

## What are the changes being introduced to the NCT from the 21 June 2021?

From this date, three changes will be introduced to the National Car Test.

1. **OBD Testing:** Ireland will be amongst the first of the EU Member States to commence the use of OBD testing under the EU Roadworthiness Directive 2014/45. OBD testing will initially be introduced on a phased basis in the NCT. When an OBD error code is detected it will result in the vehicle receiving an **“Advisory Pass”** provided the vehicle passes all other items being assessed. Then, from early 2022, when an error code is detected, this may constitute a reason for **“failure”**. This approach will enable car owners and the automotive industry to become familiar with this change to the NCT process.
2. **New NCT Manual:** A new **Manual** has been published and is available for download here ([NCT Manual 2021](#)). The manual lists each item on which a car will be tested and lays down the test method and pass/fail criteria to be adopted. It provides guidance to the public and the automotive industry as to why a vehicle may fail the NCT and the categorisation of defects.
3. **Escalation of Defects:** This will mean that where a combination of deficiencies is recorded in the NCT in one area of a vehicle, the combination of deficiencies could lead to the result of the NCT being escalated to ‘fail dangerous’. Where a vehicle receives this result, it is considered to constitute a direct or immediate risk to road safety and the vehicle should not be driven on the road under any circumstances.

## What is OBD Testing and why is it being introduced?

An On-Board Diagnostics System (OBD) is a computer system inside a vehicle, which tracks and regulates a car's performance. It collects information from sensors inside the vehicle, to alert the user to a problem, often before it becomes a major issue.

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These changes will see Ireland be amongst the first of the EU Member States to commence the use of OBD testing under the EU Roadworthiness Directive 2014/45.

## What will be inspected under the OBD test and how can I prepare for the test?

The inspection is quick and easy, the NCT Vehicle Inspector will plug the OBD scanner into the vehicle's OBD computer port known as the DLC (data link connector). This port is usually located under the steering wheel but may also be found in the glove compartment of the vehicle. This OBD scanner will quickly indicate whether error codes exist, and it also helps and alerts the Vehicle Inspector to possible defects within the vehicle.

The OBD scanner will scan the OBD system for:

### 1. **Vehicle Identification Number (VIN)**

Using the OBD scanner, the Vehicle Inspector will verify that the VIN read by the OBD scanner matches the number on the vehicle. While a difference will not be a reason for failure, the OBD VIN reading will be recorded on the VIR (Vehicle Inspection Report) issued to the owner of the vehicle.

## **2. Odometer Reading**

The Vehicle Inspector will record the odometer reading at the time of the test. They will also verify the reading using the OBD scanner and owners will be alerted to both readings on the VIR report.

## **3. Electronic Braking System (EBS)**

Any error code associated with the electronic braking system will be recorded on the Vehicle Inspection Report (VIR) provided to the owner following the NCT inspection.

## **4. Anti-lock Braking System (ABS)**

Any error code associated with the antilock braking system will be recorded on the Vehicle Inspection Report (VIR) provided to the owner following their NCT inspection.

In order for the NCT to conduct the inspection, vehicle owners are asked to ensure:

- The glove compartments are unlocked and clear of personal belongings before the NCT.
- That any devices using the OBD port in the vehicle are removed in advance of the NCT test.

NCTS has engaged with the automotive industry regarding this new inspection item, and it is recommended that you liaise with your local garage/ mechanic who should be equipped with the necessary diagnostic equipment to perform this scan in advance of going for an NCT.