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Bill Digest

National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026

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Abstract

The National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026 was published on 4 September 2026. The Bill seeks to make amendments to the *Roads Act 1920*, the *Finance Act 1936*, the *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952*, the *Road Traffic Acts 1961 to 2024*, the *Finance (No. 2) Act 1992*, the *Finance Act 1993*, and the *Roads Act 1993*. The Bill seeks to amend the legislative provisions governing the National Vehicle and Driver File database in order to bring these provisions in line with requirements under GDPR and seeks to provide for the public availability of certain information on the Check My Vehicle website. The Bill also seeks to remove the requirement to display paper motor tax discs and to provide for open-ended declarations of non-use for motor vehicles. In addition, the Bill seeks to make other miscellaneous amendments to the *Road Traffic Act 1961*, *Roads Act 1993*, Road Traffic Act 2002, and *Road Traffic Act 2010*.

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Executive Summary

- The National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026 and Explanatory Memorandum was initiated on 4 September 2026.
- The Bill seeks to amend the legislative provisions governing the National Vehicle and Driver File (NVDF) database in order to bring these provisions in line with requirements under the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)) and seeks to provide for the public availability of certain information on the Check My Vehicle website. The Bill also seeks to remove the requirement to display paper motor tax discs and to provide for open-ended declarations of non-use for motor vehicles.
- The Bill also seeks to make other miscellaneous amendments to the *Road Traffic Act 1961*, *Roads Act 1993*, *Road Traffic Act 2002*, and *Road Traffic Act 2010*. These amendments include providing a legislative basis under section 13 of the *Roads Act 1993* for local authorities to request and process data relating to collisions on a public road in order to identify safety risks, maintain or construct public roads or appropriately allocate resources in relation to the maintenance and construction of public roads.
- The Bill is scheduled for Second Stage debate on 17 September 2026 in Dáil Éireann.
- The General Scheme of the National Vehicle and Driver File Bill 2025 was initially approved for drafting in April 2025, with additional heads approved for drafting in December 2025.
- A waiver of pre-legislative scrutiny (PLS) of the General Scheme was granted by the Joint Committee on Transport on 18 June 2025.

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Glossary and abbreviations

Table 1 Glossary and abbreviations

Term	Meaning
1952 Act	*Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952*
1992 Act	*Finance (No. 2) Act 1992*
1993 Act	*Finance Act 1993*
2004 Act	*Road Traffic Act 2004*
2024 Act	*Road Traffic Act 2024*
Bill	National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026
CVRT	Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness Test
GDPR	Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) [2016] OJ L 119
NCT	National Car Test
NVDF	National Vehicle and Driver File
PLS	Pre-legislative scrutiny
RIA	Regulatory Impact Analysis
SORD	Statutory Off-Road Declaration (also known as 'Declaration of non-use')
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Source: Library & Research Service (2026)

Introduction

The National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026 ('the Bill') was initiated on 4 September 2026 and is scheduled for Second Stage debate on 17 September 2026 in Dáil Éireann.

The Bill seeks to amend the legislative provisions governing the National Vehicle and Driver File (NVDF) database in order to bring these provisions in line with requirements under the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)) and seeks to provide for the public availability of certain information on the Check My Vehicle website. The Bill also seeks to remove the requirement to display paper motor tax discs and to provide for open-ended declarations of non-use for motor vehicles.

In addition, the Bill also seeks to make other miscellaneous amendments to the *Road Traffic Act 1961*, *Roads Act 1993*, *Road Traffic Act 2002*, and *Road Traffic Act 2010*. These amendments include providing a legislative basis under section 13 of the *Roads Act 1993* for local authorities to request and process data relating to collisions on a public road in order to identify safety risks, maintain or construct public roads or appropriately allocate resources in relation to the maintenance and construction of public roads.

In a press release on 29 July 2026, the Minister of State at the Department of Transport with responsibility for International and Road Transport, Logistics, Rail and Ports, Seán Canney T.D. stated in relation to the Bill:

> *"The NVDF Bill will make a key contribution to road safety by enabling the sharing of traffic collision data between An Garda Síochána and local authorities. It will also bring improvements and efficiencies for drivers, including the abolition of the requirement to display a paper motor tax disc and allowing for open-ended declarations that a car is off the road. The abolition of motor tax discs is part of a wider project to remove the need to display paper discs in windscreens and I look forward to bringing the legislation through the Oireachtas in the Autumn."*[1]

This Bill Digest provides a brief background to the Bill before providing an overview of selected key provisions of the Bill.

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[1] Department of Transport, 'Ministers for Transport secure Government approval for package of road safety measures', Press Release, 29 July 2026 (last accessed 15 September 2026).

Background

The General Scheme of the National Vehicle and Driver File Bill 2025 was approved by Government on 15 April 2025. The General Scheme proposed to:

- strengthen General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) for access to vehicle and driver data;
- abolish the requirement to display a motor tax disc;
- remove end date of declarations of non-use of a motor vehicle;
- amend provisions relating to variation of speed limits, and;
- provide a legislative basis so that local authorities, in their role as road authorities, may request, receive, and process road collision data.

On 16 December 2025, the Government agreed to include additional heads for drafting which were sent to the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel on 22 December. The additional provisions relate to allowing a charge of careless driving to be considered when a driver is acquitted of a charge of dangerous driving, and to allowing authorised operators of a mobile camera vans to provide certificate evidence in court. These provisions also provide for a technical amendment to the power of local authorities to set special speed limits on certain roads, and for additional legislative clarity around how multiple penalty points from a single incident are to be applied when a driver is disqualified. [2]

This section of the Bill Digest provides background relevant to the main provisions of the Bill including the National Vehicle and Driver File, the Check My Vehicle website, the discontinuation of paper motor tax discs, amendments related to the setting of speed limits, as well as providing certain additional detail related to the miscellaneous amendments proposed in the Bill.

The National Vehicle and Driver File

The National Vehicle and Driver File (NVDF) is Ireland's centralised national database which contains registration and tax records for 2.9 million vehicles, and driver records for 3.3 million drivers[3]. Driver records include licence and learner permit information, and any road traffic endorsements such as penalty point offences and driver disqualifications.

It is managed by the Driver and Vehicle Computer Services Division of the Department of Transport. **Part 2 of the Bill** relates to the NVDF and seeks to bring the NDVF in line with GDPR

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[2] Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Seán Canney T.D., Response to Parliamentary Questions No 370 and 372 (Legislative Process), *Dáil Éireann Debate*, 19 May 2026 (last accessed 15 September 2026).

[3] Department of Transport, *Motor Tax and Vehicle Ownership (NVDF)*, 9 July 2025 (last accessed 15 September 2026).

requirements. Under the provisions of the Bill, the NDVF will host information across multiple distinct operational categories ranging from motor tax excise duties and non-use declarations to driving licences, disqualifications, penalty point endorsements, and trade licences.[4] It will also integrate compliance records relevant to safety and roadworthiness, such as National Car Testing (NCT) certificates, Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness Test (CVRT) certificates, notification of issue of certificates of destruction of vehicles, and notifications of vehicles that are scrapped or destroyed[5].

The "Check My Vehicle" Website / Public access portal

The "Check My Vehicle" service is an online service that shows the tax and NCT status of any vehicle registered in Ireland, managed through the Department of Transport's Driver and Vehicle Computer Services Division. Currently, it is a public-facing searchable database through which anyone can visit the portal and enter a vehicle's registration number and access the tax and NCT status of that vehicle. It provides these basic details to the public completely openly, without requiring any registration, PINs, or login credentials to access the database. This gives access to any anonymous user to view vehicle specifications such as make, model, and colour alongside its motor tax class, tax expiry date, NCT status.

Main changes brought by the Bill

The Bill, under Section 7, seeks to provide for the public availability of certain information on the Check My Vehicle website. The primary changes and enhanced information that are proposed to be made publicly available through a registration number search under this section include:

- information regarding whether excise duty has been paid, exact expiry dates, and details of any statutory exemptions or road tax remissions under the *Finance Act 1989*;
- Roadworthiness Metrics: information regarding whether there is a valid certificate of roadworthiness for the vehicle (NCT or CVRT[6]) and the dates of expiry of this certificate; and
- in relation to private vehicles, information regarding the engine capacity or CO2 emissions from the vehicle registration certificate.

By making this extensive information openly available from one single official public portal, the Bill would allow second-hand car buyers to cross-check and verify vehicle data against official records in real-time. It is anticipated that the availability of this data will help to combat motor fraud, odometer manipulation, and illegal vehicle cloning.

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[4] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 5.

[5] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 5.

[6] The CVRT is a mandatory safety inspection for commercial vehicles, buses, and ambulances in Ireland

Discontinuation of paper motor tax discs

The Bill seeks to remove the statutory requirement for drivers to display a physical, paper motor tax disc on their vehicle's windscreen.[7]

Following the widespread rollout and maturation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology used by An Garda Síochána,[8] roadside verification of vehicular motor tax status has shifted from manual visual inspection of paper discs to instant digital queries against the NVDF. As the physical tax disc has essentially become administratively redundant, removing it would reduce administrative and bureaucratic requirements for drivers while still preserving the legal requirement to pay motor tax on vehicles used on public roads.

Special speed limits

Following the Department of Transport's September 2023 Speed Limit Review and under the current Ireland's Government Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 Phase 2 Action Plan 2025-2027, multiple amendments to speed limits have already been introduced via the aforementioned strategy and the Slower Speeds Campaign. These include, for example, the reduction of speed limits on rural local roads to 60 km/h in February 2025[9], and the rollout of a 30km/h default speed limit in "built up areas". The Bill seeks to amend certain provisions governing the setting of special speed limits on national roads through amendments to the *Road Traffic Act 2004* and the *Road Traffic Act 2024*.[10] The Bill also provides for a statutory definition for 'national primary roads' and 'national road (other than a primary road)'[11].

Following discussions with local authorities[12] it was noted that if the provisions of section 10(b) of the 2024 Act were to be commenced as they currently stand, local roads in built-up areas could not be given a 60 km/h special speed limit. Based on road circumstances and

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[7] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 3 and part 3.

[8] An Garda Síochána, *Automatic Number Plate Recognition* (last accessed 15 September 2026). See also Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Seán Canney T.D., Response to Parliamentary Question No 302 (Departmental Policies), *Dáil Éireann Debate*, 7 September 2026 (last accessed 15 September 2026); Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, Jim O'Callaghan T.D., Response to Parliamentary Question No 2320 (Programme for Government), *Dáil Éireann Debate*, 7 September 2026 (last accessed 15 September 2026); Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, Jim O'Callaghan T.D., Response to Parliamentary Question No 727 (An Garda Síochána), *Dáil Éireann Debate*, 27 January 2026 (last accessed 15 September 2026).

[9] Department of Transport, 'Speed limits on rural and local roads change from 80km/h to 60km/h', *Press release*, 12 April 2025 (last accessed 15 September 2026).

[10] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 3 and part 5.

[11] See National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 20.

[12] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026 *Explanatory Memorandum,* 04 September 2026 pp6.

traffic planning, such as avoiding gridlock on major urban arterial roads, local authorities may wish to set a 60 km/h special speed limit on some local roads in built-up areas, which the Bill will provide for.

Further provisions

Local Authority access to collision data

The Bill[13] seeks to provide a legislative basis for local authorities to request, receive, and process collision data. If enacted, this provision would facilitate enhanced proactive, data-driven road safety engineering and support national casualty-reduction targets.[14]

Reform of Non-Use Declarations (SORDs)

Under the *Finance (No. 2) Act 1992*, declaring a vehicle off the road is currently restricted to a fixed time-period of between three and twelve months. The Bill seeks to provide for a more flexible, open-ended non-use declaration[15] Which is anticipated to improve efficiency for vehicle owners by removing the administrative requirement of SORD renewal, avoiding the accrual of back-tax if an extension date is missed. To prevent misuse of the new flexibility, the Bill seeks to make it an offence for a person to use a vehicle in a public place where this vehicle is subject to a non-use declaration that is continuing in effect.[16]

Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA)[17]

The RIA provides an overview of the policy context and background of the objectives the Bill including a statement of these objectives, and consideration of potential options and impacts associated with achieving such. The RIA noted several elements requiring amendments to current legislation which will be provided for in the Bill.

The RIA notes that the existing legislation providing for the data held on the NVDF database pre-dates GDPR and is very general in nature. It is spread across a mix of primary and secondary legislation and requires strengthening in order to be brought in line with current data protection requirements. Under the provisions of this Bill, it is intended that all bodies requiring access to NVDF data will be provided for in secondary legislation with the basis for requiring access specified in each instance.

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[13] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 24.

[14] Law Society Gazette, ***Local authorities to get road-collisions data***, 16 April 2025 (last accessed 15 September 2026).

[15] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, part 4.

[16] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 17.

[17] The Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA) was completed 27 July 2026. At the time of writing, the RIA has not been published. A copy of the RIA has been provided to L&RS by the Department of Transport.

Regarding the setting of special speed limits, the RIA notes that under the existing legislation provided for under section 9 of the *Road Traffic Act 2004* ('2004 Act'), a speed limit is not available to be used as a special speed limit where it would be the same as the default limit. Following the commencement of section 7 of the *Road Traffic Act 2024* on 07 February 2025, 60 kilometres per hour is now the default speed limit for local roads. To address this, section 10(b) of the *Road Traffic Act 2024* ('2024 Act'), which is not yet commenced, seeks to amend section 9(2)(c) of the *Road Traffic Act 2004* in order to make 60 kilometres per hour an option for a special speed limit 'in respect of any road other than a local road.' However, the RIA found a subsequent issue arising in section 5 of the 2004 Act, which sets a default speed limit for 'built-up areas' of 50 kilometres per hour, reducing to 30 kilometres per hour upon commencement of section 3(6) of the 2024 Act. This default speed limit applies to all roads in a built-up area except for motorways, although some roads in built-up areas are categorised as local roads. As previously noted regarding special speed limits, if the provisions of section 10(b) of the 2024 Act were to be commenced without amendment, local roads in built-up areas could not be given a 60 kilometres per hour special speed limit. Section 9(2)(c) of the 2004 Act will be further amended by this Bill to allow local authorities to set a special speed limit of 60 kilometres per hour for local roads when those local roads are in built-up areas.[18]

Further amendments to existing legislation were identified in the RIA to provide clarity on the application of penalty points in multi-offence incidents (MOI)s, where a driver is disqualified as a result of the points applied from the MOI. The RIA notes that, at present, a driver who is caught committing several penalty point offences in a single incident will only have one set of penalty points endorsed on their licence upon payment of the associated fixed charge. Amendments to the *Road Traffic Act 2002* under *Section 3 of the 2024 Act* (not yet commenced), will introduce provisions of MOIs, whereby drivers will receive two sets of points for an MOI upon payment of the fixed charges, or all points upon conviction by the Courts.

An operational complication arising from this provision arises from the fact that fixed charge notices are issued separately for each offence committed in an MOI and may arrive on different dates due to administrative processes. Drivers do not have to pay fixed charge notices from an MOI in full at one time and may opt to stagger the payments of these charges over time. In the case of a disqualification the RIA notes that if a higher set of points associated with the same MOI is received after the disqualification has already started, Section 3 of the 2024 Act would require that only the highest set of points associated with the incident be endorsed on a driver record. In that case, the original disqualification would have to be cancelled, to allow the more recently notified, higher set of points to be swapped in for a lower set of points that had already been counted towards a disqualification. There is nothing in current road traffic legislation to allow the cancellation of an existing disqualification and the reinstation of it to include the new offence. The amendment to the 2002 Act as proposed in section 25 of the Bill would clarify that

[18] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 21.

the swapping of penalty points will not be applicable in cases where the driver has been disqualified.

Options and impact

Options

Excluding the proposed legislation, no additional policy options to achieve the objectives were identified in the RIA other than retaining the status quo. Retaining the status quo of any of the elements provided for in the Bill was not considered to be a viable option by which to meet the objectives of the Bill, given the lack of alignment and gaps identified across the current relevant legislation.

Impact

The RIA found that there would be minimal impact arising from the Bill. The abolition of motor tax discs will have an exchequer impact, with savings of an estimated €8.9 million, as well as an environmental impact due to the reduction in paper. No further direct or significant impact was identified across the considered areas of national competitiveness, vulnerable groups, the economic market, citizens' rights, compliance burden, or from the sharing of traffic collision data.

Legislative proposal

The National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026 ('the Bill') contains 6 Parts and 26 Sections. According to the long title of the Bill, the Bill seeks to make amendments to the *Roads Act 1920*, the *Finance Act 1936*, the *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952*, the *Road Traffic Acts 1961 to 2024*, the *Finance (No. 2) Act 1992*, the *Finance Act 1993*, and the *Roads Act 1993* and to provide for related matters. These amendments seek to:

- bring the legislative provisions governing the National Vehicle and Driver File (NVDF) database in line with requirements under the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)),[19]
- provide for the public availability of certain information on the Check My Vehicle website,[20]
- remove the requirement to display paper motor tax discs and revoke provisions relating to the display or surrender of paper motor tax discs and offences related to the failure to display motor tax discs,[21]
- provide for open-ended declarations of non-use for motor vehicles,[22]
- amend the provisions governing the setting of certain special speed limits,[23]
- provide a legislative basis for local authorities to request and process data relating to collisions on a public road in order to identify safety risks, maintain or construct public roads or appropriately allocate resources in relation to the maintenance and construction of public roads,[24]
- substitute section 53(4) of the *Road Traffic Act 1961*, which currently provides for an alternative verdict of careless driving, with a provision under which a person charged with dangerous driving may be found guilty of careless driving where the evidence does not warrant a conviction for dangerous driving but warrants a conviction for careless driving,[25]

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[19] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, part 2.

[20] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 7. See the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill.

[21] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 3 and part 3.

[22] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, part 4.

[23] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 3 and part 5.

[24] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 24.

[25] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 23.

- clarify that section 2(4A) of the *Road Traffic Act 2002*, inserted by section 3(1)(c) of the *Road Traffic Act 2024* but not yet commenced, will not apply where, as a result of the application of section 2(3A), the person concerned stands disqualified under section 3(1) of the 2002 Act, and[26]
- provide for the supply of evidence by certificate in proceedings under section 81 of the *Road Traffic Act 2010*.[27]

The section below provides an overview of these proposed amendments. This overview is not intended to be exhaustive, and it does not address all sections of the Bill.

Amendments to the National Vehicle and Driver File (NVDF)

Part 2 of the Bill seeks to provide for amendments to the *Finance Act 1993* ('1993 Act') in relation to the National Vehicle and Driver File (NVDF). Per the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill, these amendments are intended to bring the relevant provisions of the 1993 Act "in line with GDPR requirements and also underpins access to the public to certain data held on the NVDF".

Section 4 seeks to amend section 57 of the 1993 Act to insert certain definitions into this section, including a new definition of "licensing authority". Section 4 defines this term as meaning a local authority, within the meaning of the *Local Government Act 2001*, which grants licences under section 1 of the *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952*, or the licensing authority within the meaning of Part III of the *Road Traffic Act 1961*, which is the Road Safety Authority.

Section 5 seeks to substitute a new section 60 into the 1993 Act in relation to the NVDF. The new section 60 seeks to provide for the establishment and maintenance of the NVDF by the Minister for Transport and licensing authorities. Section 60(2) sets out the records that shall be included in the NVDF and section 60(3) outlines the matters for which the records stored in the NVDF may be used. Section 60(3) states that the records included in the NVDF under the new section 60(2)(a)-(p) will enable the Minister or licensing authority to perform functions under the related legislative provisions, whilst the records included in the NVDF under section 60(2)(q)-(w) will be a repository of data under the relevant legislative provisions.[28]

The new section 60(4) and (5) relate to the processing of personal data contained in the NVDF. Where a person who is processing such personal data for the purposes of the matters set out

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[26] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 25.

[27] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 26.

[28] Section 60(3) of the 1993 Act as proposed to be substituted in by section 5 of the National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026.

in section 60(3)[29] or pursuant to a provision set out in section 60(5),[30] the person will be required to ensure that this personal data is processed in accordance with the *Data Protection Act 2018*, GDPR and any regulations made by the Minister under the new section 60(6).

The new section 60(6) proposes to allow the Minister for Transport to make regulations in relation to a number of matters including, but not limited to, setting out other bodies or persons with whom the records contained in the NVDF may be shared, the categories of data that may be shared and for what purposes, and the type of processing that may be undertaken in relation to the data.

Under the new section 60(7), the Minister will be required to put in place technical and organisational measures to prevent the abuse or unlawful access or transfer of records contained in the NVDF and lists examples of these measures. These measures include methods to secure the data such as passwords or encryption, verification measures to log activity related to the data, as well as controls to limit access to authorised persons, training those involved in processing personal data. and requiring the data to be deleted according to specific timeframes.

Section 6 of the Bill proposes to insert a new section 60A into the 1993 Act to provide that, before the coming into operation of section 5 of the Bill, any records maintained under the current section 60 of the 1993 Act shall continue to exist and shall be contained in the NVDF. Any reference to certain terms such as "records under section 60 of the Finance Act 1993", "the National Vehicle and Driver File" or "joint licensing records" before section 5 of the Bill comes into operation will be taken as meaning the National Vehicle Driver File under the Bill.

Information availability on the Check My Vehicle website

Section 7 of the Bill seeks to insert a new section 60B into the 1993 Act to permit the Minister for Transport to make available certain information that is linked to a vehicle's registration number on a website maintained by or on behalf of the Minister. This information includes, but is not limited to, the make and model of the vehicle, the tax applicable to the vehicle and whether there is any non-use declaration applicable to the vehicle. Per the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill, this section relates to the Check My Vehicle Website which allows members of the public to access certain vehicle data that is contained on the NVDF. This section does not provide for the inclusion of the names and the addresses of the owners of vehicles on the Check My Vehicle website.

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[29] As set out in the new section 60(3).

[30] The provisions set out in the new section 60(5) are section 22(4) of the *Road Traffic Act 1961*, section 64A of the *Roads Act 1993*, and section 5(1) of the *Road Traffic Act 2014*.

Amendments relating to paper motor tax discs

Section 3 of the Bill proposes to repeal a number of legacy provisions in older vehicle-licensing legislation.[31] Some relate directly to the paper motor-tax licence/disc regime, including the display requirement in section 5(5) of the *Roads Act 1920* and the offence for failure to display motor tax and related provisions in sections 73 and 74 of the *Finance Act 1976*. Other provisions proposed for repeal concern separate legacy vehicle-licensing matters.

Part 3 of the Bill relates to the display of motor tax discs. This Part proposes amendments to:

- the *Roads Act 1920* in order to provide a basis for charging motor tax and issuing of related licences under the *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952* ('1952 Act'),[32]
- the *Roads Act 1920*,[33] the *Finance Act 1936*,[34] and *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952*,[35] in order to remove references to requirements to surrender, deliver or return motor tax discs in specific circumstances,
- the *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952* to insert a new section 1A into the 1952 Act to provide that where an application for a licence under section 1 is made in accordance with section 5 of the *Roads Act 1920*, the licence is deemed to be issued and granted on the provision of a receipt, whether electronically or in paper form, and the grant of the licence is entered in the NVDF,[36]
- the *Road Traffic Act 1961* to remove the requirement that a motor-tax licence and, where applicable, a test certificate be displayed on a vehicle used for a driving test, while retaining the requirement that the relevant licence and test certificate be in force,[37]

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[31] Section 3 of the Bill proposes to repeal sections 5(4), 5(5), 5(6), 10, 11 and 12(1)(e) of the *Roads Act 1920*, section 22 of the *Finance Act 1921*, section 62(1) of the *Finance Act 1993* and sections 70(2)(a), 73 and 74 of the *Finance Act 1976*.

[32] Section 8 of the Bill seeks to seeks to substitute in references to the *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952* into sections 1(1), 5(1), 5(2), 5(3) and 8(2) of the *Roads Act 1920* and to substitute references to the *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952* and the *Finance (No. 2) Act 1992* into sections 13(1) and 19(3) of the *Roads Act 1920*. As noted in the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill, this section seeks to replace references to the *Finance Act 1920* which provided the earlier basis for motor taxation.

[33] Section 8 of the Bill proposes to substitute in a new section 5(3) into the *Roads Act 1920*. The new subsection (3) does not include a reference to surrendering a tax disc.

[34] Section 9 of the Bill proposes to insert a new subsection (2) into section 23 of the *Finance Act 1936* in order to disapply the application of section 23(1)(b)-(d) to motor tax licences issued under the *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952* and to apply other requirements under the new subsection (2).

[35] Section 10 of the Bill proposes to amend section 1 of the *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952* to remove the requirement to surrender a motor tax disc.

[36] Section 10 of the Bill proposes to insert the new section 1A into the *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952* to provide for this amendment.

[37] Section 11 of the Bill proposes to insert a new subsection (3B) into section 33 of the *Road Traffic Act 1961*. See the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill.

- the *Local Authorities (Traffic Wardens) Act 1975* and the *Road Traffic Act 2010* to remove references to the offence of failing to display a motor tax disc.[38]

Non-use for motor vehicles

Part 4 of the Bill seeks to amend the *Finance (No. 2) Act 1992* ('1992 Act') in relation to non-use declarations, whereby a person declares their vehicle is temporarily off the road.[39] Section 20B of the 1992 Act, as inserted by section 7 of the *Non-Use of Motor Vehicles Act 2013*, permits that the registered owner of a vehicle to provide a non-use declaration to the licensing authority[40] to state that the vehicle will not be used in a public place for a specified period of between 3- and 12-months.[41] According to the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill, the amendments in Part 4 of the Bill seek to remove these time limits and to provide for non-use declarations for "an indefinite period".

Section 15 of the Bill seeks to amend section 20(1)(b) and section 20(1AB) of the 1992 Act in order to remove references to the time period specified in the non-use declaration and the expiry of non-use declarations in section 20. These amendments coincide with the amendments proposed in section 16 of the Bill to remove the requirement to specify a time-period of between 3- and 12-months in a non-use declaration.[42] Section 15 also seeks to amend the definition of "period of arrears" in relation to motor tax in section 20(1AB) and

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[38] Sections 12 of the Bill proposes to delete the reference to the offence under regulations under the *Roads Act 1920* of not displaying motor tax from section 3 of the *Local Authorities (Traffic Wardens) Act 1975*, Sections 12 and 13 also proposes to delete references to section 73 of the *Finance Act 1976* from section 3 of the *Local Authorities (Traffic Wardens) Act 1975* and section 34 the *Road Traffic Act 2010*. Section 73 of the *Finance Act 1976* makes it an offence if a person fails to display a motor tax disc and is proposed to be repealed by Section 3 of the Bill. Section 12 and 13 propose to insert a references to section 71 of the *Finance Act 1976* which makes it an offence to use, park or keep a vehicle in a public place where motor tax is unpaid.

[39] A person can declare their vehicle temporarily off the road via the Motor Tax Online website or by completing a form and sending this form to their local motor tax office. For more information, see Procedures for declaring a vehicle off the road.

[40] Licensing authority is defined in section 18 of the *Finance (No. 2) Act 1992* as amended by section 4 of the *Non-Use of Motor Vehicles Act 2013* as meaning the county or city council which grants licences under section 1 of the *Finance (Excise Duties) (Vehicles) Act 1952*, or as respects those licences, where the context so requires, the Minister for Transport.

[41] *Finance (No. 2) Act 1992,* section 20B(2) and (3) as inserted by section 7 of the *Non-Use of Motor Vehicles Act 2013*.

[42] Section 15(c) of the Bill proposes to substitute in "section 71 of the Finance Act 1976" for "section 5(5) of the Act of 1920 or section 71 or 73 of the Finance Act 1976" in section 20(4) of the 1992 Act. This would remove the reference to the offence of not displaying a paper motor tax disc under section 73 of the *Finance Act 1976* and the requirement to display a motor tax disc under section 5(5) of the *Roads Act 1920* and would insert a reference to section 71 of the *Finance Act 1976*. Section 71 of the *Finance Act 1976* makes it an offence to use, park or keep a vehicle in a public place where motor tax is unpaid.

seeks to provide that a registered owner of a vehicle will not be liable for arrears after their first application for motor tax after an open-ended declaration of non-use has been made under the Bill.[43]

As noted above, Section 16 of the Bill seeks to amend section 20B of the 1992 Act to remove references to the requirement to specify a time-period of between 3- and 12-months in a non-use declaration and to delete references to the expiry of a non-use declaration as it is expressed in the current section 20B. These amendments permit a non-use declaration to be made without an end-date. Section 16(f) and (h) of the Bill seeks to substitute in a new subsection (8) and subsection (11) into section 20B to clarify when a non-use declaration will commence. Section 16(i) of the Bill seeks to insert a new subsection (11A) to clarify until when the non-use declaration shall have effect.

Section 17 of the Bill seeks to amend section 20C of the 1992 Act, as inserted by section 8 of the *Non-Use of Motor Vehicles Act 2013*. Under this section, a person who provides a non-use declaration that contains information which he/she knows is false or materially misleading to a licensing authority shall be guilty of an offence. Section 17 of the Bill seeks to insert a new subsection (2) into this provision to make it an offence for a person to uses a vehicle in a public place where this vehicle is subject to a non-use declaration that is continuing in effect.

Transitional provisions in relation to non-use declarations are set out in section 18 of the Bill, which seeks to insert a new section 20D into the 1992 Act. This section provides that the commencement of section 16 of the Bill would not impact the expiry of non-use declarations made prior to commencement. The registered owner of the vehicle may apply for an open-ended non-use declaration in accordance with the Bill as enacted. However, this section provides that a further non-use declaration shall have no effect and shall not be accepted by the licensing authority if it is made to the authority on or after the expiration of the period specified in the non-use declaration that was made prior to the commencement of the Bill.

Section 19 of the Bill seeks to amend section 21(5) of the 1992 Act in relation to trade licences to substitute in "Section 13(1) of the Act of 1920, section 1(1) of the Act of 1952 and section 71 of the Finance Act 1976" for "Sections 5(5) and 13(1) of the Act of 1920, section 1(1) of the Act of 1952 and sections 71 and 73 of the Finance Act 1976". This substitution would remove references to the obligation to display motor tax under Section 5(5) of the *Roads Act 1920* and the offence for failing to display motor tax under section 73 of the *Finance Act 1976*.

Special speed limits

Section 3 of the Bill proposes to repeal section 10(b) of the *Road Traffic Act 2024* ('2024 Act'). This provision has not yet been commenced. It seeks to amend section 9(2)(c) of the *Road Traffic Act 2004* ('2004 Act') in relation to special speed limits. Section 10(b) of the 2024 Act

[43] Section 15(b) amends the provisions in section 20(1AB) of the 1992 Act in relation to arrears of motor tax.

sought to provide that special speed limits of 60 kilometres per hour may be specified by bye-laws in respect of any road other than a local road. This repeal coincides with section 21 of the Bill which seeks to substitute a new paragraph (c) into section 9(2) of the 2004 Act in relation to special speed limits to provide that the special speed limits that may be specified by bye-laws by a county or city council includes a special speed limit of "60 kilometres per hour, in respect of any road other than a local road that is outside a built-up area".

The amendment proposed in section 21 of the Bill, if enacted, would provide for the setting by city or county councils of a special speed limits of 60 kilometres per hour on local roads in built-up areas. According to the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill, this amendment would avoid the limitation of local authorities' ability to set a special speed limit of 60 kilometres per hour in local roads in built up areas on the commencement of the 2024 Act.

Section 21 of the Bill also seeks to amend section 9(2)(d), (e) and (f) of the 2004 Act. These amendments would permit city or county councils to specify via bye-laws special speed limits of 80 kilometres per hour for a national primary road and 120 kilometres per hour for dual carriageways that form part of a national primary road and to specify a speed limit of 100 kilometres per hour in respect of a national road (other than a national primary road).

Section 22 of the Bill seeks to make amendments like those in section 21 regarding special speed limits for national primary roads and national roads (other a national primary roads) to section 9A of the 2004 Act. Section 9A relates to the setting of special speed limits on national managed roads by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).[44] The amendments in this section would permit TII to specify via bye-laws for roads that are national managed roads special speed limits of 80 kilometres per hour for a national primary road and 120 kilometres per hour for dual carriageways that form part of a national primary road. This section would also permit TII to specify a speed limit of 100 kilometres per hour in respect of a national road (other than a national primary road) where the road is a national managed road.

Section 20 of the Bill seeks to amend section 2(1) of the 2004 Act to insert a definition of 'national primary road' to coincide with the amendments in section 21 and 22 of the Bill. This section defines a national primary road as having the same meaning as assigned to it by section 7A(1). Section 7A(1) was inserted into the 2004 Act by section 9 of the 2024 Act and relates to the national primary road speed limit. This section refers to national roads classified by the Minister as national primary roads by order under section 10 of the *Roads Act 1993*. Section 9 of the 2024 Act has not yet been commenced.

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[44] Section 9A of the 2004 Act refers to the National Roads Authority. Under the *Roads Act 2015*, the Railway Procurement Agency was dissolved and its functions transferred to the National Roads Authority. The National Roads Authority subsequently adopted 'Transport Infrastructure Ireland' as its operational name. It remains the statutory body referred to in section 9A. See Transport Infrastructure Ireland, *About Us* (last accessed 15 September 2026).

Miscellaneous amendments

Part 6 of the Bill proposes miscellaneous amendments to the *Road Traffic Act 1961*, *Roads Act 1993*, Road Traffic Act 2002, and *Road Traffic Act 2010*. These amendments seek to:

- substitute section 53(4) of the *Road Traffic Act 1961*, which currently provides for an alternative verdict of careless driving, with a provision under which a person charged with dangerous driving may be found guilty of careless driving where the evidence does not warrant a conviction for dangerous driving but warrants a conviction for careless driving;[45]
- provide a legislative basis under section 13 of the *Roads Act 1993* for local authorities to request and process data relating to collisions on a public road in order to identify safety risks, maintain or construct public roads or appropriately allocate resources in relation to the maintenance and construction of public roads;[46]
- clarify that section 2(4A) of the *Road Traffic Act 2002*, inserted by section 3(1)(c) of the *Road Traffic Act 2024* but not yet commenced, will not apply where, as a result of the application of section 2(3A), the person concerned stands disqualified under section 3(1) of the 2002 Act;[47] and
- permit a certificate signed by or on behalf of a member of An Garda Síochána or by an authorised operator of a mobile camera van to be sufficient evidence of the camera being in operation at a specified location on a specified day at a specified time in proceedings under section 81 of the *Road Traffic Act 2010*.[48]

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[45] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 23.

[46] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 24 seeks to insert a new subsection (8A) into section 13 of the *Roads Act 1993*.

[47] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 25.

[48] National Vehicle and Driver File, Road Traffic and Roads Bill 2026, section 26. See the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill.

Pre-legislative Scrutiny (PLS)

A waiver of pre-legislative scrutiny (PLS) of the General Scheme of the National Vehicle and Driver File Bill 2025 was granted by the Joint Committee on Transport on 18 June 2025.