505
Lane re-test	448,386	444,628	474,796	471,919	476,613	454,790
Non lane re-test	239,950	236,135	233,513	130,337	197,625	191,491
Total	2,043,870	2,024,524	2,098,895	1,609,237	2,092,351	2,041,786

2. Pass rates for full NCT tests increased in 2022. Pass rates for lane and non-lane re-tests decreased marginally in 2022.

Table 1.2: Pass rates 2017 – 2022

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Full test (%)	49.20	49.25	49.98	54.94	52.76	54.31
Lane re-test (%)	86.89	87.65	88.77	81.76	88.30	88.01
Non lane re-test (%)	99.45	99.50	99.60	99.57	99.56	99.55

The quarterly pass rates for 2022 are set out hereunder:

	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022
Full test (%)	53.69	53.69	55.32	54.68
Lane re-test (%)	87.96	87.97	88.10	88.00
Non lane re-test (%)	99.53	99.55	99.62	99.52

3. NCT test accuracy for 2022 was 99.34% (see **Section 3**).

4. NCT customer satisfaction in 2022, measured via the Customer Performance Index (CPI) was 85.53% (see **Section 4**).

2022 NCT test volumes overview

A monthly analysis of the throughput, based on full-tests, of vehicles and pass / fail rates for the NCT in the period January 2021 – December 2022 is presented below in **Figure 1.1**.

The axis on the left details the throughput of vehicles, the axis on the right details the pass rate.

Figure 1.1: 2021 – 2022 throughput and pass rates

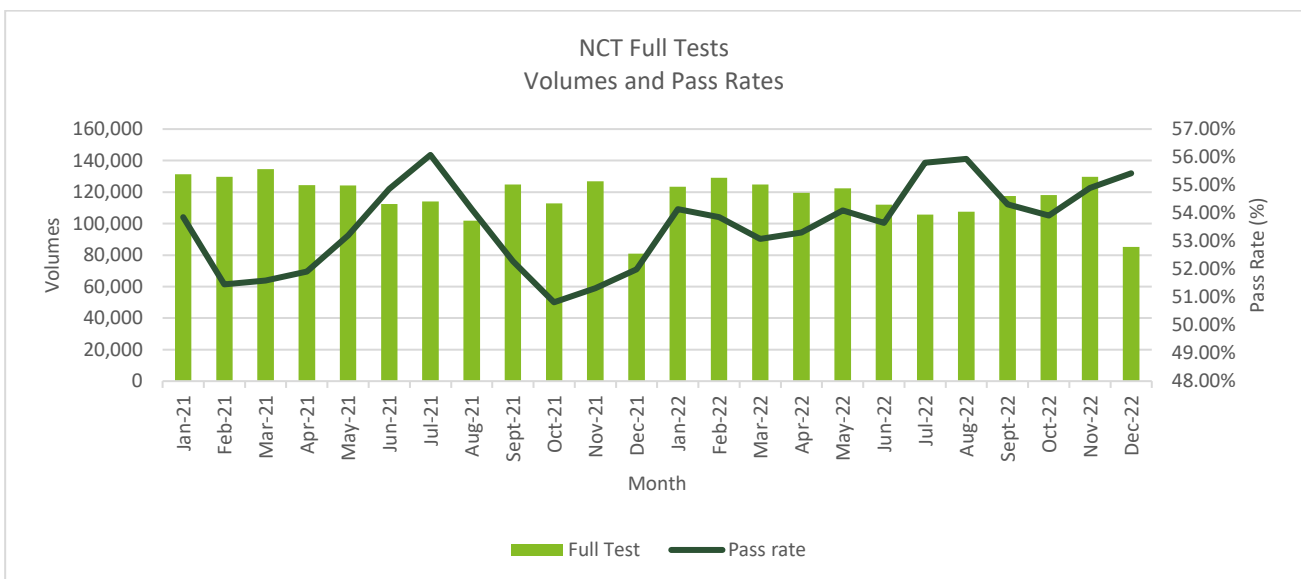


Table 1.3 below sets out a high-level annual summary of NCT activity levels and test outcomes for 2022.

	Pass	Pass advisory	Pass – Pending Recheck	Visual fail	Visual fail dangerous	Non-Visual Fail	Non-Visual Fail Dangerous	Total
Full tests	433,454	304,917	19,593	131,438	34,655	419,179	52,269	1,395,505
	31.06%	21.85%	1.40%	9.42%	2.48%	30.04%	3.75%	100.00%
Lane re-test	265,962	130,734	3,550	8,716	745	43,211	1,872	454,790
	58.48%	28.75%	0.78%	1.92%	0.16%	9.50%	0.41%	100.00%
Non lane re-test	125,936	64,173	525	631	225	1	0	191,491
	65.77%	33.51%	0.27%	0.33%	0.12%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

Table 1.4 below sets out a summary of NCT activity levels, based on full tests, and associated test outcomes on an NCT test centre basis for 2022.

Test centre	Pass		Pass – Pending Recheck*		Fail		Fail dangerous		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Abbeyfeale	9,741	59.21%	226	1.37%	5,658	34.39%	826	5.02%	16,451
Arklow	16,157	56.62%	416	1.46%	10,336	36.22%	1,628	5.70%	28,537
Athlone	10,349	53.04%	249	1.28%	7,688	39.40%	1,226	6.28%	19,512
Ballina	9,590	46.57%	167	0.81%	9,323	45.27%	1,513	7.35%	20,593
Ballinasloe	9,037	58.49%	131	0.85%	5,338	34.55%	945	6.12%	15,451
Cahir	15,334	54.64%	343	1.22%	10,904	38.86%	1,482	5.28%	28,063
Cahirciveen	1,675	50.36%	46	1.38%	1,348	40.53%	257	7.73%	3,326
Carlow	12,428	44.50%	374	1.34%	13,087	46.86%	2,041	7.31%	27,930
Carndonagh	3,899	47.03%	100	1.21%	3,758	45.33%	534	6.44%	8,291
Carrick-on-Shannon	6,855	47.79%	130	0.91%	5,895	41.10%	1,464	10.21%	14,344
Castlerea	6,323	44.59%	174	1.23%	6,682	47.12%	1,001	7.06%	14,180
Cavan	5,698	41.35%	125	0.91%	6,694	48.58%	1,263	9.17%	13,780
Charleville	9,340	56.84%	220	1.34%	5,891	35.85%	980	5.96%	16,431
Clifden	2,402	42.92%	59	1.05%	2,761	49.33%	375	6.70%	5,597
Cork-Blarney	28,790	57.83%	723	1.45%	17,555	35.26%	2,715	5.45%	49,783
Cork-Little Island	32,448	57.55%	793	1.41%	19,674	34.89%	3,470	6.15%	56,385
Deansgrange	52,319	60.60%	1,791	2.07%	28,628	33.16%	3,604	4.17%	86,342
Derrybeg	2,221	38.41%	95	1.64%	2,888	49.94%	579	10.01%	5,783
Donegal	7,245	49.74%	192	1.32%	6,139	42.15%	990	6.80%	14,566
Drogheda	14,936	54.94%	356	1.31%	10,325	37.98%	1,567	5.76%	27,184
Dundalk	11,530	49.92%	315	1.36%	9,814	42.49%	1,439	6.23%	23,098
Ennis	17,229	48.58%	419	1.18%	15,192	42.84%	2,624	7.40%	35,464
Enniscorthy	19,361	47.84%	546	1.35%	17,519	43.29%	3,046	7.53%	40,472

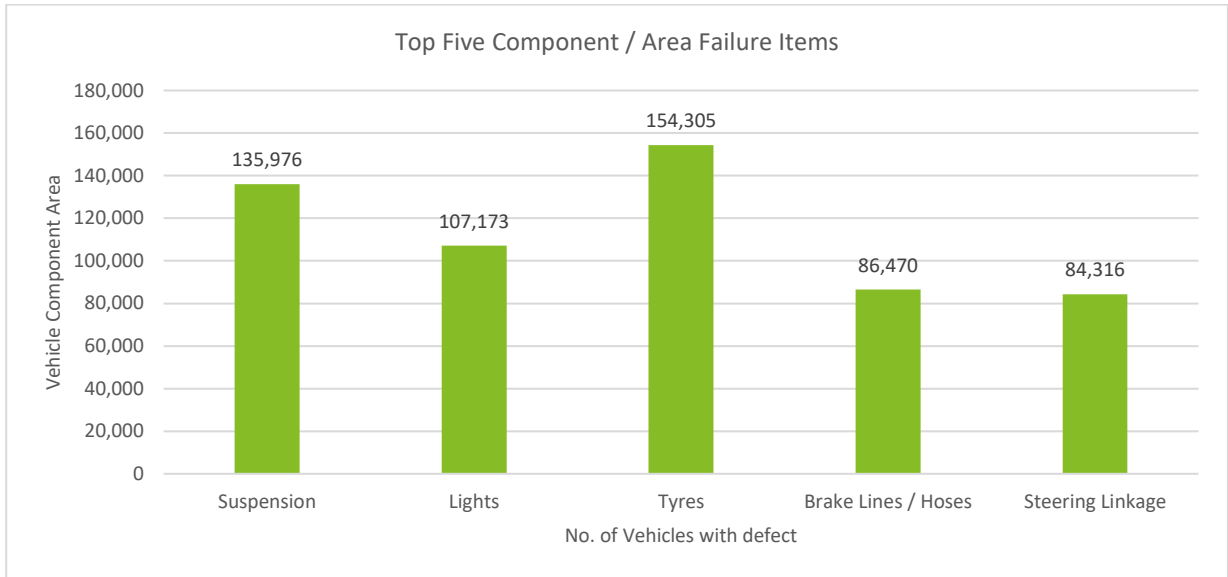
Test centre	Pass		Pass – Pending Recheck*		Fail		Fail dangerous		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Fonthill	36,738	47.90%	1,613	2.10%	33,373	43.51%	4,979	6.49%	76,703
Galway	22,025	48.67%	629	1.39%	19,304	42.66%	3,295	7.28%	45,253
Greenhills (Exit 11,M50)	26,264	48.95%	1,180	2.20%	22,754	42.41%	3,452	6.43%	53,650
Kells	11,365	51.64%	277	1.26%	8,964	40.73%	1,402	6.37%	22,008
Kilkenny	18,453	56.28%	300	0.91%	12,001	36.60%	2,034	6.20%	32,788
Killarney	11,721	58.93%	190	0.96%	6,844	34.41%	1,136	5.71%	19,891
Letterkenny	9,285	45.06%	270	1.31%	9,768	47.41%	1,282	6.22%	20,605
Limerick	31,217	56.27%	465	0.84%	20,144	36.31%	3,651	6.58%	55,477
Longford	7,729	54.61%	127	0.90%	5,397	38.13%	900	6.36%	14,153
Macroom	8,861	54.26%	265	1.62%	6,146	37.63%	1,059	6.48%	16,331
Monaghan	6,819	46.21%	182	1.23%	6,596	44.70%	1,160	7.86%	14,757
Mullingar	13,046	57.23%	259	1.14%	8,084	35.46%	1,406	6.17%	22,795
Naas	25,184	54.77%	613	1.33%	17,920	38.97%	2,264	4.92%	45,981
Navan	8,443	46.91%	223	1.24%	7,990	44.39%	1,342	7.46%	17,998
Nenagh	13,224	55.16%	250	1.04%	8,645	36.06%	1,857	7.75%	23,976
Northpoint 1 (Exit 4, M50)	25,093	48.57%	988	1.91%	22,184	42.94%	3,403	6.59%	51,668
Northpoint 2 (Exit 4, M50)	35,646	52.50%	1,316	1.94%	26,933	39.67%	4,006	5.90%	67,901
Portlaoise	19,158	59.13%	224	0.69%	11,064	34.15%	1,956	6.04%	32,402
Skibbereen	9,228	50.01%	277	1.50%	7,625	41.32%	1,322	7.16%	18,452
Sligo	9,696	51.27%	228	1.21%	7,681	40.61%	1,307	6.91%	18,912
Tralee	14,972	57.13%	349	1.33%	9,514	36.31%	1,370	5.23%	26,205
Tuam	8,233	50.78%	173	1.07%	6,813	42.02%	993	6.13%	16,212
Tullamore	15,418	58.42%	213	0.81%	9,459	35.84%	1,303	4.94%	26,393
Waterford	24,126	57.82%	535	1.28%	14,827	35.54%	2,236	5.36%	41,724
Westport	12,703	49.58%	253	0.99%	11,143	43.49%	1,523	5.94%	25,622
Youghal	8,817	54.82%	204	1.27%	6,347	39.46%	717	4.46%	16,085
Total (Full tests only)	738,371	52.91%	19,593	1.40%	550,617	39.46%	86,924	6.23%	1,395,505

Top Component / Vehicle Failure Items

We set out hereunder (for the three areas listed below) the five most commonly recorded individual fail items recorded in 2022:

1. Component / area.
2. Visual fail items.
3. Non-visual fail items.

Figure 1.2: Top five – component / area failure items – 2022



Note: 'Tyres' encompasses condition, specification and tread.

Figure 1.3: Top five – visual failure items – 2022

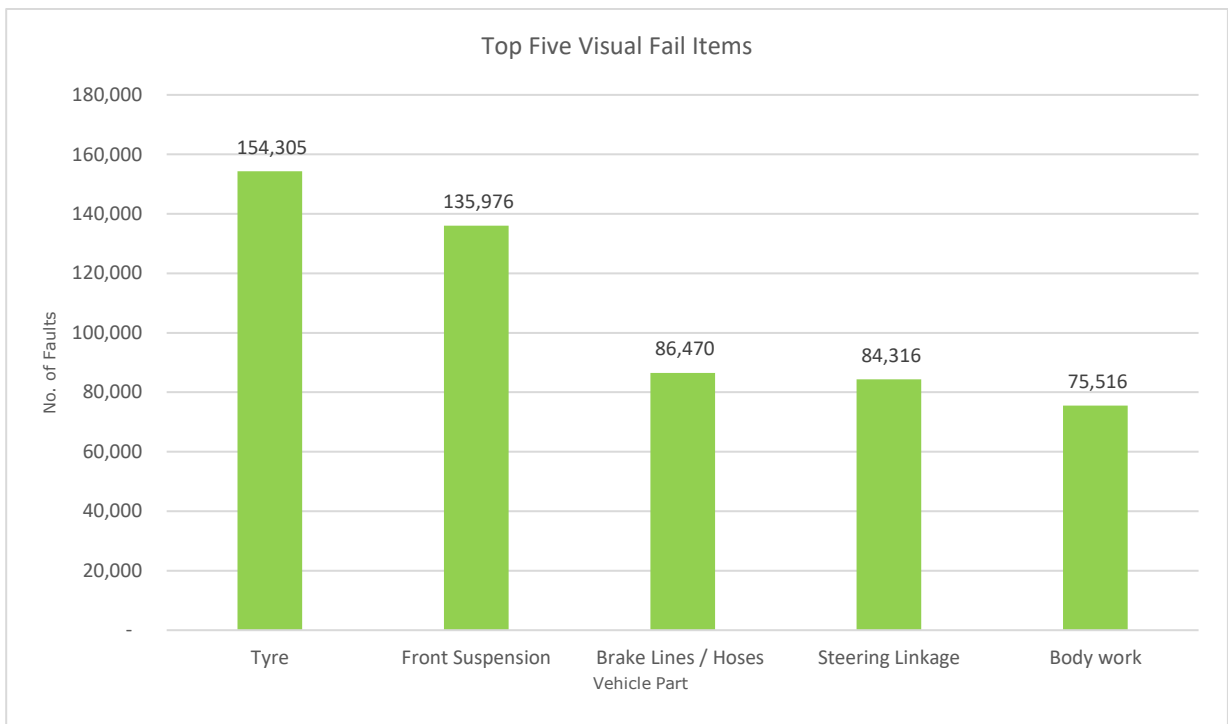
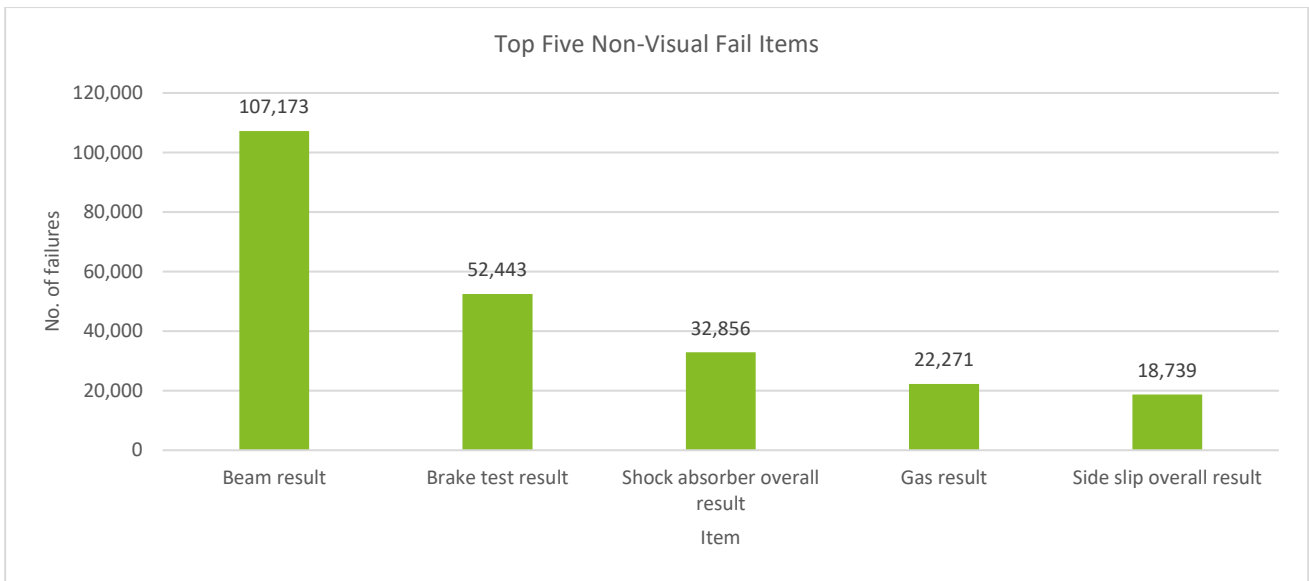


Figure 1.4: Top five non-visual failure items – 2022



The remainder of this report reviews the operation and performance of the Contractor during 2022 as follows:

- ❖ **Section 2** – Operational audit – Contractor performance in the area of operational audit.
- ❖ **Section 3** – Observed test inspections – Contractor performance in the area of observed test inspections.
- ❖ **Section 4** – Customer satisfaction – Contractor performance in the area of customer satisfaction.
- ❖ **Section 5** – Complaints & appeals - complaints levels in 2022.
- ❖ **Section 6** – Performance management – Contractor performance against Project Agreement Service Levels.
- ❖ **Section 7** – Financial matters – Contractor financial performance in the period under review.

2. Operational audit

Background & Methodology

The Operational Audit assesses the performance of the Contractor against the requirements of the contract specification across four areas:

Area	Service Level
Operations & Customer Services	90%
Facilities	90%
Testing Arrangements	90%
IT / Systems	90%

Operational audits are performed on a quarterly basis by the SSC and the TISP with a breakdown as set out below:

1. Operational and customer services – performed by the SSC with support from the TISP.
2. Facilities – performed by the TISP.
3. Testing arrangements – performed by the TISP.
4. IT / Systems – performed by the SSC.

The format of the Operational Audit was amended as part of the contract transition from 27 June 2020. The new methodology was introduced in Q3 2020.

Table 2.1 below shows the operational audit scores achieved in the period Q1 2022 – Q4 2022.

Table 2.1: Operational audit scores Q1 2022 – Q4 2022

Category	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022
Operations and customer services	99.08%	94.84%	98.68%	94.01%
Facilities	98.47%	91.79%	94.06%	94.34%
Testing arrangements	98.54%	99.03%	99.35%	95.93%
IT / Systems	100.00%	99.06%	100.00%	100.00%

2.3 2022 outcomes

This section details in relation to key areas addressed during the operational audit.

Call Centre

Figure 2.1 below sets out the monthly call centre performance for 2022.

Overall call volumes increased in 2022 by 287,493 calls (28.26%) when compared with 2021 (see **Figure 2.2** below).

Following an increasing trend in prior years, the percentage of internet bookings fell in 2022, due to increasing difficulty of customers to obtain suitable booking slots as overall capacity tightened (see **Figure 2.3** below).

Owing to the reduced number of available slots on the NCTS website, there was an increased number of customers who used the NCTS call centre to secure an NCTS appointment. This was reflected in the increased call volumes in 2022.

Figure 2.1: 2022 monthly call centre performance

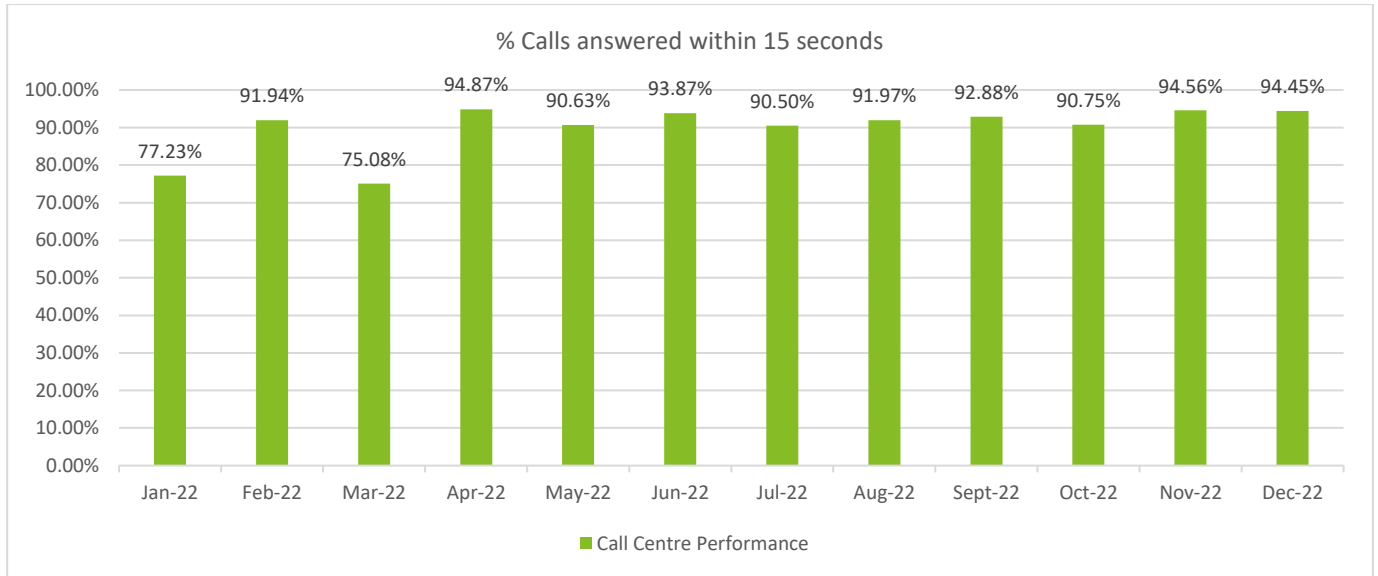


Figure 2.2: 2017 – 2022 call volumes

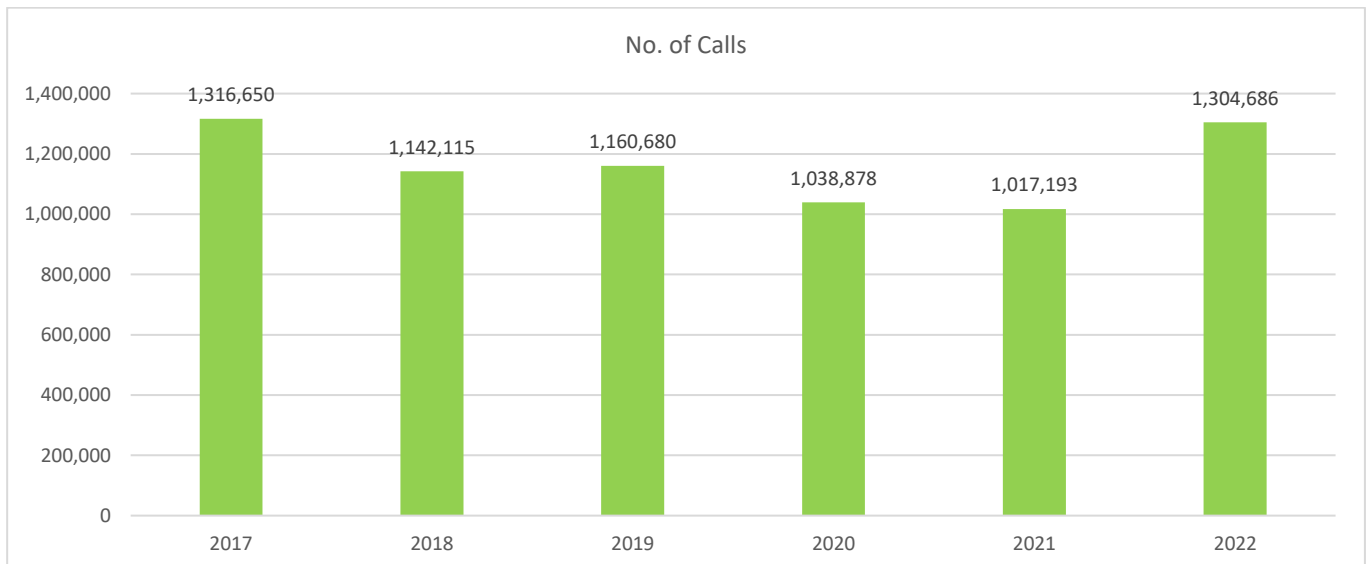
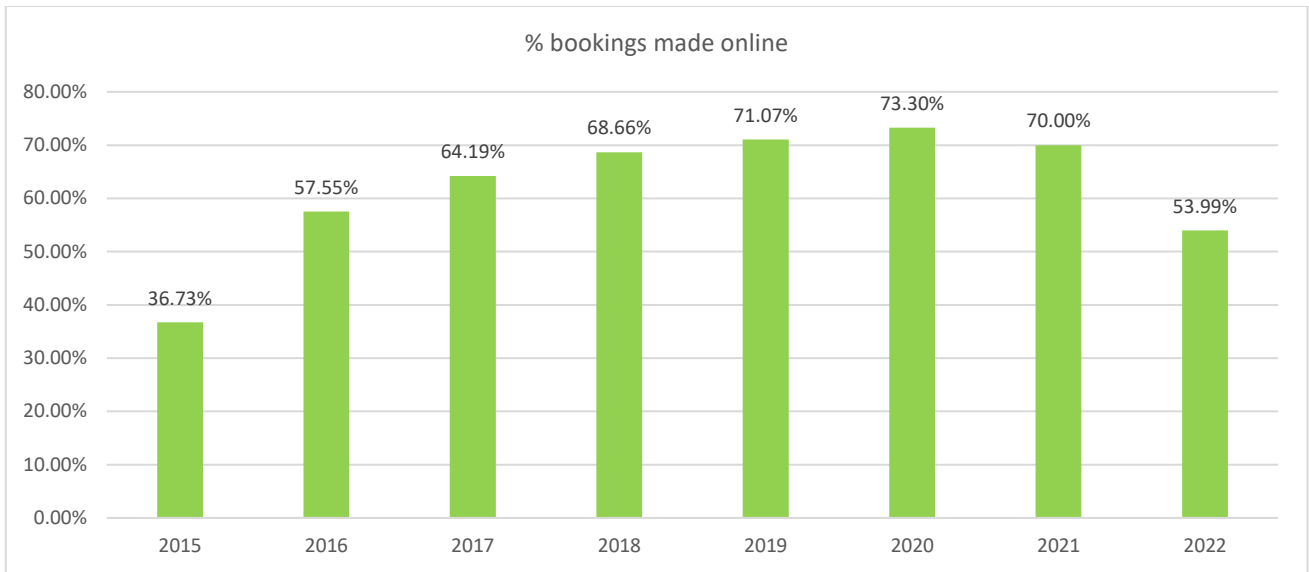


Figure 2.3: 2015 – 2022 internet booking levels (full tests)



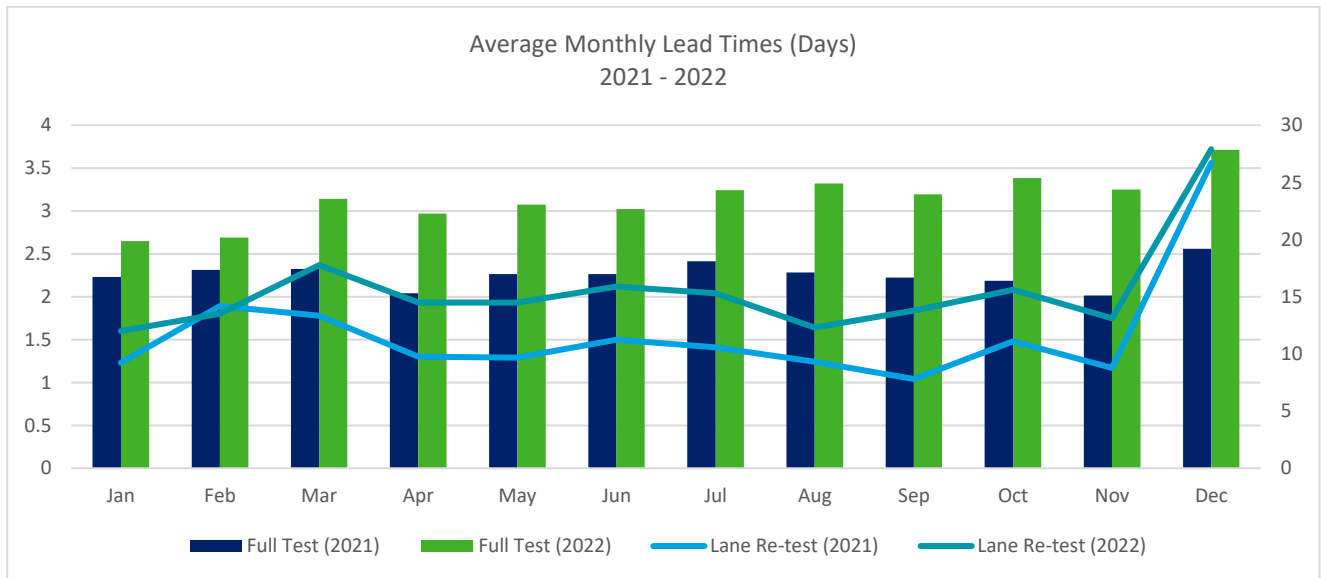
Waiting times for NCT bookings

The NCTS Project Agreement sets a target average lead time across the NCT network of 12 days with no individual NCT test centre to exceed 15 days.

Lead-times for tests and retests are monitored monthly and quarterly at both a national and test centre basis.

Throughout the year, average lead times for full tests were higher than those levels seen in 2021, and from February onwards exceeded 20 days for all subsequent months as can be seen in **Figure 2.4**.

Figure 2.4: 2021 – 2022 average lead times



Priority list

In circumstances where an Owner is unable to obtain a suitable National Car Test appointment, customers can add their application for a National Car Test to a priority waiting list.

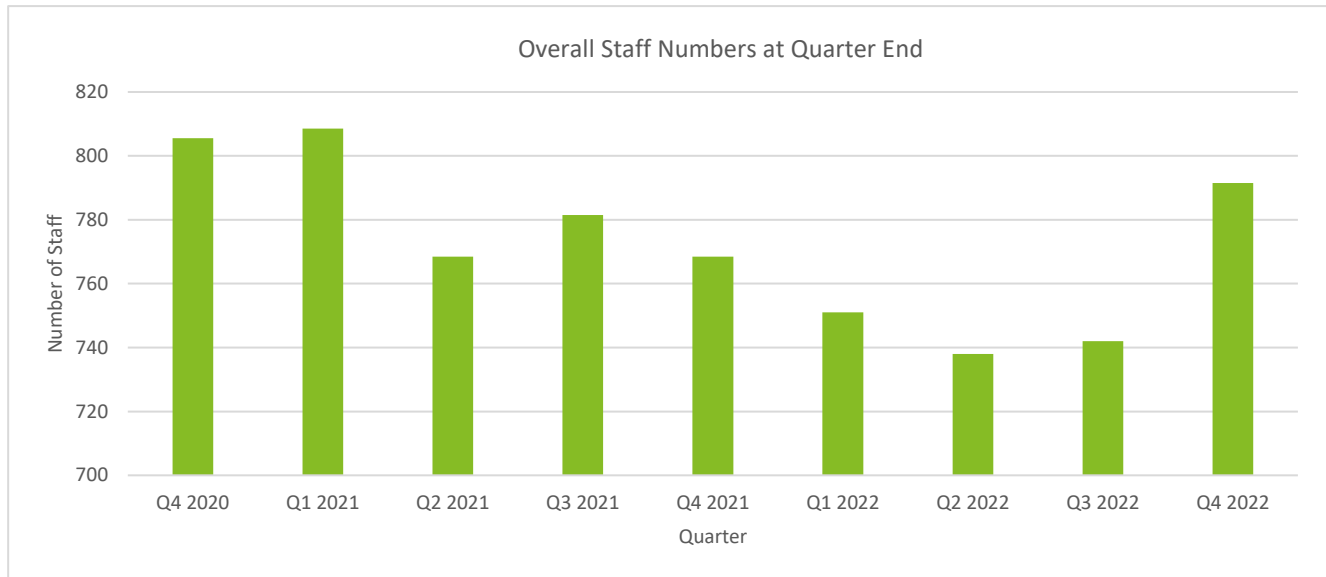
Throughout 2022 average numbers on the NCTS priority list increased by comparison to levels seen in 2021. This was largely driven by demand exceeding supply throughout the period which impacted NCT customers opting to have their details added to the NCTS priority list.

Staffing Levels and Human Resources

Overall staffing levels which include headquarters; test centre; and call centre personnel, stood at 791.5 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) in December 2022. The Contractor's staffing levels throughout the period Q4 2020 – Q4 2022 are shown hereunder in **Figure 2.5**.

In response to capacity constraints across the NCTS Network in Q4 2022 the NCTS Contractor seconded in Vehicle Inspectors from Applus Spain and recruited Vehicle Inspectors from the Philippines. All new Vehicle Inspectors were appropriately qualified and underwent necessary AISIL training.

Figure 2.5: Q4 2020 – Q4 2022 Contractor staff levels



Annual training of all vehicle inspectors took place in Q3 2022. The training programme delivered to Vehicle Inspectors is independently accredited.

This training covered elements of the test process and test equipment. An assessment of each Vehicle Inspector was also conducted. Further training was provided throughout the year as new vehicle inspectors were recruited and inducted.

In addition, specific training courses were provided, including occupational First Aid training and Health and Safety training, as well as training for Call Centre staff. New recruit training provided by the Contractor is assessed and accredited by the Institute of the Motor Industry.

Premises

The service is required to be delivered from premises that are accessible to customers and fit for purpose. This is assessed via a number of methods:

1. By the TISP during on-site inspections of test centres; and
2. Via feedback from NCT customers during mystery shopping and customer satisfaction surveys (see **Section 4**).

TISP inspections revealed that, in general, the Contractor maintained the fabric of the premises to the expected standard during the year.

As part of the NCTS contract transition, the Contractor has committed to a major programme of works on the NCTS network. This involves the refurbishment of existing NCT centres and a number of new NCT centres. Throughout 2022 the roll-out of this programme has been impacted by supply chain constraints across the construction industry.

Test Equipment

During the regular inspections of all test centre premises, the availability of the test centre equipment was checked by the TISP. These checks did not involve certification of test centre equipment (equipment is certified by equipment manufacturers). The scores for individual test centres against this criterion were gathered and reviewed and a number of minor areas for improvement drawn to the attention of Contractor management.

A key aspect of ensuring the accuracy of testing is to carry out regular consistency checks on all test equipment. Consistency checks were carried out quarterly during the year.

Observed Tests

A key aspect of the operational audit process is an assessment of the quality of work carried out by vehicle inspectors. During the year the TISP carried out 2,404 visits to NCT test centres and audited 7,252 vehicles (4,612 vehicle audits and 2,640 independent checks) This is discussed further in **Section 3**.

3. Observed test inspections

Summary comments

All NCTS Vehicle Inspectors are fully qualified and experienced mechanics with refresher training being provided to every Vehicle Inspector each year to ensure the highest level of quality and consistency is attained in all test centres.

The NCTS testing systems and Vehicle Inspectors are subject to a stringent regime of audit and inspection carried out independently by the TISP on behalf of the Road Safety Authority. These audits have shown that during 2022, 99.34% of the vehicles audited were correctly and fairly assessed (see **table 3.3** below).

Methodology

The methodology for independently observing test inspections is based on a random selection of test centres and Vehicle Inspectors for unannounced inspection visits. Additional targeted inspections take place at test centres throughout the year.

Vehicle Inspectors (VIs) are observed carrying out full tests, with TISP Engineers observing their attention to the inspection sequence and their effectiveness in identifying faults as set out in the NCT Manual. They also assess whether or not any anomalies found would have changed the outcome of the test result.

During 2022 TISP inspections covered:

- 100% of NCTS test centres in the network;
- 100% of test lanes in the network; and
- 99% of Vehicle Inspectors.

Further details of the outcome of these inspections are set out hereunder.

During 2022, the TISP team audited 4,603 vehicles. Additionally, throughout 2022, 2,640 independent checks were undertaken. The overall number of vehicles audited increased in 2022.

Table 3.1 sets out a summary of inspection details in 2022. On average, each vehicle inspector was observed performing 5 – 6 tests throughout the year. This was higher than the number of observations in 2021.

Table 3.1: TISP inspection details 2022

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Individual Centre audits conducted	49	46	49	49	49	45	49	49	49	49	49	48	580
No. of visits in period	156	166	155	184	217	186	175	238	241	250	270	166	2,404
Vehicles audited (observed inspections)	320	334	297	387	444	293	321	430	417	462	534	373	4,612
VI audits performed	345	348	320	350	396	306	308	381	392	403	428	315	4,292
Lane audits performed	101	98	95	102	104	93	96	102	106	107	107	104	1,215
Independent checks	177	182	178	205	235	200	189	254	265	273	296	186	2,640

Over 2022, a cohort of VIs were audited each month with individual VIs being audited several times during the year. A breakdown of the test result outcomes is set out in **table 3.2** below:

Table 3.2 Vehicle Inspector Performance Rating for 2022

Category	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Total
Very Good (0 faults omitted)	961	1,008	1,041	1,088	4,098
Adequate (<=4 faults omitted)	2	1	1	1	5
Unacceptable (any major item or 6 minor items omitted)	46	33	24	45	148
C.N.A (Could Not Assess)	4	10	15	12	41
Total	1,013	1,052	1,081	1,146	4,292

The above refers to matters noted during the assessment of Vehicle Inspector (VI) performance and is not an indicator of the accuracy of NCTs completed. This performance measure of VIs should not be used to measure the integrity of the NCT. There are other quality assurance mechanisms in place to measure the integrity and accuracy of the NCT and as referenced above, and in table 3.3 below, 99.34% of the vehicles audited in the year were correctly and fairly assessed.

Note that in relation to the 148 instances where unacceptable matters were identified as part of VI performance assessment, this was brought to the attention of the following parties:

- The VI in question.
- The test centre team / shift leader.
- Contractor senior management.

Examples of the unacceptable matters highlighted in 2022 included incorrect assessments of:

- Wheel nuts being missing.
- Broken coil springs.
- Presence of corrosion.
- Tyres – cords being visible, bulge on tyre, tyres being different sizes, tyres being fitted in the wrong direction.
- Insecure battery.
- Lights not working.
- Damaged ball joint dust covers.

Independent check tests

In addition to the 4,612 vehicles audited by the TISP in 2022, the TISP also conducted independent checks on 2,640 vehicles. Therefore, a total of 7,252 vehicles were audited in 2022.

Test accuracy

The NCTS Project Agreement sets out a minimum score of 98.5% for test accuracy which the Contractor must achieve throughout the period of the contract.

During observed and independent tests conducted in 2022, 51 pass / fail decisions were overturned as a result of failure items having been omitted or included in error. 48 of these 51 instances were associated with a reduced score attributed to the VI. These 48 instances were included in the test accuracy calculation for 2022 as set out hereunder:

Table 3.3: 2022 Test accuracy calculation

Description	No.
Total vehicles audited (observed inspections + Independent checks)	7,252
No. instances where test outcome was impacted and VI score was reduced	48
Test accuracy (%)	99.34%

NCTS test accuracy results in the period 2015 – 2022 are set out in **table 3.4** hereunder:

Table 3.4: Average test accuracy 2015 – 2022

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Test accuracy (%)	99.5	99.0	99.1	99.33	99.25	99.42	99.25	99.34

4. Customer satisfaction

In 2021 the methodology to capture customer satisfaction with the NCTS was updated to reflect the new NCTS Project Agreement. Details of this updated methodology are set out below. The 2022 survey was based on a total of 1,186 telephone interviews (998 customer satisfaction and 188 mystery shopping) with members of the general public throughout the Republic of Ireland who had their vehicle tested by the NCTS during the calendar year.

Feedback received is collated and, using pre-agreed weightings, used to determine the Customer Performance Index (CPI). In 2022 the Contractor achieved a CPI of 85.53. This is a marginal decrease of 2.24 (2.55%) on the 87.77 achieved in 2021. It should be noted that owing to the changes in how the CPI were calculated from Q1 2021 onwards, the outcome for 2022 is not directly comparable with the CPI reported in Service Periods before Q1 2021. Therefore, CPI outcomes in these Service Periods have not been set out in this report.

Methodology & approach

The objective of this research is to continue to develop an understanding of how well the NCTS network of test centres is performing in the minds of its customers. To this end, the Supervisory Services Contractor (SSC) team at Deloitte conducted quarterly NCTS customer satisfaction and mystery shopping surveys on behalf of the Road Safety Authority (RSA) throughout each quarter in 2022.

The customer satisfaction exercise conducted is made up of two components:

- ✓ A mystery shopping exercise (forming 10% of the calculation of the CPI); and
- ✓ A customer satisfaction survey (forming 90% of the calculation of the CPI).

The sampling methodology employed in the survey has been designed to ensure that the sample selected is representative of the population of NCT customers and is drawn from across the target population.

NCTS customers were selected, based on:

1. A proportional weighting, applied to the total population of NCT customers from the quarter, based on the volume of tests carried out at each NCT test centre and the overall national pass rate.
2. A random selection of NCT customers from those selected in No. 1 above.

The 2022 survey was conducted on a quarterly basis with members of the general public who had their vehicle tested in the prior quarter. Feedback was collated by conducting post-test interviews with customers. Interviews were administered using a structured questionnaire dealing with the level of satisfaction with a range of issues that an NCT customer would expect to encounter. All NCT customer data used in the customer satisfaction exercise is processed in line with GDPR requirements.

The survey is divided into five distinct areas (aspects), each of which is assigned an agreed weighting, which feeds into the overall CPI. The areas assessed are:

- Booking experience;
- Waiting experience;
- Check-in experience;
- Test experience; and
- Facilities experience.

The CPI summarises the overall performance of the Contractor into a single score which allows for each year's results to be interpreted at a glance.

As part of the NCTS contract transition a new methodology for calculating CPI was agreed with the NCTS Contractor. This new methodology was introduced in Q1 2021.

Outcome

This year's CPI score of 85.53 shows a high level of satisfaction with NCTS procedures and staff, with the CPI score in excess of the 83.0 benchmark. These findings set a high standard for NCTS to maintain and improve on in the next monitoring period.

2022 Customer Performance Index

The CPI for 2022 was a score of 85.53%. This reflects a high underlying level of satisfaction with the key aspects of the service that customers deem to be most important.

Table 4.1: Hereunder provides an analysis of the CPI performance achieved in 2022:

Table 4.1: CPI performance 2022

Aspect	Question	Customer Satisfaction				Mystery Shopping				Index
		Customer Satisfaction Outcome	Customer Satisfaction Average	Customer Satisfaction Weighting	Customer Satisfaction Outcome	Mystery Shopping Outcome	Mystery Shopping Average	Mystery Shopping Weighting	Mystery Shopping Outcome	
Booking experience	The convenience of making and confirming my booking	83.21	86.16	25.90%	22.32	80.75	86.01	2.90%	2.49	24.81
	My experience in using the NCT website and / or call centre	89.03				86.11				
	The information I received when making my NCT booking (including resolving any queries that I may have had)	91.15				96.64				
	The convenience of the NCT location that I attended	81.25				80.55				
Waiting experience	The NCT test time and date that I was allocated	70.45	81.00	27.00%	21.87	79.55	85.94	3.00%	2.58	24.45
	Waiting time at the NCT centre on the day of my test	91.54				92.33				
Check-in experience	Check in process at the NCT Centre	91.11	88.83	13.00%	11.55	91.54	90.90	1.40%	1.27	12.82
	The helpfulness of the staff on reception at the test centre	86.55				90.25				
Test experience	The attitude of the member of staff who carried out the test	91.01	90.31	15.10%	13.64	88.61	89.91	1.70	1.51	15.15
	The testers' ability to help you understand the test report	89.61				89.21				
Facilities experience	The cleanliness and comfort of the reception and waiting areas in the NCT centre	83.00	83.00	9.00%	7.47	83.00	83.00	1.00	0.83	8.30
	The cleanliness and comfort of the bathroom facilities in the NCT centre	83.00				83.00				
				90.00%	76.84			10.00%	8.69	85.53

5. Complaints & appeals

Customer Complaints

The NCTS Project Agreement requires the Contractor to use all reasonable endeavours to ensure that Customer complaints as a percentage of National Car Tests conducted shall not exceed 0.1% .

Customer complaints are recorded under a number of agreed categories (as set out in the summary **table 5.1** below).

The Contractor uses a computer system to record initial customer complaints, document their progress and resolution and provide a documented audit trail to retain information regarding promptness and quality of responses to customers.

In 2022, the Contractor received 1,434 complaints. This represents a decrease of 49 complaints (3.30%) from the 1,483 complaints received in 2021.

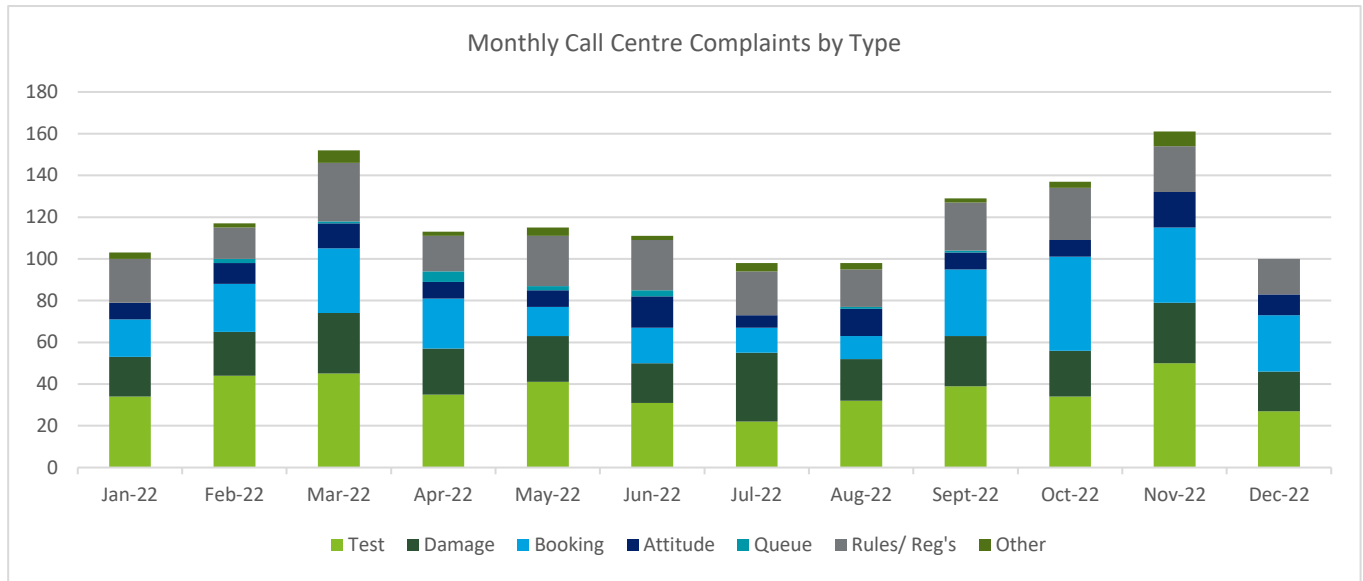
The total number of complaints as a percentage of total tests taken was 0.07%. This is unchanged from the 2021 result (0.07%) and for the year overall is below the target set of 0.10%.

Table 5.1 Year 2022 Customer Complaints (by category)

Complaint category	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Total
Test (conduct of test/results)	123	107	93	111	434
Damage (or loss to property)	69	63	77	70	279
Bookings (& call centre)	72	55	55	108	290
Attitude (of staff)	30	31	27	35	123
Queue (delays at test centre)	3	10	2	0	15
Rules/Regulations	64	65	62	64	255
Other	11	8	9	10	38
Total	372	339	325	398	1,434
Number of vehicle tests performed	549,575	523,006	479,665	489,547	2,041,793
As a % all tests conducted	0.07%	0.06%	0.07%	0.08%	0.07%

A breakdown of the number and category of complaints received in 2022, by month, is set out below.

Figure 5.1: 2022 complaints by category and month



Independent appeals Board

The Independent Appeals Board, overseen by the Technical Inspection Service Provider (TISP), provides an independent review service for the resolution of customer issues, for the small number of cases that require additional investigation.

The Independent Appeals Board received 17 appeals throughout 2022, of which two (2) were upheld after investigation.

Test integrity issues

The Contractor operates using an internal Code of Ethics. Each staff member receives refresher training each year on the company's Code of Ethics.

On occasion, matters come to the attention of the Contractor, the SSC, the TISP or the RSA, which give rise to investigations into the integrity with which testing is carried out by particular vehicle inspectors or at particular test centres.

Such matters are investigated and, where appropriate, disciplinary action taken against relevant members of staff. In certain circumstances, An Garda Síochána are informed. During 2022, two employees were dismissed in relation to breaches of policies and procedures.

6. Performance management

Service Level Performance

A new NCTS contract came into effect on the 27 June 2020 and includes Service Levels to assess Contractor performance in a number of key areas. The new Service Levels that are now being used are set out in Schedule 22 of the contract to deliver the NCT services for a ten-year period commencing 27 June 2020. Please refer to **Appendix 1** for details of the Service Levels applicable under the new NCTS contract.

Table 6.1 sets out the Contractors level of achievement over the period Q1 2022 – Q4 2022.

Table 6.1 NCT Achievement against Service Levels Q1 2022 – Q4 2022

Ref.	Sub Ref.	Service Level	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Comment
1	Notifying Owners of the requirement to have their vehicle tested	90% 20 – 60 working days before the due date of the test.	78%	65.4%	88.10%	96.68%	Relief was sought and granted for Q1 and Q2 2022 due to the Impact of Covid-19
		99% 5 working days before the due date of the test.	98%	98.6%	99.5%	99.31%	
2	At each individual National Car Test centre, notification to Catchment Owners of the requirement to have their vehicle tested	90% 20 – 60 working days before the due date of the test.	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	
		Average booking lead time for Full Tests across the National Car Testing Service	21.2 days	22.83 days	24.2 days	25.61 days	
3	Test accuracy	Average booking lead time for Full Tests at each individual National Car Test Centre	One test centre above target	Six test centres above target	49 test centres above target	49 test centres above target	Relief granted for Q1 and Q2 2022
		> 98.5% of test outcomes to be confirmed on check testing	99.33%	99.10%	99.73%	99.20%	N/A
4	Telephone response times	> 90% of telephone calls answered within fifteen (15) seconds.	85.04%	93.04%	91.80%	93.17%	N/A Relief was sought and granted for Q1 due to the impact of Covid-19
5	Customer Satisfaction rating	A score which is 83% or more achieved for customer satisfaction, as calculated using the Composite Customer Performance Index	85.71%	85.02%	84.45%	87.05%	N/A
6	Operational audit Q3 2020 – Q4 2020	90% or more achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to the Operations and Customer Service.	99.08%	99.84%	98.68%	94.01%	N/A
		90% or more achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to Facilities.	98.47%	91.79%	94.06%	94.34%	N/A
		90% or more achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to the Testing Arrangements.	98.54%	99.03%	99.35%	95.93%	N/A
		90% or more achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to the IT Systems and Controls.	100%	99.06%	100.00%	100.00%	N/A
7	Notification of results	Transfer of test results to NVDF daily (or issue of test certificates and discs within two minutes of test completion) on 98 per cent of occasions	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A
8	NCTS compliance	≥60% of NCTS Vehicles have undertaken their National Car Test on or before the end of the Contract Month in which the Test Due Dates of such NCTS Vehicles fall	See comment	60.3%	36.7%	40.13%	Relief was sought and granted for Q1 and Q2 2022 due to the Impact of Covid-19
		≥ 90% of NCTS Vehicles have undertaken their National Car Test on or before the end of the Contract Month falling three (3) Contract Months after the Contract Month in which the Test Due Dates of such NCTS vehicles fall	See comment	84.4%	74.7%	70.11%	

✓ - Denotes satisfactory result by reference to the performance standards.

As shown in the table above:

- The test accuracy standard, at 99.34% for the year as a whole, exceeded the target.
- The Customer Performance Index (CPI) for 2021 was 85.53, above the target of 83.
- Operational audit performance for 2022 was above the target of 90%.

In Q3 and Q4 the Contractor failed to meet performance standards for Average Booking Lead times (Service Level 2) and for NCT Compliance (Service level 8) and as a result, incurred Service Credits totalling €931,361 for the period July to December 2022.

7. Financial matters

The Contractors profit & loss account for 2022 is summarised below in **table 7.1**. These amounts have been extracted from:

1. Audited AISIL financial statements for the year-ended 31 December 2022.
2. Audited AISIL financial statements for the year-ended 31 December 2022.

Table 7.1: Contractor 2022 Profit & Loss Statement

	2021 €	2022 €	Increase / (Decrease) €
Turnover	82,390,219	79,323,558	(3,066,661)
Cost of Sales	(69,138,096)	(67,362,423)	1,775,673
Gross profit	13,252,123	11,961,135	(1,290,988)
Administrative expenses	(11,624,573)	(12,501,078)	(876,505)
Net unrealised foreign exchange gain / loss realised	(4,520)	(1,834)	2,686
Net unrealised foreign exchange gain / loss un-realised	6,017	1,181	(4,836)
Operating profit	1,692,047	(540,596)	(2,232,643)
Finance income	184,123	187,291	3,168
Finance Costs	(713,464)	(627,705)	85,759
Profit/(loss) before taxation	1,099,706	(981,010)	(2,080,716)
Taxation	(287,266)	195,604	482,870
Profit/(loss) after taxation	812,440	(785,406)	(1,597,846)
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
Comprehensive income / (loss) for the financial year	812,440	(785,406)	(1,597,846)

Comments

Total turnover for 2022 was €79,323,558 – this is a decrease of €3,066,661 (3.72%) on the €82,390,219 recorded in 2021.

A comprehensive loss of €785,406 was recorded in 2022 – this is a reduction of €1,597,846 (196.67%) on the €812,440 profit recorded in 2021.

The Contractors balance sheet as at 31 December 2022 is summarised below in **table 7.3**. These amounts have been extracted from audited Contractors financial statements for the year-ended 31 December 2022.

Table 7.3: Contractor Balance sheet as at 31 December 2022

	2021 €	2022 €	Increase / (decrease) €	Increase / (decrease) %
Non-Current assets				
Property, plant and equipment	12,419,583	12,641,910	222,327	1.79%
Intangible assets	1,875,208	1,631,381	(243,827)	(13.00%)
Right of Use Assets	22,421,753	19,990,383	(2,431,370)	(10.84%)
Deferred tax asset	68,866	-	(68,866)	(100.00%)
Total non-current assets	36,785,410	34,263,674	(2,521,736)	(6.86%)
Current Assets				
Trade and other receivables	8,716,903	14,062,617	5,345,714	61.33%
Cash and cash equivalents	826,621	777,257	(49,364)	(5.97%)
Total current assets	9,543,524	14,839,874	5,296,350	55.50%
Total Assets	46,328,934	49,103,548	2,774,614	5.99%
Equity				
Called up share capital presented as equity	3,000,000	3,000,000	-	0.00%
Retained earnings	2,132,088	1,346,682	(785,406)	(36.84%)
Other reserve	-	783	783	-
Total Equity	5,132,088	4,347,465	(784,623)	(15.29%)
Non-Current Liabilities	19,960,283	17,775,970	(2,184,313)	(10.94%)
Current Liabilities				
Trade and other payables	18,219,069	23,991,689	5,772,620	31.68%
Lease Liabilities	3,017,494	2,988,424	(29,070)	(0.96%)
Total Current Liabilities	21,236,563	26,980,113	5,743,550	27.05%
Total Liabilities	41,196,846	44,756,083	3,559,237	8.64%
Total Equity and Liabilities	46,328,934	49,103,548	2,774,614	5.99%

Comments

Total assets increased by €2,774,614 (5.99%) in the year to 31 December 2022. This is mainly made up of an increase of €5,345,714 (61.33%) in trade and other receivables, which was offset by a reduction of €2,431,370 (10.84%) in right of use assets.

Total current liabilities increased by €5,743,550 (27.05%) in the year to 31 December 2022. This is mainly made up of an increase of €5,772,620 (31.68%) in trade and other payables.

Appendix 1 – NCTS Service Levels

The below Service Levels are set out in Schedule 22 of the contract for the delivery of the NCTS which came into operation on 27 June 2020.

Reference		Service Level	Operating Service Level	Service Threshold
1	1.1	Notifying Owners of the requirement to have their vehicle tested	90% 20 – 60 working days before the due date of the test.	<80% of Owners of NCTS Vehicles to be tested, to be notified at least twenty (20) Working Days, but not more than sixty (60) Working Days before the Test Due Date for their NCTS Vehicles.
			99% 5 working days before the due date of the test.	<90% of Owners of NCTS Vehicles to be tested, to be notified at least five (5) Working Days before the Test Due Date for their NCTS Vehicles
	1.2	At each individual National Car test centre, notification to Catchment Owners of the requirement to have their NCTS Vehicles tested.	≥80% of Catchment Owners of NCTS Vehicles to be tested, to be notified at least twenty (20) Working Days, but not more than sixty (60) Working Days, before the Test Due Date for their NCTS Vehicles.	<70% of Catchment Owners of NCTS Vehicles to be tested, to be notified at least twenty (20) Working Days, but not more than sixty (60) Working Days, before the Test Due Date for their NCTS Vehicles.
2	2.1	Average booking lead time for Full Tests across the National Car Testing Service	Average booking lead time for Full Tests ≤12 days.	Average booking lead time for Full Tests >20 days.
	2.2	Average booking lead time for Full Tests at each individual National Car Test Centre	Average booking lead time for Full Tests ≤15 days.	Average booking lead time for Full Tests being >23 days.
3	N/A	Test accuracy	≥ 98.5% of outcomes of National Car Tests confirmed on being checked.	<97.5% of outcomes of National Car Tests confirmed on being checked.
4	N/A	Telephone response times	≥ 90% of telephone calls answered within fifteen (15) seconds.	< 84% of telephone calls answered within fifteen (15) seconds.
5	N/A	Customer Satisfaction rating	A score which is 83% or more achieved for customer satisfaction, as calculated using the Composite Customer Performance Index.	A score which is less than 75% achieved for customer satisfaction, as calculated using the Composite Customer Performance Index.
6	N/A	Operational audit	A score of 90% or more achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to the Operations and Customer Service;	A score which is less than 80% achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to the Operations and Customer Service;
			A score of 90% or more achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to Facilities;	A score which is less than 80% achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to the Facilities;
			A score of 90% or more achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to the Testing Arrangements;	A score which is less than 80% achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to the Testing Arrangements;
			A score of 90% or more achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to the IT Systems and Controls.	A score which is less than 80% achieved in that part of the Operational Audit relating to the IT Systems and Controls.

Reference		Service Level	Operating Service Level	Service Threshold
7	N/A	Notification of results	For so long as there is no webservice allowing for the transfer of NCT results to the NVDF, ≥98% of NCT results transferred to NVDF on same day as the National Car Test is completed;	For so long as there is no webservice allowing for the transfer of NCT results to the NVDF, <92% of NCT results transferred to NVDF on same day as the National Car Test is completed
			Where there is a webservice allowing for the transfer of NCT results to the NVDF, ≥98% of test results transferred to NVDF within 30 minutes of completion of the National Car Test	Where there is a webservice allowing for the transfer of NCT results to the NVDF, <92% of test results transferred to NVDF within 30 minutes of completion of the National Car Test
8	N/A	NCTS compliance	≥60% of NCTS Vehicles have undertaken their National Car Test on or before the end of the Contract Month in which the Test Due Dates of such NCTS Vehicles fall.	< 54% of NCTS Vehicles have passed their National Car Test on or before the end of the Contract Month in which the Test Due Dates of such NCTS Vehicles fall.
			≥ 90% of NCTS Vehicles have undertaken their National Car Test on or before the end of the Contract Month falling three (3) Contract Months after the Contract Month in which the Test Due Dates of such NCTS Vehicles Fail.	< 84% of NCTS Vehicles have passed their National Car Test on or before the end of the Contract Month falling three (3) Contract Months after the Contract Month in which the Test Due Dates of such NCTS Vehicles Fail.